

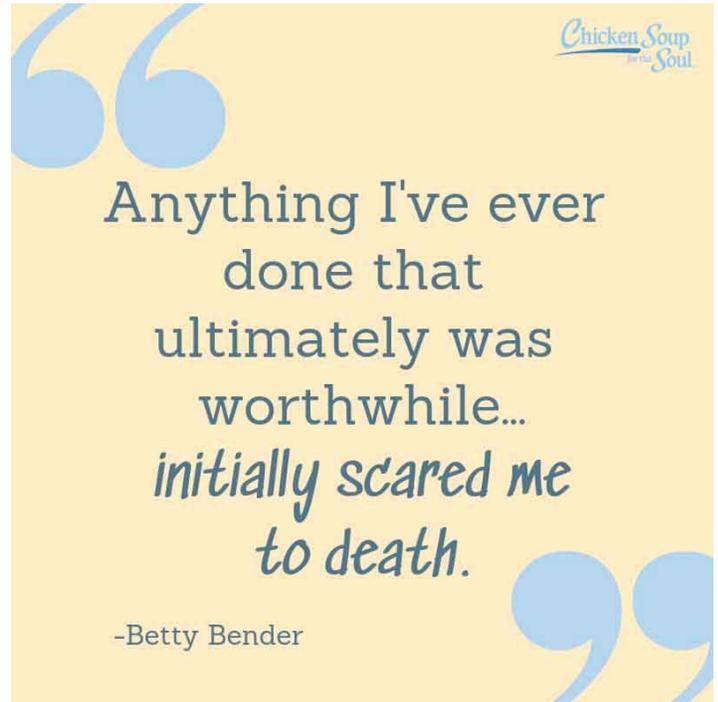
# Groton Daily Independent

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Ag

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## 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

## Service Notice: Clara Barondeau

Mass of Christian Burial for Clara Barondeau, 96, of Aberdeen and formerly of Conde will be 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, May 14th at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic Church, Groton. Father Mike Kelly will officiate. Burial will follow in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the chapel on Monday from 5-6 p.m. with a rosary at 6:00 p.m.

Clara passed away May 8, 2019 at Avera Mother Joseph Manor, Aberdeen.

## 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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## Cub Cadet

### ALL-AROUND STRENGTH



#### SC 100 HW PUSH WALK-BEHIND MOWER

- 159cc Cub Cadet® performance-tuned OHV engine
- 21" Cub Cadet Signature Cut™
- High rear wheels to maneuver with ease

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**\$269\***

#### XT1™ LT42"™ LAWN TRACTOR

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**\$1,699\***

#### RT 65 H REAR-TINE TILLER

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605-395-6421

\*Product Price - Actual retail prices are set by dealer and may vary. Taxes, freight, setup and handling charges may be additional and may vary. Models subject to limited availability. Specifications and programs are subject to change without notice. Images may not reflect dealer inventory and/or specifications. \*\*As rated by Kohler. All power levels are stated in gross horsepower at 3600 RPM per SAE J1940 as tested by engine manufacturer. \*\*See your local Cub Cadet Independent Dealer for warranty details. © 2018 Cub Cadet LP, an ECOMMERCIAL

## Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

### 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

### Friday, May 24, 2019

Faculty Inservice  
STATE TRACK MEET @ TEA AREA

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**Girls Soccer Awards**  
Photos courtesy  
Tricia Keith

**Offensive Player of the Year:**  
Reagan Leicht

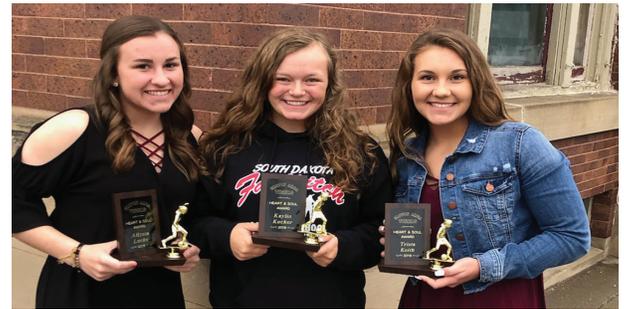


Receiving the Rookie of the Year Awards were Sydney Leicht and Paloma Hernandez



**Ani Davidson - Hustle Award**

**Right Photo: Miss Universal Awards:**  
Brooklyn Gilbert and Sam Geffre.  
Kenzie McInerney (not pictured)



Receiving the Heart and Soul Award were Allyssa Locke, Kaylin Kucker and Trista Keith



**Defensive Player of the Year:**  
Devan Howard



The seniors Devan Howard (left) and Sam Geffre (right) are pictured with Coach Chris Kucker.



Receiving the Hustle Award were Madeline Flihs and Riley Leicht.

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**By Kelli Erickson, Full Circle Ag.**

Who: Jim & Kraig Kroll

What: Corn, soybeans, hay, alfalfa, oats, as well as cow/calf pairs

Where: Andover, SD

How They Got Started: Both Jim and Kraig grew up on the farm. They are an uncle/nephew farming operation with additional help as well. Bill Kroll, Kraig's dad/Jim's brother, works and lives on the farm where they operate. Jim had gone to SDSU to obtain a bachelor's degree in General Agriculture. Upon graduating in 1977, he then came back to the farm. Kraig joined the operation in 1993 and has been there since.

Where Are They Now: Jim, Kraig, and Bill are still working as hard today as they have been since they started...just with a little more help now. Kraig's 15-year old daughter, Kansas, has been a huge help to their operation. "She helps us a lot with the cattle. She runs the skid steer, opens gates, and does whatever we need her to!" On top of being active in the Groton FFA Chapter, Kansas is a very busy 15-year old who loves to help out on the farm as much as she can!

How do you foresee spring planting going?: When we get spring, it should go well! The ground is still cold yet so we're being patient. It doesn't take long to get it done and if you wait a little longer, it makes it easier when the time comes to plant. We'll be able to go out and in two or three days, we'll be done. We are very hopeful!

The most useful advance in farming since you've started?: Chemicals. Especially with corn. The chemicals keep it a lot cleaner and keep the corn healthy. They're so much better at killing weeds and bugs than they did when we started.

Thank you so much, Jim and Kraig, for being our May Producer of the Month! We truly appreciate you taking the time out of your busy spring to sit down and visit with us. We wish you a safe and prosperous spring and look forward to continue working with you!

# NOW HIRING!

## Truss Pros

10954 424th Avenue | Britton, SD 57430

Looking for assemblers - both shifts

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

### BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Comprehensive Health,
- Dental & Vision insurance
- Life Insurance
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- Referral Bonuses

To apply visit [www.uslbn.com/careers](http://www.uslbn.com/careers) or call Diane at 605-448-2929.

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## GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6 School Board Meeting May 13, 2019 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

### AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.  
POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

#### CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of minutes of April 8, 2019 and April 23, 2019 school board meeting as drafted.
2. Approval of North Central Special Education Co-Op (NCSEC) agenda items...as fiscal agent.
3. Approval of April 2019 District bills for payment.
4. Approval of April 2019 Financial Report, Agency Accounts, and Investments.
5. Approval of April 2019 School Transportation Report.
6. Approval of April 2019 School Lunch Report.
7. Approve Open Enrollment Application #20-01.
8. Approve Open Enrollment Application #20-02.
9. Approve Open Enrollment Application #20-03.
10. Approve Open Enrollment Application #20-04.

#### OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Discussion on possible amendment to 2019-2020 school calendar.
3. School Board Committee Reports:
  - a. Building, Grounds, & Transportation: Clint Fjelstad, Merle Harder
  - b. Personnel, Policy, & Curriculum: Deb Gengerke, Kara Pharis
  - c. Negotiations: Grant Rix, Steve Smith, Marty Weismantel
4. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

#### NEW BUSINESS:

1. Public Hearing on District waiver to ARSD 24:43:11:01 allowing HS credit for 8th graders completing Algebra I.
2. First reading of proposed amendments to graduation requirements.
3. Review of FY2020 Preliminary Budget.
4. Review list of surplus property and declare property for sale or disposal.
5. Review/Approve specifications for Elementary tuck pointing work.
6. Review/Approve specifications for HS Boiler replacement.
7. Cast ballot for SDHSAA Constitutional Amendment #1.
8. Cast ballot for SDHSAA Native American At-Large Representative to Board of Directors.
9. Cast ballot for SDHSAA West River At-Large Representative to Board of Directors.
10. Cast ballot for SDHSAA Large School Group Board of Education Representative to Board of Directors.
11. Discussion and/or action on OST tuition rates.
12. Discussion and/or action on activities personnel fees.
13. Approve resignation from Shaun Wanner, Head Girls Basketball Coach.
14. Approve hiring Brian Dolan as Head Boys Basketball Coach and Athletic Director for 2019-2020 school year.
15. Approve hiring Seth Erickson as Assistant Football Coach for the 2019-2020 school year.
16. Issue teacher contracts for 2019-2020 school year with return date of Friday, May 24.
17. Approve Special Education ESY, Summer School, and Summer Library work agreements for 2019.
18. Approve summer custodial work agreements for 2019.
19. Issue off-staff coaching agreements for 2019-2020 school year with return date of Friday, May 24.
  - a. Chance Strom, Head Boys Soccer
  - b. Chris Kucker, Head Girls Soccer
  - c. Chelsea Hanson, Head Girls Volleyball
  - d. Jenna Strom, Assistant Girls Volleyball
  - e. Aubray Harry, Cheer Coach
  - f. Joellen Miller, Cheer Coach
  - g. Darin Zoellner, Head Wrestling Coach
  - h. Ryan Scepaniak, Assistant Wrestling Coach
20. Executive session pursuant to SDCL 1-25-2(1) personnel and SDCL 1-25-2(4) negotiations.

ADJOURN

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## Today in Weather History

May 10, 1982: An F3 tornado was first sighted six miles west of Tintah, Minnesota. The storm moved into the town of Tintah and then northeastward, dissipating north of Wendell. Two farms, sites were damaged west of Tintah. Nearly one dozen farm buildings were destroyed, and 50 cows were killed. Hail as large as softballs preceded the tornado into Tintah where there was extensive damage. A school and church received heavy damage, two railroad cars were overturned, homes and grain buildings were damaged, and utility poles and trees were uprooted.

1880: A tornado estimated to be F4 intensity moved across 20 miles of Scott and Morgan Counties in central Illinois. The tornado touched down near Alsey and moved northeast, passing 8 miles south of Jacksonville. The tornado was strongest in the Pisgah area, where 30 buildings were destroyed. Seven people were killed.

1905: On Wednesday, May 10th, 1905, the Oklahoma Territory was struck by one of the worst natural disasters in early American history. Tornadoes pounded the southwest part of the Territory, one of which flattened the town of Snyder. The "official" death toll is listed today as 97, but the actual number of victims may never be known. One hundred years later, this single tornado remains the second most deadly in Oklahoma history.

1953: Four, F4 tornadoes touched down in parts of eastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. One F4 tornado moved northeast from northeast of Fountain City, Wisconsin to Colburn, Wisconsin. Total damage from this storm was \$1 million, and it caused ten injuries.

The second F4 tornado moved from 5 miles southwest of Chester, Iowa to 4 miles northeast of Chatfield, Minnesota. One man was killed as his barn was destroyed one mile southeast of Wykoff. A rural school was leveled 3 miles south of Chatfield as well.

The third F4 tornado moved northeast and passed about 2 miles northwest of St. Charles, Minnesota. Farms were torn up all along the track. An infant was killed, and four other people were injured in a car that was thrown 100 feet. Overall this tornado killed one person and injured 11 people.

The final F4 tornado moved across Rusk, Price, and Taylor counties in Wisconsin. Over \$150,000 worth of damage resulted. An F3 tornado moved northeast across Clayton County, Iowa. At least 60 head of cattle were killed. A farmer was carried 700 feet but suffered only minor injuries.

2010: On this day, Oklahoma experienced its largest tornado outbreak since May 3, 1999. Fifty-five twisters tore through the state, including two rated EF4. The EF4 storms took three lives and injured 81 people. Ironically, both EF4 tornadoes struck Norman, Oklahoma, home of the Storm Prediction Center and the National Severe Storms Laboratory. Fourteen additional tornadoes hit Oklahoma during May 11-13. The May 10 disaster racked up insured property losses of \$2 billion.

1966 - Morning lows of 21 degrees at Bloomington-Normal and Aurora, IL, established a state record for the month of May. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Summer-like "Father's Day" type weather prevailed in the north central and western U.S. for "Mother's Day", as seventeen cities reported record high temperatures for the date. Jamestown ND soared to a record high of 96 degrees. Thunderstorms along the Central Gulf Coast deluged Lillian AL with 14.5 inches of rain, and nearby Perdido Key FL with 12.8 inches of rain. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

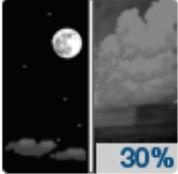
1988 - Thunderstorms produced hail and high winds over the Atlantic Coast Region and the Gulf Coast States marking the end of a five day episode of severe weather associated with a cyclone tracking out of the Great Basin into southeastern Canada. (The National Weather Summary)

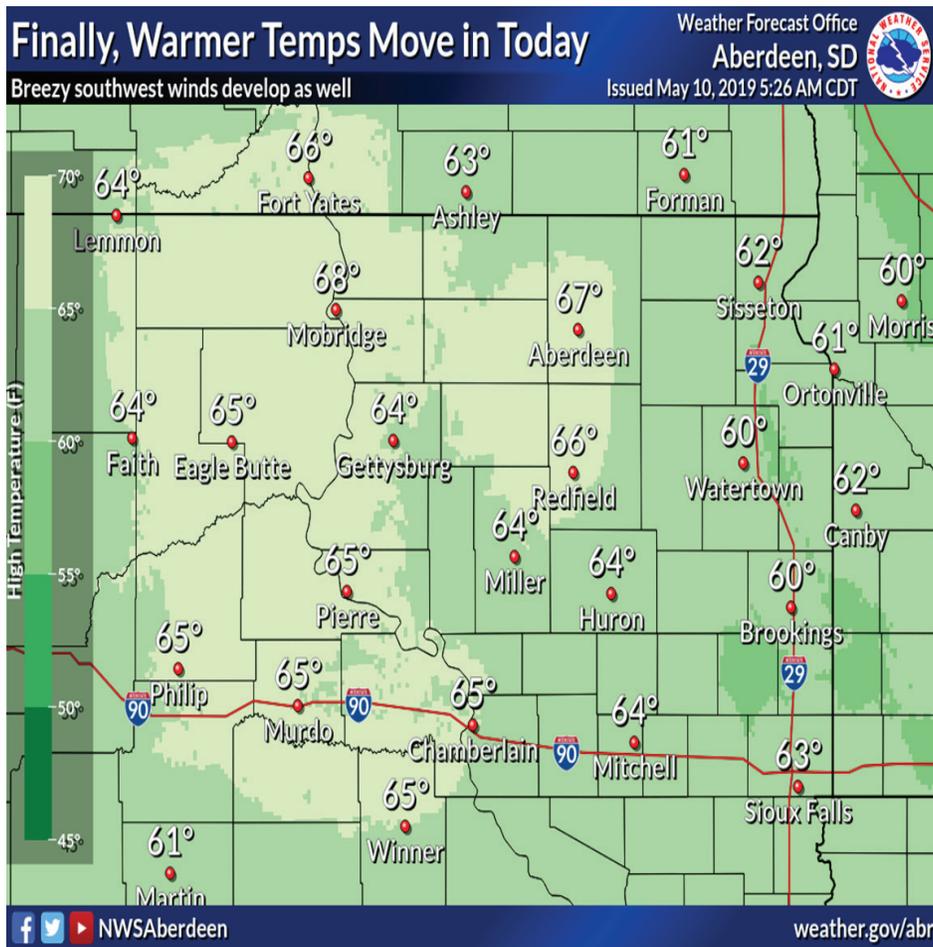
1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a cold front crossing the Plateau Region produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Butte MT, and gusts to 77 mph at Choteau MT. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - A spring storm produced heavy snow in Upper Michigan and eastern Wisconsin. Totals ranged up to 12 inches at Marquette MI, with eight inches reported at Muskego WI and Hartford WI. The heavy wet snow, and winds gusting to 35 mph, damaged or destroyed thousands of trees, and downed numerous power lines. Total damage from the storm was more than four million dollars. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Today	Tonight	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Sunny	Mostly Clear then Chance Showers	Showers Likely	Chance Showers	Mostly Sunny
High: 67 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 59 °F	Low: 42 °F	High: 63 °F



Published on: 05/10/2019 at 6:38AM

Surface high pressure over the region this morning is bringing clear skies, light winds, and cold temperatures. Some locations have dipped as far as the upper 20s. Although, as the day progresses, this high will move off to the southeast and allow for southwest winds and warmer air to move back into the region. Highs will bounce back into the 60s. Showers return to the forecast on Saturday, along with cooler temperatures once again.

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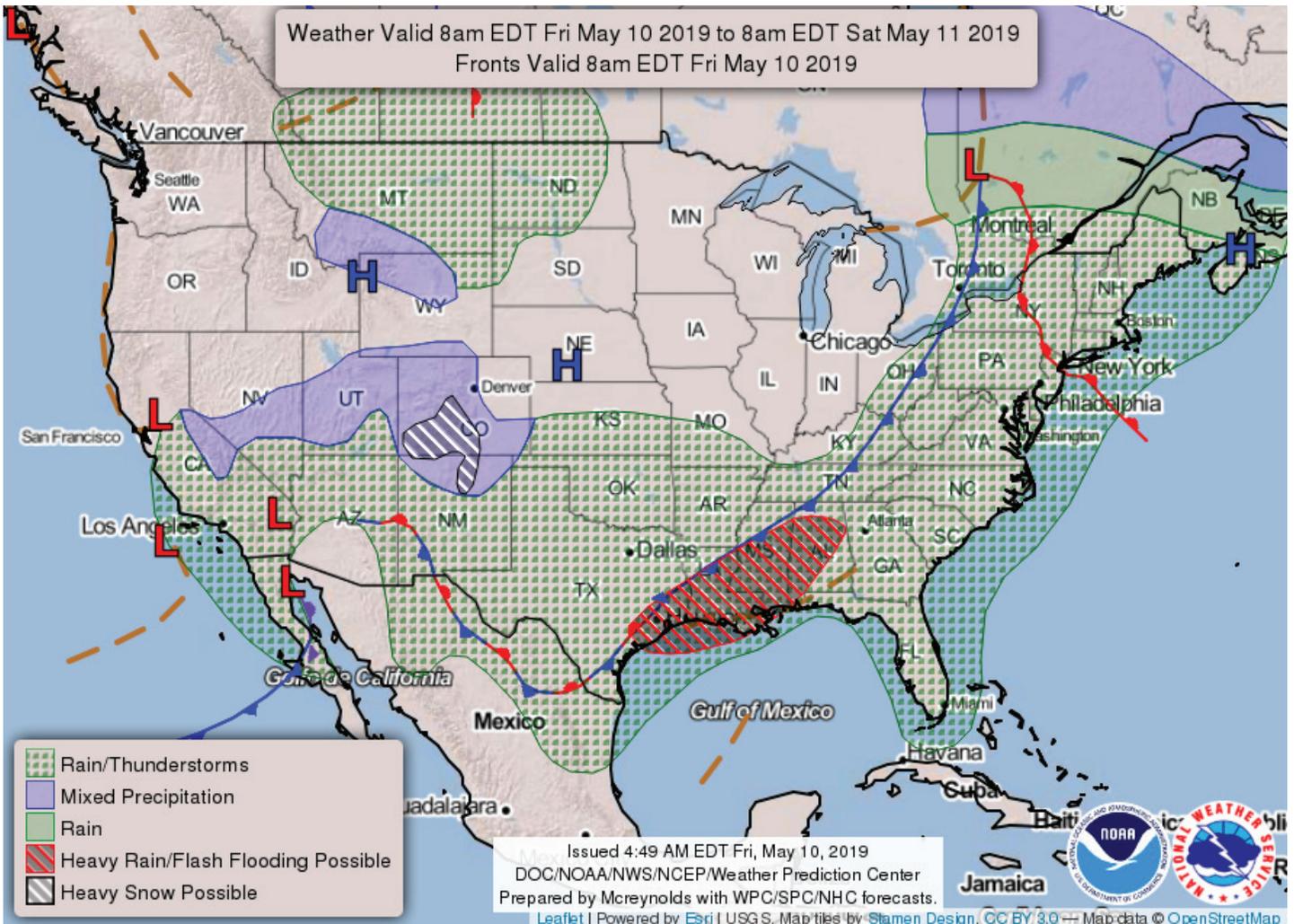
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## Yesterday's Weather

**High Outside Temp: 54 °F at 5:16 PM**  
**Low Outside Temp: 36 °F at 6:28 AM**  
**High Gust: 31 mph at 2:39 PM**  
**Precip: 0.00**

## Today's Info

**Record High: 95° in 1911**  
**Record Low: 20° in 1981**  
**Average High: 67°F**  
**Average Low: 42°F**  
**Average Precip in May.: 0.92**  
**Precip to date in May.: 0.45**  
**Average Precip to date: 4.95**  
**Precip Year to Date: 5.14**  
**Sunset Tonight: 8:51 p.m.**  
**Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:08 a.m.**



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## THE WAY

Yes, we do look forward to the day when we will meet in the sweet by and by, said the aging evangelist with the volume of his voice rising, but right now we live in the nasty now and now! I wonder what he would say today - some fifty years later.

Wherever we look today nasty seems to be more and more predominate and the sweet by and by more enticing. Evil and wickedness, immorality and indecency confront us constantly. What once made most people blush and gasp rarely causes them to turn their eyes from lewd scenes or pictures. Advertisements and marketing strategies are now designed to exploit what was once pure and sacred, beautiful and honorable. What once was unimaginable is now commonplace and common. But Gods laws have not changed.

In the way of righteousness there is life, along that path is immortality, wrote Solomon. He was not writing of heaven as we now understand it from the New Testament. It was a hint of things to be revealed as God unfolded His message through the risen Christ.

There is no doubt about the fact that the way of the righteous points to the path of immortality. Clearly it looks beyond this world and into the next. It reflects the insight of David when he wrote, And I - in righteousness will see your face, when I awake, I will be satisfied with seeing your likeness. We also have the words of Job: I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end He will stand upon the earth (and) in my flesh I will see God; with my own eyes - I and not another. My heart yearns... Heaven awaits those who accept Christ!

Prayer: How blest we are, Father, to know that the way is Your way and will lead us into Your presence. We are so blest to have eternal life through You! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 12:28 In the way of righteousness there is life, along that path is immortality.

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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

### **Aberdeen man shot by officer sent to mental health hospital**

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — An Aberdeen man who was shot twice by a police officer in 2016 and convicted in March of felony aggravated assault and drug possession has been sent to a mental health hospital rather than prison.

The American News reports two mental health evaluations supported the insanity defense of 24-year-old Ehkhu Poe.

Authorities say Officer Ty Reinke shot Poe in the chest and arm after Poe threatened family members and charged the officer with a knife in August 2016. A state investigation determined that Reinke was justified in shooting Poe.

Poe pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. His conviction could have sent him to prison for up to 30 years. He'll now be evaluated at the Human Services Center in Yankton to determine if he's a danger to society. His next court hearing is June 17.

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

### **2 South Dakota men sentenced for fentanyl conspiracy**

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Two South Dakota men have been sentenced to more than seven years in federal prison for trafficking fentanyl from Minnesota.

The U.S. attorney's office says 28-year-old Stuart Siecke, of Worthing, and 37-year-old Dean Bourn, of Vermillion, obtained the narcotic from co-conspirators in Minneapolis for distribution in South Dakota. Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid drug much more powerful than heroin.

Homeland Security helped in the investigation that led to the two men pleading guilty to drug conspiracy in February. Siecke was recently sentenced to seven years and three months in prison and Bourn to seven years and four months.

### **Pence says US working 'hour by hour' on China trade deal**

By DAVE KOLPACK Associated Press

GLYNDON, Minn. (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence said Thursday the Trump administration is working "literally hour by hour" to reach a trade agreement with China, as the deadline loomed on a U.S. threat to raise tariffs on Chinese imports.

Flanked by farmers and ranchers invited to a northwestern Minnesota farm to talk about the new North American trade agreement, Pence told reporters he was hopeful a deal with China could be reached before 12:01 a.m. Friday. However, he said the U.S. is going to "continue to stand firm" to reset an unbalanced trading relationship.

Should the U.S. follow through and raise tariffs on \$200 billion in Chinese imports from 10 to 25%, Pence said "you can very confident" that the administration is going to "look for ways" to provide additional support to farmers affected by the trade dispute. He was not specific.

Pence changed the subject from China to "the good news," referring to the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement, or USMCA. He spent most of his one-on-one time with the friendly audience gathered at R&J Johnson Farms promoting the deal and telling producers that Congress needs to act on it.

Pence called on Minnesota Democratic Rep. Collin Peterson, chairman of the House Agriculture Committee, to help persuade Speaker Nancy Pelosi to put the USMCA to a vote. The vice president said it's sure to pass.

Peterson put out a statement before Pence's comments stating he is the most senior Democrat who supports USMCA. A spokeswoman for Peterson did not immediately return a phone message seeking

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reaction on Pence's plea for assistance.

"Farmers need certainty and getting USMCA done is one part of that," Peterson said.

Jake Hein, 29, one of the attendees at Thursday's event, said farming has been in his family for five generations, tracing back to the original farm in Norway. His wife, Christina, 28, is expecting in October and he's hoping by that time he won't have to worry about selling crops from his Audubon, Minnesota farm.

"I'm thankful the vice president came here to talk about something that is just extremely important to us in rural Minnesota," Jake Hein told The Associated Press after talking with Pence. "If we can get the USMCA ratified it would really go a long way toward making our farms profitable again."

One subject that didn't come up Thursday was Trump's tariffs on steel and aluminum, which Minnesota Farm Bureau President Kevin Papp calls a "tax at the border" that is "killing us in agriculture." Pence was scheduled later Thursday to give a speech to workers at Gerdau Ameristeel, one of the mills that Trump's tariffs are meant to help.

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."

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."

## Dog teams to return to search for missing 9-year-old girl

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Authorities plan to resume the search this weekend for a 9-year-old girl who ran away from a children's home in western South Dakota more than three months ago.

Six dog teams plus their handlers will search for Serenity Dennard on Friday and Saturday. The dog teams from South Dakota and Colorado will search a 2-mile radius around the Black Hills Children's Home. The Pennington County Sheriff's Office says up to 30 people are expected to be involved in this weekend's search.

Serenity ran away from the children's home on Feb. 3. Numerous searches have been conducted since then.

The search changed from a rescue to a recovery effort not long after the girl went missing. Authorities say Serenity likely wouldn't have survived if she was outside in subzero temperatures.

## Judge strikes down South Dakota out-of-state fundraising ban

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's ban on out-of-state money for ballot question campaigns is unconstitutional, a federal judge ruled Thursday in blocking state officials from enforcing the new law.

U.S. District Judge Charles Kornmann ruled that the first-in-the-nation measure approved by South Dakota voters in November violates First Amendment political speech rights and also violates the Commerce Clause by interfering with interstate transfer of money to ballot question campaigns in South Dakota.

The law is scheduled to take effect July 1, but the judge blocked state officials from enforcing it.

In his ruling, Kornmann said the evidence "demonstrates how important out-of-state contributions are for the ballot question committees to pursue political speech. The State cannot enact restrictions that so completely prevent those pursuing unpopular laws from amassing the resources necessary for effective

advocacy.”

Former House Speaker Mark Mickelson sponsored the initiative. He said it was necessary to preserve the ballot measure process for state residents and predicted that it would survive legal challenges.

Out-of-state donors put more than \$10 million into campaigns for or against South Dakota ballot questions during the 2016 election cycle.

The new law prohibits contributions to ballot question committees from nonresidents, out-of-state political committees and entities that haven't filed with the secretary of state's office for the preceding four years.

When the measure passed in November, Josh Altic, ballot measures project director at online political encyclopedia Ballotpedia, said in an email he's confident the South Dakota measure would be the first statewide prohibition on out-of-state contributions to ballot question campaigns.

“Today's ruling is a big win for free speech. Government cannot ban speech because it dislikes who is speaking. South Dakotans have the right to hear messages from all Americans,” said legal director Allen Dickerson of the Institute for Free Speech, a Virginia-based organization that along with former South Dakota Attorney General Marty Jackley represented a coalition of trade associations, an advocacy group and a former South Dakota resident now living in Florida in challenging the law.

The South Dakota Newspaper Association, South Dakota Retailers Association, South Dakota Broadcasters Association and Americans for Prosperity were among those challenging the measure. The law also was challenged by Aberdeen political blogger Cory Heidelberger and his ballot-question committee, SD Voice. The ruling applies to both cases.

Executive director David Bordewyk of the South Dakota Newspaper Association said his organization joined the lawsuit because of its concern that the measure violated the First Amendment.

“It's not something we took lightly, especially considering that 56 percent of the voters in last year's election approved” the measure, Bordewyk said in a statement to the Yankton Daily Press & Dakotan. He said the judge “made it clear today that (the measure) is not constitutional.”

The state can appeal. Timothy Bormann, chief of staff for Republican South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg, who was elected in November, said in an email to The Associated Press on Thursday that the attorney general's office is reading the decision and “examining the avenues available to our office that best coincide with protecting the best interests of the people and the State of South Dakota.”

## **A Sioux Falls recycler flourishes amid struggling industry**

**By PATRICK ANDERSON Sioux Falls Argus Leader**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Jake Anderson kept the house he owned in the Twin Cities when he moved away to start his own recycling business.

After working in the industry for a Minnesota-based company, Anderson bought a small recycling company in Sioux Falls that had fallen on hard times and moved into a triplex in the center of the city.

He took on a shop with eight employees, uncertain of the future and hoping to make a mark.

Millennium Recycling Inc. is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, having become a local leader in an industry filled with fluctuation and uncertainty, the Sioux Falls Argus Leader reported.

As recycling processors across the United States face ongoing problems in the global market, Millennium has built a solid foundation thanks to Anderson's prudence, the company's willingness to embrace new technology and lessons learned during the lean years.

“Too often, people have too short of a memory in this industry,” the 47-year-old said.

The Sioux Falls-based recycler — known as a materials recovery facility in the industry — is still pulled by those market forces. The 20-year mark represents what Anderson called a “down time” in a business that ebbs and flows with market demands for papers, plastics and metals. But he and other company leaders have weathered worse storms and have built a business model designed for long-term success.

Millennium is using 2019 to instead celebrate its success and growth over the years, including being an innovator in South Dakota's recycling industry, being the first in the state to recycle consumer electronics, going on a trade mission to China with former Gov. Dennis Daugaard and launching the nonprofit Ecoma-

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niacs, which provides recycling services to summer events.

Anderson was born into an entrepreneurial family. His father owned a liquor store, health clubs and other businesses during his childhood in Owatonna, Minnesota.

After working for years for a recycling company in the Minneapolis area, he was interested when he heard there was a small processor in Sioux Falls that was looking at either closing up shop or selling to a new owner.

He was 27 when bought Python's Recycling in 1999.

He came with experience and expertise in a larger market, bringing ideas that were new to Sioux Falls. A lot of the work he did in his first year was focused on getting to know the community, its people and businesses.

Millennium's growth over the years is a testament to those relationships, Anderson said.

"We spent the first — probably — year trying to refine the operation," he said.

The company's northern Sioux Falls facility handles 3,500 to 4,000 tons per month compared to 150 to 300 tons per month it handled when Anderson bought the company. It employs about 30 people, not including the dozen staff members at Secure Enterprise Asset Management, a spin-off company that specializes in electronics recycling.

Relationships with the people and companies in the Sioux Falls area remain a strong focus for Millennium, which doesn't do residential hauling but still actively tries to educate the community about up-to-date best practices in recycling, Millennium President Shannon Dwire said.

Dwire worked for Python before Anderson bought the company and has been with Millennium ever since. Connection to the community has been a common thread since Anderson bought the company she said.

"We always have some level of support out there," she said.

Millennium's single-stream recyclable sorter runs like a backbone through its plant. It's also a backbone of the business itself.

The decision to buy and install the sorter was a defining moment for Millennium.

The equipment changed the company as much as it changed how hundreds of thousands of people in the Sioux Falls area recycle, allowing them to combine papers, plastics, glass bottles and cans in one bag and not worry about the logistics of separating everything out again.

That all happens at Millennium now. Recyclables running through the sorter are separated and belted off to different parts of the plant, where they are bailed and packed with like materials. Only about 3.5% of the stuff that comes in can't be recycled.

Anderson spent years researching the game-changing technology before deciding to invest, but was pressured by conversations with Waste Management, which had already altered the industry landscape by allowing consumers to mix recyclables.

But the national chain didn't have the technology in smaller secondary markets such as Sioux Falls to sort recyclables and was losing money by having an ancillary operation in the city.

But it was clear the industry was going in a new direction. If Millennium didn't move to single-stream sorting, there was a chance another company would one day take its place, Anderson said.

"It was the equivalent of an all-in play for us," he said. "We spent a painstaking amount of time just trying to pencil this out."

Millennium bought and went through the first phase of installing the technology in 2007.

And then the Great Recession hit.

The fallout of the economic downturn left Millennium floundering with an oversupply of recycled materials and minimal demand from buyers such as the paper mills who rely on processors for product.

Millennium had gone into debt as much as the bank would allow, and Anderson started meeting with attorneys about bankruptcy.

And then, at the wire, business started to rebound, Anderson said.

"All of a sudden, we started to get orders," he said.

It took about two years for Millennium to catch up to where it was before the recession, but company

leadership left the experience having learned a number of important lessons.

Perhaps the most important was clarity on the realities of the industry. There will be good times and bad times, and Millennium doesn't take anything for granted.

"You use your good markets wisely," Dwire said. "Even when things are running well, you look for efficiencies."

Global market forces have continued to squeeze the industry, starting with tighter limits China's government approved in 2013 for imported recycled material.

China sparked incredible growth in the U.S. recycling industry in 1999 when it opened massive paper mills subsidized by the government. The buoying of the industry was felt all the way in Sioux Falls, where Anderson was just starting to build Millennium into a bigger, more commercially-focused recycler.

China dominated the market, becoming the biggest buyer of America's recycled goods. While recycling processors benefited from Chinese demand, paper mills in the U.S. started a process of acquisition and consolidation to compete, eventually closing plants across the country, especially in the coastal states.

The, with domestic demand for recycled goods weakened, China started limiting waste imports. China's new policy, dubbed "Green Fence," was a solution to the country's increasing problems with pollution, but Anderson believes the restrictions on imported recycling products were painting with too big of a brush.

Then, in 2018, China upped the ante with an even stricter policy called "National Sword." It was basically a list of outright bans on materials, including imported recyclables.

But the loss of North American paper mills during the boom years of Chinese demand has now left the entire industry scrambling for solutions, Anderson said. That includes Chinese investment in some of the closed U.S.-based paper mills.

Millennium, with its strong ties to the region, isn't directly affected by China's policies. About 90% of its recycled material is sold to buyers in the Midwest.

None of the current stress caused by the global market compares to what Millennium has already survived.

"Recycling is not going to go away," Anderson said. "It's going to do what it's always done. It's going to evolve."

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

## For schools, name change or logo tweak is about competing

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Three major South Dakota schools have moved recently to rebrand themselves, illustrating a trend that experts say show how schools are realizing the importance of strong branding in a competitive marketplace.

The Sioux Falls Argus Leader reports on the moves by the Sioux Falls Catholic School system, Dakota State University and University Center in Sioux Falls. They ranged from the Catholic School System renaming itself Bishop O'Gorman to the simple logo and mascot colors tweak by Dakota State.

The moves came after two other major schools shifted their brands in the past decade. That included Augustana College becoming Augustana University in 2015, and South Dakota State shifting its Jackrabbits logo to be more fierce as it moved up to Division I.

Mike Lockrem, communications and marketing director at South Dakota State, had a hand in the Jackrabbit redesign. He said he's seen a shift in the last 10 years with schools realizing the importance of brand names.

"If you look nationally, a lot of universities are studying it more and more," he said. "But the challenges lie in reaching out to the stakeholders. It's important impact to how we recruit students and how we reach key individuals."

South Dakota State tested the new look carefully before making it final, he said.

"You're always evaluating where you are with your brand, and looking at the possibilities that are out there and what strengthens your product and your university," Lockrem said.

He said a deep rebranding is sometimes aimed at solving some kind of problem — perhaps confusion

with another institution's logo, or reshaping the public's perception. But it's often about enrollment.

"That's always a top-of-the-mind conversation because you're selling your product - the education - to your students," he said. "But you also have an industry, and state leaders, that play into it, those people who are very involved in your college."

Enrollment is why University Center is repositioning itself as a local community college, with aid from the University of South Dakota. USD spokeswoman Hailie Warren said the center's enrollment has been declining in large part because of lack of a strong identity, structure and mission.

Warren said University Center's research suggested it could be more successful if it repositioned as a workforce college — hoping to attract some of the Sioux Falls high school graduates who don't enroll in college soon after graduation, or working adults who have no post-secondary degree.

The Sioux Falls Catholic School system decided to change its name to Bishop O'Gorman Catholic Schools to move away from a city-specific name that might have led some people to believe it wasn't an option for them. The system serves 2,600 people across 20 communities.

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

## Police arrest 2 for vandalizing cars in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police have arrested two suspects for allegedly causing thousands of dollars in damage to cars in Sioux Falls.

Authorities say the suspects, 19 and 20 years old, broke several car mirrors Wednesday morning. Police say 16 owners have reported damage to their vehicles so far. The estimated damage amount totals more than \$5,000.

One suspect allegedly used a wooden dowel to break the mirrors while the other drove.

Authorities say three teenage girls were in the back seat during the vandalism but were not charged.

KSFY-TV reports the two suspects face charges of intentional damage to property. Authorities say the amount of damage makes the crime a felony.

Information from: KSFY-TV, <http://www.ksfy.com>

## Opponents fight permits for mining proposal near Rapid City

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Pennington County planners have awarded permits for a limestone mining proposal south of Rapid City, but opponents are still fighting.

Croell Inc. wants to expand the Perli Pit Quarry, but some area residents worry about increased truck traffic, potential releases of harmful chemicals and gases, and harm to the area scenery. The quarry is off Highway 16, the main tourist route to Mount Rushmore National Memorial.

"This is a really big operation that is not appropriate at this location," Sylvia Cox said during a Wednesday meeting of the county planning commission that lasted five hours.

The Perli Pit Quarry has been mined periodically by other entities since 1966. Nearly 34 acres already are disturbed at the site. Croell wants to mine roughly another 70 acres during the next several decades and has been trying to obtain permits since 2015. A lawsuit over the legality of mining ordinances that the county amended last year is under consideration by the state Supreme Court.

Representatives of Croell and the state Transportation Department said Wednesday they're working together on plans to mitigate traffic problems. The company also said state regulators have already considered environmental impacts, and that passing motorists won't see the mine.

Croell executives "no more want harm to come to the Black Hills or the community or to any citizen or any visitor than anyone else in this room," company attorney Tom Brady said.

County planners awarded three permits with several conditions attached, but one automatically goes to the County Commission for final approval, and opponents appealed the other two to the commission, the Rapid City Journal reported.

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

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.

## Your Uber has arrived, on Wall Street

By **CATHY BUSSEWITZ** and **MICHAEL LIEDTKE** AP Business Writers

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Uber's next stop is the stock market, where it hopes to pick up more investors willing to bet on a ride-hailing market brimming with potential and conspicuously lacking in profits.

The world's largest ride-hailing service reached a major milestone Thursday when Uber priced its long-awaited initial public offering at \$45 price per share to set the stage for its stock to begin trading Friday morning.

The IPO came in at the lower end of Uber's targeted price range of \$44 to \$50 per share. The caution may have been driven by escalating doubts about the ability of ride-hailing services to make money since Uber's main rival, Lyft, went public six weeks ago.

Even at the tamped-down price, Uber now has a market value of \$82 billion — five times more than Lyft's.

No matter how Uber's stock swings Friday, the IPO has to be considered a triumph for the company most closely associated with an industry that has changed the way millions of people get around. That while also transforming the way millions of more people earn a living in the gig economy.

The IPO raised another \$8.1 billion for Uber as it tries to fend off Lyft in the U.S. and help cover the cost of giving rides to passengers at unprofitable prices. The San Francisco company already has lost about \$9 billion since its inception and acknowledges it could still be years before it turns a profit.

That sobering reality is one reason that Uber fell well short of reaching the \$120 billion market value that many observers believed its IPO might attain.

Another factor working against Uber is the cold shoulder investors have been giving Lyft's stock after an initial run-up. Lyft's shares closed Thursday 23% below its April IPO price of \$72.

Uber "clearly learned from its 'little brother' Lyft, and the experience it has gone through," Wedbush Securities analysts Ygal Arounian and Daniel Ives wrote late Thursday.

The jitters about an intensifying U.S. trade war with China also have roiled the stock market this week.

Despite all that, Uber's IPO is the biggest since Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group debuted with a value of \$167.6 billion in 2014.

"For the market to give you the value, you've either got to have a lot of profits or potential for huge growth," said Sam Abuelsamid, principal analyst at Navigant Research.

Uber boasts growth galore. Its revenue last year surged 42% to \$11.3 billion while its cars completed 5.2 billion trips around the world either giving rides to 91 million passengers or delivering food.

Uber might be even more popular if not for a series of revelations about unsavory behavior that sullied its image and resulted in the ouster of its co-founder, Travis Kalanick, as CEO nearly two years ago.

The self-inflicted wounds included complaints about rampant internal sexual harassment, accusations that it stole self-driving car technology, and a cover-up of a computer break-in that stole personal information about its passengers. What's more, some Uber drivers have been accused of assaulting passengers, and one of its self-driving test vehicles struck and killed a pedestrian in Arizona last year while a backup driver was behind the wheel.

Uber hired Dara Khosrowshahi as CEO to replace Kalanick and clean up the mess, something that analysts say has been able to do to some extent, although Lyft seized upon the scandals to gain market share.

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Kalanick remains on Uber's board, although he isn't expected to be on the podium to help ring the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange to herald the company's debut Friday. Instead, he will be left standing on the sidelines while the spotlight shines on other Uber executives, although Kalanick can still savor his newfound wealth. At \$45 per share, his stake in Uber will be worth \$5.3 billion. Hundreds, if not thousands, of other Uber employees are expected to become millionaires in the IPO.

Meanwhile, scores of Uber drivers say they have been mistreated by the company as they work long hours and wear out their cars picking up passengers as they struggle to make ends meet. On Wednesday, some of them participated in strikes across the United States to highlight their unhappiness ahead of Uber's IPO but barely caused a ripple. A similar strike was organized ahead of Lyft's IPO to the same effect.

In its latest attempt to make amends, Uber disclosed Thursday that it reached a settlement with tens of thousands of drivers who alleged they had been improperly classified as contractors. The company said the settlement covering most of the 60,000 drivers making claims will cost \$146 million to \$170 million.

Now, Uber will focus on winning over Wall Street.

Uber may be able to avoid Lyft's post-IPO stock decline because it has a different story to tell than just the potential for growth in ride-hailing, says Alejandro Ortiz, principal analyst with SharesPost. Uber, he said, has plans to be more than a ride-hailing company by being all things transportation to users of its app, offering deliveries, scooters, bicycles and links to other modes of transportation including public mass transit systems.

"Whether or not that pitch will work kind of remains to be seen. It's nearly impossible to tell now," he said. "Obviously the risk to the company now is they have a lot more shareholders that they have to convince."

Bussewitz reported from New York.

## Scrap 'Obamacare'? Maybe not all, says Trump administration

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Scrap "Obamacare"? Well, maybe not all of it.

The Trump administration is arguing in court that the entire Affordable Care Act should be struck down as unconstitutional. But at the same time, Justice Department lawyers recently suggested that federal judges could salvage its anti-fraud provisions, raising questions about keeping other parts as well.

Serving up more mixed messages, President Donald Trump last week floated to a Democratic lawmaker that he'd like to revive her legislation shoring up the health law's insurance markets. "I was kind of stunned, but I said, look, I am willing to work with anyone," recalled the lawmaker, Sen. Patty Murray of Washington.

Following questions from The Associated Press, the White House released a statement: "Obamacare remains unconstitutional but people deserve relief from all of its empty promises, so the Trump Administration is working within current law to reduce fraud and lower cost for all Americans."

But analyst Timothy Jost says the administration may be undercutting its own legal argument that the 9-year-old statute, President Barack Obama's health care law, is so flawed it must be overturned entirely.

"Somehow they want their cake and to eat it, too," said Jost, a retired law professor who supports the health law's goal of expanding coverage. He called the Justice Department's latest filing with the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals a "mashed together combination" seemingly written by different administration factions, one seeking a total rollback and the other anxious to preserve useful provisions.

Case in point: Drawing on language used by conservative Supreme Court justices, administration lawyers likened various health law provisions to "ornaments" that must come down if a Christmas tree falls. But they also suggested the courts might want to keep the ACA's anti-fraud provisions, which have made it easier for prosecutors to win Medicare cases involving kickbacks, increased screening of providers who bill public programs, and made other significant changes.

The New Orleans-based appeals court is hearing the lawsuit after a lower court judge sided with the plaintiffs — Texas and other GOP-led states. The district judge ruled the entire law unconstitutional because Congress repealed its unpopular fines for being uninsured. Democratic states appealed, saying

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that's a stretch.

Originally, the Trump administration had argued that only certain provisions — like protections with people with preexisting medical conditions — should be invalidated. Then, following a White House directive, the Justice Department said the whole law must go. Now the administration seems to be further hedging its position.

"The relief awarded should be limited only to those provisions that actually injure the individual plaintiffs," the Justice Department wrote last week in its brief. "For example, the ACA amended several criminal statutes used to prosecute individuals who defraud our health care system." A judge can "determine the precise scope of the judgment" later, added the administration.

There's no conceivable reason to do away with the health law's anti-fraud provisions, said Joan Krause, a health care fraud expert who teaches at the University of North Carolina law school in Chapel Hill.

"It would get more complicated, and more effort would be required for the government to put together a case," she said. "And it opens a huge door for defendants."

Similar arguments can be made for other parts of the health law, said Jost. That includes a Medicare innovation center the Trump administration is using to drive changes in drug prices, Medicaid expansion that's helping AIDS patients and people caught up in the opioid epidemic, and a regulatory framework for lower-priced versions of advanced biologic drugs.

"These provisions are essential for Trump administration initiatives," said Jost. But the Justice Department "seems to argue that these provisions, along with the rest of the ACA, should somehow be invalidated, but not prevented from operating."

For a brief time last week, even Trump himself seemed to be having second thoughts about Obamacare. During a White House meeting with Democratic leaders on a potential infrastructure deal, he pitched the idea of reviving bipartisan legislation that would help stabilize the ACA's insurance markets. HealthCare.gov could be wiped away if the administration prevails in the court case.

Trump "just threw out there that he didn't understand why our bill got sidetracked," said Murray, a Democratic senator from Washington state and co-author of a proposal that went nowhere last year after the White House balked.

"His intent was, 'Why can't we get this done?'" added Murray.

For a few hours, health care staffers on Capitol Hill wondered if a new opening was in the works. Then a prominent Republican senator released a statement that essentially shut down the speculation.

Reflecting on her experience, Murray said, "it was very incoherent."

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Associated Press writer Catherine Lucey contributed to this report.

## South Africa's ruling ANC cruising to a win in national vote

By ANDREW MELDRUM Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — The ruling African National Congress is coasting to a comfortable lead in South Africa's presidential and parliamentary elections with 83% of the vote counted, but the tally shows the party getting less support than five years ago amid deep anger over government corruption.

The ANC, led by President Cyril Ramaphosa, had 57% of Wednesday's vote, according to results announced Friday by the electoral commission. That was a dip from the 62% of the total vote it won in 2014.

The ANC's lead, despite its reduced margin, is seen by many as a mandate for Ramaphosa to keep trying to clean up corruption in the party that once inspired the country under Nelson Mandela but has seen a recent leader, former President Jacob Zuma, resign last year amid numerous corruption allegations.

"It's now up to Ramaphosa to clean up the ANC, to stop the looting in government," said commentator Barney Mthombathi. "He can argue that the ANC lost its share of the vote because of the rampant corruption under the previous Zuma leadership."

In the campaign, Ramaphosa acknowledged the problem of graft in the party, which has governed South

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Africa since the end of apartheid 25 years ago. He vowed not to have any corrupt members in his Cabinet. "After he voted in Soweto, Ramaphosa pledged to root out corruption," said Mthombothi. "He will have to deliver decisively on those words."

On Friday, 35 smaller parties jointly lodged a complaint with South Africa's electoral commission, complaining of irregularities and calling for an audit of the vote and a possible rerun of the election.

The main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance received 21% of the vote so far, slightly less than what it got in the last election.

"Even though we've lost a few votes, we've held the center of South Africa politics," Mmusi Maimane, the DA party leader, said Friday at the electoral commission's results center in Pretoria. "We will work to regain those votes because we are the party for all South Africans of whatever race."

The populist, left-wing Economic Freedom Fighters increased its share of the vote from 6% to 10%.

Voter apathy also has been a factor, as turnout dipped to 65% from 74% in 2014.

In South Africa, the president and parliament are not elected directly. The number of votes won by each party determines how many representatives are sent to the national 400-seat legislature. The president of the country is the leader of the party that gets the most votes.

Results from South Africa's more remote areas are expected to trickle in, and electoral officials say final results may not be announced until Saturday.

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## Crisis point? High stakes in Trump's showdown with Congress

By LISA MASCARO and MARK SHERMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats call it a "constitutional crisis." But is it?

Stunned by the extent of the White House's blanket refusal to comply with oversight by Congress, the Democrats warn that the Trump administration is shattering historic norms and testing the nation's system of checks and balances in new and alarming ways.

It's not just the House's fight with the Justice Department over the release of special counsel Robert Mueller's report. The standoff involves President Donald Trump's unwillingness to engage with dozens of Capitol Hill probes of his tax returns, potential business conflicts and the running of the administration — from security clearances for his family to actions he's taken on his own on immigration.

It's a confrontation that's only expected to deepen now that Mueller's work is finished and the investigation focus shifts to Capitol Hill.

Trump derides the probes as "presidential harassment." Republican Senate leader Mitch McConnell tries to declare it all "case closed." But Democrats warn that without the legislative branch staying on the case, keeping watch, any executive becomes more like a "monarchy" — or "tyranny" — that doesn't have to answer to the representatives of all Americans.

"Will the administration violate the Constitution and not abide by the requests of Congress in its legitimate oversight responsibilities?" asked House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on Thursday.

"Every day they are advertising their obstruction of justice," she said. "We're not talking about isolated situations. We're talking about a cumulative effect of obstruction the administration is engaged in, and the president has warned that he is not going to honor any subpoenas from Congress."

Struggles between the executive and legislative branches are nothing new. The House voted to hold George W. Bush administration officials in contempt over an investigation into the firing of U.S. attorneys. Barack Obama's attorney general, Eric Holder, was found in contempt over an undercover gun-running operation.

But those were specific cases. The difference, say historians and legal scholars, is that Trump has announced he will essentially ignore all oversight requests from Congress.

Congressional experts say a big risk is setting a precedent that goes way beyond Trump. What happens, for example, if an administration stonewalls Congress on information it wants for an investigation of air or

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water quality rules — or anything else? Can the White House just say no?

"We have a big problem," said Julian E. Zelizer, a Princeton University professor who studies history and public affairs.

Trump's new stance, at the end of the Mueller investigation, comes as the president faces a divided Congress for the first time. Democrats talked of being a check on him when they took control of the House in January, upsetting the calm he enjoyed during two years of friendlier relations with Republicans in charge of both chambers.

Zelizer said with Trump "aggressively flexing power to shut down oversight capacity of another branch," it's "unclear who and how this is resolved, especially with Senate Republicans standing by their man."

Asked if this is a constitutional crisis, Zelizer said, "I think we are looking at one."

Jack Balkin, a Yale Law School expert on the Constitution, won't go that far, but he said the Democrats are describing a real problem.

"There is a breakdown in constitutional norms that keep the republic going," Balkin said. "In an ordinary world, you just have negotiations over subpoenas. It happens all the time. Congress and the president work it out."

After talks broke down this week between the House Judiciary Committee and the Justice Department over the panel's subpoena for the full Mueller report, the committee voted to recommend that Attorney General William Barr be held in contempt of Congress.

Lawmakers want to see a less fully redacted version of the publicly released 448-page document on Russian interference in the 2016 election. They say they need to know what's in the hundreds of fully or partly blacked-out pages that were publicly released to better understand how to protect elections from future interference. Barr says he tried to accommodate the request as much as he could before asking Trump to invoke executive privilege to enable him to block it.

While there's no direct oversight written in the Constitution, the House historical website says it's implied in Article 1 that gives Congress "all legislative powers," with investigations intended as a way to seek necessary information for that purpose.

Underscoring that, the Supreme Court ruled nearly 100 years ago that "the power of inquiry -- with process to enforce it -- is an essential and appropriate auxiliary to the legislative function."

Saikrishna Prakash, an expert on presidential power at the University of Virginia, said he doubts that Trump will carry out a total refusal to participate in congressional oversight.

"If you want to have an oversight hearing on EPA and a clean water rule, they're probably going to send someone," Prakash said. "The president doesn't care about that. He cares about the Russia investigation and obstruction, and he cares about an investigation into his personal finances."

The president's advisers say part of Trump's strategy is to slow-walk his legal battles with Congress in court, seeing an advantage for the 2020 campaign. His public arguments are more political than legal: He portrays the Democrats as "unhinged."

Democrats, though, believe the public is on their side in pursuing oversight of Trump.

Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York, chairman of the Judiciary Committee, said the White House is "stonewalling the American public from all information and this cannot be. We cannot have a government where all the information is in the executive branch."

He said, "It's an attack on the essence of our democracy and we must oppose this."

## 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 HIKES TARIFFS ON CHINESE GOODS

Trump's latest tariff hike on Chinese goods took effect Friday and Beijing said it would retaliate, escalating a battle over China's technology ambitions and other trade tensions.

### 2. CRISIS POINT? HIGH STAKES IN TRUMP'S SHOWDOWN WITH CONGRESS

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Democrats warn that the Trump administration is shattering historic norms and testing the nation's system of checks and balances in new and alarming ways.

### 3. WHO'S FINGERPRINTS ARE ON NORTH KOREA'S NEW MISSILE

Experts say North Korea's new missile bears a strong resemblance to something the Russian military has been selling abroad for years.

### 4. FEDERAL JUDGES FIND RETIREMENT OFFERS EASY WAY OUT OF PROBES

The fastest way for federal judges facing investigation by their peers to make the inquiry go away is to utter two words: "I quit."

### 5. STUDENT 'GEEK SQUADS ARE CROPPING UP IN SCHOOLS

Schools districts are leaning on youngsters to be part of the upkeep of the thousands of devices handed out in the classroom and return, gain valuable skills.

### 6. WHITE HOUSE SENDING MIXED MESSAGES ON OBAMACARE

The White House says "Obamacare remains unconstitutional but people deserve relief from all of its empty promises, so the Trump Administration is working within current law to reduce fraud and lower cost for all Americans."

### 7. WHAT ISSUE REMAINS CENTRAL IN EUROPEAN ELECTION

No issue rings louder in Hungary than migration as Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his right-wing Fidesz party campaign almost exclusively on anti-immigration policies.

### 8. SUSPECTS IN COLORADO SCHOOL SHOOTING DUE BACK IN COURT

Both suspects in the suburban Denver school shooting are due back in court as prosecutors file charges in the attack that killed a student and wounded eight others.

### 9. WHY FACEBOOK FAILS TO FIX ITSELF

It's complicated, with reasons that include Facebook's size, its business model and technical limitations, not to mention years of unchecked growth. Oh, and the element of human nature.

### 10. SMELLY ALGAE INVASION THREATENS MEXICO BEACHES

Tourists looking for sun and sand in Mexican resorts have been disgusted by foul-smelling mounds of sargassum — a seaweed-like algae — piling up on beaches and turning turquoise waters brown.

## Trump faces mounting foreign policy challenges around world

By CATHERINE LUCEY and ROBERT BURNS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — New North Korea missile tests . A trade standoff with China. Fresh nuclear tensions with Iran.

President Donald Trump's foreign policy challenges are mounting around the world, showing the limits of his self-touted ability to make a deal and perhaps the difficulty of focusing primarily on domestic concerns for his "America first" administration.

They're also forcing him into some contorted positions, for example, backing regime change in Venezuela without any displays of force and saying he's open to talks with Iran while dispatching an aircraft carrier and bombers to the Middle East.

Staring down high-stakes diplomacy around the world, Trump says his efforts are working.

"We've made a decisive break from the failed foreign policy establishment that sacrificed our sovereignty, surrendered our jobs and tied us down to endless foreign wars," he told supporters at a rally in Florida. "In everything we do, we are now putting America first."

Still, Trump has plenty of unfinished business. Since taking office, he has specialized in publicly hectoring friendly partners, embracing foes and resisting too much advice. Critics have labeled him an unreliable force, while allies say he has followed through on a promise to disrupt foreign policy norms.

Trump inherited some of his foreign policy problems, such as North Korea, Syria and Afghanistan, but has yet to solve them. And his hands-on approach to North Korea, holding the first meetings between a U.S. president and that country's leader, has not yielded a deal to curtail North Korea's nuclear missile program.

On other fronts, Trump has turned up the heat. His trade clash with China remains unresolved as he

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brandishes additional tariff hikes. With Iran, Trump pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear deal that the Obama administration had negotiated along with five other world powers, and he recently increased the pressure, designating Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps a terrorist organization and deploying military forces to the Persian Gulf. He said Thursday that he would like to get a call from Iran's leaders to negotiate.

Cliff Kupchan, chairman of Eurasia Group, described China and Iran as the two most pressing issues for the U.S. But he noted that Trump's moves are not unexpected.

"With China and Iran we're seeing a strategically very predictable president play out his hand," he said. Still, he said that handling the range of challenges proves that the administration can manage to "walk and chew gum at the same time."

Speaking to reporters on Thursday, Trump rattled through some of the top concerns. He said the U.S. was looking "very seriously right now" at North Korea's recent military tests. On trade talks with China, he said the U.S. would be fine either way, but said Chinese President Xi Jinping wrote him a "beautiful" letter. And amid a rising clash with Iran, he declared, "we have information that you don't want to know about."

Other pressing issues include the economic and political crisis in Venezuela. The United States and other nations have recognized opposition leader Juan Guaidó as interim president, but a recent effort to encourage an uprising against President Nicolás Maduro failed. Also on the horizon is a blueprint for Middle East peace from Trump senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner, as well as the possibility of peace talks with the Taliban to end the 18-year war in Afghanistan.

Trump, who ran on limiting U.S. engagement abroad, has stressed his interest in domestic policymaking. Michael O'Hanlon, a defense and foreign policy analyst at the Brookings Institution, said a unifying theme of Trump's approach to foreign policy is his unwillingness to commit to more wars.

"I think so far we continue to see reluctance on the part of Trump to get involved in new military operations -- which is mostly a good instinct - but a willingness to brandish nonmilitary instruments" of national power, as well as assertive shows of military force with no serious intention of taking pre-emptive military action, O'Hanlon said in an email Thursday.

Every administration faces periods of intensified - and often unforeseen - foreign policy problems that can divert its attention, resources and political capital away from domestic issues, such as jobs and the economy, that are more central to a president's re-election hopes. The 9/11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon happened in President George W. Bush's first year in office, and his subsequent decisions to invade Afghanistan in October 2001 and Iraq in March 2003 consumed his administration for years.

Trump also stressed that he was calling the shots. Asked if he lines up with hawkish national security adviser John Bolton, he said "I'm the one who tempers him, which is OK," and added: "Ultimately I make the decision."

That lines up with a central emphasis of Trump's foreign policy, which is that he always has the final word. His advisers have shifted during his term, and he is now on his second secretary of state and third national security adviser. On Thursday, the White House said Trump will nominate Patrick Shanahan to succeed Jim Mattis as defense secretary, ending an audition period for Shanahan that began in January.

In a sign that Shanahan remains focused on Trump's top security issue - building a wall on the U.S.-Mexican border - Shanahan is scheduled to travel to the border on Saturday, even as he juggles the Iran, Venezuela and North Korea problems.

## US hikes tariffs on Chinese goods, Beijing vows retaliation

By **JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer**

BEIJING (AP) — President Donald Trump's latest tariff hike on Chinese goods took effect Friday and Beijing said it would retaliate, escalating a battle over China's technology ambitions and other trade tensions.

The Trump administration raised duties on \$200 billion of Chinese imports to 25% from 10%. China's Commerce Ministry said it would impose "necessary countermeasures" but gave no details.

The increase went ahead even after American and Chinese negotiators began more talks in Washington

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aimed at ending a dispute that has disrupted billions of dollars in trade and shaken global financial markets. "The risk of a complete breakdown in trade talks has certainly increased," said Michael Taylor of Moody's Investors Service in a report.

American officials accuse Beijing of backtracking on commitments made in earlier rounds of negotiations.

The talks were due to resume Friday after wrapping up Thursday evening with no word on progress.

"China deeply regrets that it will have to take necessary countermeasures," said a Commerce Ministry statement.

Shares in Asia were mixed Friday amid renewed investor jitters that global growth might suffer in the battle between the two biggest economies and international traders.

Business groups appealed for a settlement that will resolve chronic complaints about market barriers, subsidies and a regulatory system they say is rigged against foreign companies.

Companies disagree with tariff hikes but "are supportive of the idea in the short term if it helps us get to a strong, enforceable, long-term agreement that addresses structural issues," said Greg Gilligan, the deputy chairman of the American Chamber of Commerce in China.

The latest increase extends 25% duties to a total of \$250 billion of Chinese imports. Trump said Sunday he might expand penalties to all Chinese goods shipped to the United States.

Beijing retaliated for previous tariff hikes by raising duties on \$110 billion of American imports. But regulators are running out of U.S. goods for penalties due to the lopsided trade balance.

Chinese officials have targeted operations of American companies in China by slowing customs clearance for them and stepping up regulatory scrutiny that can hamper operations.

The latest U.S. increase might hit American consumers harder, said Jake Parker, vice president of the U.S.-China Business Council, an industry group. He said the earlier 10 percent increase was absorbed by companies and offset by a weakening of the Chinese currency's exchange rate.

A 25 percent hike "needs to be passed on to the consumer," said Parker. "It is just too big to dilute with those other factors."

Despite the public acrimony, local Chinese officials who want to attract American investment have tried to reassure companies there is "minimal retaliation," said Parker.

"We've actually seen an increased sensitivity to U.S. companies at the local level," he said.

The higher U.S. import taxes don't apply to Chinese goods shipped before Friday. By sea, shipments across the Pacific take about three weeks, which gives negotiators a few more days to reach a settlement before importers may have to pay the increased charges.

The negotiators met Thursday evening. Then, after briefing Trump on the negotiations, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin dined with the leader of the Chinese delegation, Vice Premier Liu He.

Liu, speaking to Chinese state TV on his arrival in Washington, said he "came with sincerity." He appealed to Washington to avoid more tariff hikes, saying they are "not a solution" and would harm the world.

"We should not hurt innocent people," Liu told CCTV.

At the White House, Trump said he received "a beautiful letter" from Chinese President Xi Jinping and would "probably speak to him by phone."

The two countries are sparring over U.S. allegations Beijing steals technology and pressures companies to hand over trade secrets in a campaign to turn Chinese companies into world leaders in robotics, electric cars and other advanced industries.

This week's 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 the backsliding became more apparent in exchanges over the weekend. They wouldn't identify the specific issues involved.

A sticking point is U.S. insistence on an enforcement mechanism with penalties to ensure Beijing lives up to its commitments. American officials say China has repeatedly broken past promises.

China wants tariffs lifted as soon as an agreement is reached, while U.S. officials want to keep them as

leverage to ensure compliance.

"A real enforcement mechanism is critical," said the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai in a statement.

Also Thursday, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau urged Trump in a phone call to press China to release two Canadians who have been held for five months.

The men were detained in apparent retaliation after Canada arrested an executive of Chinese tech giant Huawei on U.S. charges of bank fraud.

AP videojournalist Dake Kang contributed.

## Why does Facebook fail to fix itself? It's partly humans

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — The question comes up over and over, with extremist material, hate speech, election meddling and privacy invasions. Why can't Facebook just fix it?

It's complicated, with reasons that include Facebook's size, its business model and technical limitations, not to mention years of unchecked growth. Oh, and the element of human nature.

The latest revelation: Facebook is inadvertently creating celebratory videos using extremist content and auto-generating business pages for the likes of ISIS and Al Qaida. The company says it is working on solutions and the problems are getting better. That is true, but critics say better is not good enough when mass shootings are being live-streamed and online mobs are spreading rumors that lead to deadly violence.

"They have been frustratingly slow in dealing with everything from child sexual abuse to terrorism, white supremacy, bullying, nonconsensual porn" and things like allowing advertisers to target categories such as "Jew hater," simply because some users had listed the term as an "interest," said Hany Farid, a digital forensics expert at the University of California, Berkeley.

As new problems crop up, Facebook's formula has been to apologize and promise to make changes, sometimes also noting that it did not anticipate how malicious actors could so readily misuse its platform. More recently, the company has also emphasized just how much it is improving, both technically in its use of artificial intelligence to detect problems and in terms of focusing more money and effort on fixing them.

"After making heavy investments, we are detecting and removing terrorism content at a far higher success rate than even two years go," Facebook said Wednesday in response to the revelations about the auto-generated pages. "We don't claim to find everything, and we remain vigilant in our efforts against terrorist groups around the world."

It has seen some success. In late 2016, CEO Mark Zuckerberg infamously dismissed as "pretty crazy" the idea that fake news on his service could have swayed the election. He later backtracked, and since then the company has reduced the amount of misinformation shared on its service, as measured by several independent studies.

Zuckerberg has also, by and large, avoided similar gaffes by conceding mistakes and delivering apologies to the public and to lawmakers.

But even as the company bats down one problem, others pop up. The reason for that might be baked into its DNA. And that's not just because its business model relies on as many people as possible using it as much as possible, leaving behind personal details that can then be targeted by advertisers.

"Almost everything Facebook has designed has been designed for good people. People who are nice to each other, who have birthdays to celebrate, who have new puppies and generally like to treat others well," said Siva Vaidhyanathan, director of the Center for Media and Citizenship at the University of Virginia. "Basically Facebook is made for a better species than ours. If it were made for golden retrievers, everything would be great."

But if just 1% of the 2.4 billion people on Facebook want to do terrible things to others, that's 24 million people.

"Every couple of weeks, we hear about Facebook knocking down troublesome pages, making promises

about hiring more people, building AI and so on," Vaidhyanathan said. "But at Facebook's scale, none of that will matter. We are basically stuck with all this garbage."

Chris Hughes, a co-founder of Facebook, called for a breakup of the social media giant in a Thursday op-ed. Vaidhyanathan also thinks strong government regulation could be the answer, such as laws that "limit companies' ability to suck up all our data and use it to target advertising."

"We really should be addressing the back end of Facebook," he said. "That's what you have to attack."

Associated Press Writer Desmond Butler in Washington contributed to this story.

## Suspects in Colorado school shooting due back in court

By P. SOLOMON BANDA and KATHLEEN FOODY Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Both suspects in a suburban Denver school shooting are due back in court Friday as prosecutors file charges in the attack that killed a student and wounded eight others.

The district attorney's office also is expected to decide whether the younger suspect will be charged as an adult in Tuesday's shooting.

Kendrick Castillo, the 18-year-old senior killed during the shooting, and two classmates at the STEM School Highlands Ranch have been credited with helping thwart the attack by charging at one of the shooters when he entered a classroom. Authorities have said an armed private security guard restrained the second shooter.

Authorities have identified the suspects as 18-year-old Devon Erickson and 16-year-old Maya McKinney, whose attorney has said uses male pronouns and the name Alec. They have been in jail since Tuesday on suspicion of murder and attempted murder and made their first court appearances Wednesday.

District attorney George Brauchler plans to file formal charges and decide whether to charge McKinney as an adult by Friday's hearings. Colorado law permits prosecutors to file adult charges of serious felonies against 16- and 17-year-olds without prior approval from a judge.

The two students allegedly walked into their school with handguns and opened fire in two classrooms. Investigators have offered no immediate motive and refused to discuss how the students obtained the weapons.

The Colorado attack unfolded nearly three weeks after neighboring Littleton marked the anniversary of the Columbine attack that killed 13 people. The two schools are separated by about 7 miles (11 kilometers) in adjacent communities south of Denver.

Friends remembered Castillo this week as funny, smart and modest and expressed no surprise that he protected his classmates. Castillo, a member of the school's robotics club who loved to tinker with his own projects, was set to graduate days after he was killed.

Details about the armed school security guard who subdued the second suspect also emerged this week. The man's employer, Boss High Level Protection, was contracted to guard the charter school that about 1,800 students attend.

The guard, whose name has not been released, fired his weapon inside the school during the response to the shooting, a law enforcement official with knowledge of the case told The Associated Press on Thursday. Two news organizations citing anonymous sources reported that authorities are investigating whether the guard mistakenly fired at a responding sheriff's deputy and may have wounded a student.

The law enforcement official spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to make information public. The official did not address whether anyone was hit by the security guard's firing.

An attorney for the guard declined to directly answer questions Thursday about the media reports but said his client helped prevent any further bloodshed at the school. The security guard is a former Marine and previously worked for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, attorney Robert Burk said.

"He ran there as quick as he could and took what I think is decisive action that helped save lives," Burk said.

## Experts see Russia fingerprints on North Korea's new missile

By ERIC TALMADGE Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The three new missiles North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has tested over the past week are eerily familiar to military experts: They look just like a controversial and widely copied missile the Russian military has deployed to Syria and has been actively trying to sell abroad for years.

Ending a pause in ballistic missile launches that began in late 2017, and alarming North Korea's neighbors, Kim personally supervised the launch of the first missile from the country's east coast on Saturday and two more from the west on Thursday. All splashed down in the Pacific.

The missiles were short-range and the launches do not mean Kim has decided to end his self-imposed moratorium on testing long-range missiles that could reach the United States mainland. They do indicate, however, that Kim is methodically expanding the battle readiness of his missile forces and that could have a major impact on the safety of American allies and U.S. forces in the region.

The missiles bear a strong resemblance to the Russian-designed Iskander, a short-range, nuclear-capable ballistic missile that has been in the Russian arsenal for more than a decade.

"There are Russian technology fingerprints all over it," said Marcus Schiller, a leading expert on North Korean missiles who is based in Germany.

He added that short of actually procuring the missiles from Russia, the North could have had key parts delivered from somewhere else, perhaps not directly from Russia, while making components such as the outer shell, or airframe, domestically.

The Iskander, or something like it, would be of particular interest to North Korea.

It's designed to fly at a flattened-out altitude of around 40 kilometers (25 miles) and to make in-flight guidance adjustments. Both capabilities exploit weaknesses in the U.S. and South Korean missile defenses that are now in place, primarily Patriot missile batteries and the THAAD anti-missile defense system.

The Iskander is also quicker to launch, and thus harder to destroy on the ground, because of its solid fuel engine and more accurate because of its advanced guidance system.

Despite claims by senior members of the Trump administration that the missiles aren't a threat to the United States, in a battle scenario they would likely be used to attack targets well behind the front-lines, such as the U.S. military bases in South Korea. There are roughly 28,000 U.S. troops stationed in South Korea and tens of thousands more family members and civilian Department of Defense employees.

The North first displayed a mock-up of an Iskander-like missile at a military parade in 2018. This week's launches mark its first known flight tests.

Michael Elleman, director of the Nonproliferation and Nuclear Policy Program at the International Institute for Strategic Studies, said further analysis of the missiles' performance will provide clues as to whether it was produced by Russia.

"If its flight path and accuracy were marginal or inconsistent with known Iskander trajectories and performance, then I think some form of local development with external technical assistance is more likely," he said. "The key here is that one cannot make a new system without undertaking certain development steps. I have seen no evidence of such activity."

Initial reports suggested at least one of the tests did involve an Iskander-like trajectory.

The Iskander missile system has been part of the Russian arsenal since 2006. The Iskander-M version used by the Russian military is more than 7 meters (yards) long, can weigh more than 4,000 kilograms (9,000 pounds) and has a range of about 400 to 500 kilometers (250 to 310 miles).

Russia first tested the Iskander in combat in 2008, against Georgia.

The Iskander missiles have long been a source of tension in Europe and were cited by President Donald Trump as a key reason behind his decision in February to break with the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty, which bans production, testing and deployment of land-based cruise and ballistic missiles with a range of 500 to 5,500 kilometers (310 to 3,410 miles).

Such missiles only take a few minutes to reach their targets, leaving no time for decision-makers and

raising the likelihood of a global nuclear conflict over a false launch warning. Moscow claims the Iskander-M's range is just below the operational limit and should not be considered a treaty violation.

From the start, Russia has seen the Iskander missile as a potential export.

To avoid running afoul of international non-proliferation restrictions, Russia produces a less-formidable version that has a reduced range and is designed to carry a smaller payload for sales abroad.

So far, it has sold that missile — called Iskander-E — to Algeria and Armenia. It has reportedly discussed exports to Iran, Libya, the United Arab Emirates, Malaysia and Saudi Arabia.

According to Siemon Wezeman, a senior researcher at the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, which tracks the global arms trade, Russia has used the Iskander missile in Syria. He said Syria has expressed interest in buying its own Iskanders, but Russia has declined.

Wezeman stressed Russia cannot legally sell Iskanders of any variety to North Korea.

A United Nations embargo in place since 2006, when the North conducted its first nuclear test, prohibits supplying the North with major arms, including ground-to-ground missiles, and U.N. sanctions prohibit the transfer of ballistic missiles and related technology.

If North Korea is producing an Iskander clone, it would not be the first country to do so.

South Korea has what many believe is its own Iskander-inspired missile — the Hyunmoo-2. China also has a similar missile, called the DF-12 or M20 that was also configured with exports in mind. One of its buyers, Qatar, put them on display at a parade in 2017.

Talmadge is the AP's Pyongyang bureau chief. Follow him on Twitter and Instagram: @EricTalmadge

## South Korea says North Korea's latest launches were missiles

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

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The U.S. and South Korea have determined that two projectiles launched by North Korea were short-range missiles, a South Korean military official said Friday, a day after the North's second launch in five days raised jitters about an unraveling detente between the Koreas and the future of U.S.-North Korea nuclear negotiations.

The weapons flew 420 kilometers (260 miles) and 270 kilometers (167 miles), respectively, on Thursday with an apogee of 45 to 50 kilometers (28 to 31 miles), according to Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff and Defense Ministry. The launches were seen as a possible North Korean warning toward Washington over deadlocked nuclear negotiations as the two sides continue to struggle with mismatched demands on sanctions relief and disarmament.

North Korea's state-run Korean Central News Agency said Friday that leader Kim Jong Un helped guide the weapons tests on Thursday and learned about "various long-range strike means," but the statement from the propaganda services didn't specify the type of missiles fired. The North's official Rodong Sinmun newspaper published photos showing Kim, equipped with binoculars and smiling widely, observing the firing of rocket artillery and what appeared to be a short-range ballistic missile fired from a launch vehicle.

South Korea's National Intelligence Service told lawmakers in a closed-door briefing on Friday that the missile is possibly part of a new North Korean weapons system, lawmaker Kim Min-ki said.

Experts say the missile was identical to the one that North Korea launched on Saturday, which appeared to be a solid-fuel missile modeled after Russia's Iskander short-range ballistic missile system. The Rodong Sinmun photos showed the North used a tracked launch vehicle on Thursday, unlike Saturday when it used a wheeled vehicle.

Some analysts say the new missile is potentially capable of delivering warheads and striking targets within the entire Korean Peninsula. It's unclear how closely the missile matches the capabilities of the Iskander, which can be maneuvered during flight to improve its chances of evading missile defense systems.

The South Korean military official said the South Korean and U.S. militaries are continuing to jointly analyze details from the launch. He didn't want to be named, citing office rules.

What was launched Thursday is a crucial detail, as North Korea is banned by the United Nations from

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testing ballistic missiles. A major missile test could result in more sanctions, and North Korea's so far unsuccessful push for large-scale sanctions relief is at the heart of the current diplomatic impasse with Washington.

South Korea's military said the two missiles were launched from the town of Kusong in North Pyongan province, where North Korea conducted its first successful flight tests of its Hwasong-12 intermediate-range missile and Hwasong-14 intercontinental ballistic missile, both in 2017.

Kusong also has 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.

The latest launches came as U.S. Special Representative for North Korea Stephen Biegun visited South Korea, and hours after the North described its tests on Saturday as a regular and defensive military exercise. North Korea also ridiculed South Korea for criticizing those launches.

Trump told reporters the weapons were smaller, short-range missiles, but said "Nobody's happy about it." He has met with Kim Jong Un at two summits but said Thursday at the White House that "I don't think they're ready to negotiate."

South Korean President Moon Jae-in urged North Korea to refrain from actions that could impede diplomacy. In an interview with the KBS television network, Moon also said Seoul will explore various options to help revive the talks, including providing food aid to the North and pushing for his fourth summit with Kim.

Moon's office earlier said the North Korean launches were "very concerning" and detrimental to efforts to improve inter-Korean ties and ease military tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

Japanese Defense Minister Takeshi Iwaya said Friday that Tokyo finds it "extremely regrettable" that North Korea fired short-range ballistic missiles in violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions. He said none of the missiles reached Japanese territory and there was no immediate impact on Japan's security.

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 Korea in 2018, when Kim 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.

In Geneva on Thursday, North Korean Ambassador Han Tae Song likened the economic sanctions to "crimes."

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.

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Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo contributed to this report.

## Hungary stems migrant flow, but issue remains big in EU vote

By PABLO GORONDI Associated Press

ASOTTHALOM, Hungary (AP) — Hundreds of migrants a day streamed through the Hungarian village of Asotthalom on their way to Western Europe in 2015. Today there are almost none. So one might think the political discourse has moved on.

Think again.

In this month's European Parliament election, no issue rings louder in Hungary than migration. Prime Minister Viktor Orban and his right-wing Fidesz party have campaigned almost exclusively on anti-immigration policies and it remains a hot topic in this formerly beleaguered village as well.

Asotthalom's mayor has left the nationalist Jobbik party to form a new movement with an even harder anti-migrant stance.

"Migrants still get through, but they are caught in Asotthalom," gloated Laszlo Toroczkai, the mayor who is also his party's leading candidate in the European election. "This region, which suffered terribly from massive, uncontrolled immigration, has absolutely recovered its security and tranquility."

Orban won a third term last year after a campaign that linked migration to rape and terrorism and warned that a mostly Muslim "migrant invasion" was putting Europe's "Christian culture" at risk.

His Fidesz party is using the same message in this month's European election and is expected to win as many as 14 of Hungary's 21 seats in the 751-seat European Parliament. No other Hungarian party is expected to get more than three seats in the May 26 vote.

Nowhere is the focus on migration more acute than in Asotthalom, a village of 4,000 that borders Serbia, a non-European Union nation.

In 2015, when nearly 1 million asylum-seekers and migrants moved through the region seeking better lives in Western Europe, Hungary built a razor-wire fence at the edge of Asotthalom's farms and fruit trees. Two years later, it added a second fence with cameras and heat and motion detectors.

From a peak of more than 9,000 migrants a day entering Hungary in September 2015, the country now catches about two dozen migrants a day.

Hundreds of students from around the country attend Asotthalom's forestry vocational high school and the village has a Sandor Rozsa museum, dedicated to a 19th-century outlaw celebrated as a Hungarian Robin Hood.

One Asotthalom resident, who harvests potatoes from her home vegetable patch, said she felt sorry for the migrants who used to walk past her house but complained about the garbage they left behind and how they climbed over the fence into the public swimming pool to cool off.

Anna, who like other villagers refused to give her last name, said even although she knew the migrants were only passing through "it was scary" to see so many people in desperate need walking past her house.

Toroczkai and more radical politicians left Jobbik last year to form the Our Homeland Movement. The group has brought back issues that Jobbik had mostly abandoned as it tried to distance itself from accusations of racism, like referring to petty crimes as "Gypsy crimes," or other racial slurs.

Our Homeland is critical of government corruption and wants to subsidize Hungarian companies instead of multinationals. On immigration, it hopes to push Orban's hard-line policies even further to the right, proposing to eliminate scholarships for thousands of foreign students, one of Orban's outreach programs.

"If Fidesz wants to protect European and Christian culture, then (these students) should not be allowed in either," Toroczkai said. "But on this we agree — migration must be stopped."

The fence, criticized at first as a "new Iron Curtain," stretches 175 kilometers (more than 100 miles) along the border with Serbia and parts of the border with Croatia. While other factors helped to stem the migrant surge through Hungary — especially a 2016 deal between the EU and Turkey that returns people arriving on Greek islands to Turkey — Orban has been unapologetic about its success.

"The people in Austria and Germany can sleep tight because the Hungarians will protect Europe's external borders here," Orban said when the fence was reinforced.

When hard-line Italian Interior Minister Matteo Salvini visited Hungary earlier this month, he immedi-

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ately toured the southern border area with Orban, congratulating his government on its effectiveness in stopping illegal immigration.

Fidesz's EU election campaign includes the slogan "Let's stop immigration!"; calls for leaders who oppose immigration to lead major EU institutions; and demands measures guaranteeing that Christians won't suffer discrimination in Europe.

"The matter we will be voting on is an essential one — at stake is the existence of our Christian civilization," Orban said at the April launch of the Fidesz EU campaign.

Orban has used his opposition to migration to fuel other conservative policies, too. In February, he announced measures to boost Hungary's birthrate, offering a lifetime income tax exemption for mothers of at least four children.

While Western Europe is resorting to immigration to increase its population "we do not need numbers, but Hungarian children," Orban declared. "In our minds, immigration means surrender."

May's EU election could determine Orban's future in Europe for some time.

In March, the Fidesz party was suspended from the center-right bloc in the European Parliament, the European People's Party, because of long-standing concerns over democracy in Hungary. For his part, Orban wants the bloc, the biggest in the EU parliament, to forge closer ties with Salvini and other anti-immigration forces even further to the right.

It's not clear yet whether Fidesz stays with the EPP or shifts over to join Salvini's new populist, far-right bloc that has vowed to shake up the European Parliament and the EU.

"We will look for cooperation with Salvini in a spectacular, avowed and open manner," Orban said during his visit.

As long as Hungarians continued to respond to the migration issue, even when hardly any migrants come to Hungary, it will dominate Orban's message, said Gabor Gyori, a senior analyst at Policy Solutions, a political research institute in Budapest.

"Changes may come ... if migration is no longer effective in covering up potentially more important issues, like education, corruption and health care," Gyori said.

He noted that Orban's focus on migration had made him a role model for Europe's populist or far-right parties.

"Orban's biggest political success is tying his anti-democratic policies to migration, always suggesting that the two are inseparable," Gyori said. "In reality, there is no connection between the two."

He said Orban has convinced voters that "the external checks and balances limiting the government's power" have to be weakened or "otherwise, migration will come (back) to Hungary." He said Orban's reasoning was "very attractive to many politicians with authoritarian ambitions."

In Asothalom, Janos, who lives on a farm with his partner Ilona, also complained about the migrants' litter but said he was moved by the sight of exhausted families walking across Europe from as far away as war-torn Afghanistan or Syria.

"What was spiritually draining was to see them in the winter, in the snow, with little children," the farmer said. "I don't blame them. Somewhere, this got really messed up."

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Andras Nagy contributed to this report.

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For more news from The Associated Press on the European Parliament elections go to <https://www.apnews.com/EuropeanParliament>

## US seizes North Korean ship amid tense moment in relations

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. said Thursday that it has seized a North Korean cargo ship that was used to violate international sanctions, a first-of-its kind enforcement action that comes amid a tense moment in relations between the two countries.

The "Wise Honest," North Korea's second largest cargo ship, was detained in April 2018 as it traveled toward Indonesia. It's now in the process of being moved to American Samoa, Justice Department officials said.

Officials made the announcement hours after North Korea fired two suspected short-range missiles toward the sea, the second weapons launch in five days and a possible signal that stalled talks over its nuclear weapons program are in trouble. The public disclosure that the vessel is now in U.S. custody may further inflame tensions, though U.S. officials said the timing of their complaint was not a response to the missile launch.

Justice Department lawyers laid out the case for confiscating the ship in a complaint filed in New York, arguing that payments for maintenance and operation of the vessel were channeled through unwitting U.S. financial institutions in violation of American law. The coal trade itself is also believed to fund the isolated country's nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programs.

"This sanctions-busting ship is now out of service," Assistant Attorney General John Demers, the Justice Department's top national security official, told reporters. He later added: "The U.S. sanctions against North Korea reflect the threat these programs pose to U.S. national security."

The 581-foot (177 meters) Wise Honest was used for coal transports to ports abroad, according to the complaint, generating badly needed revenue to a country that is under U.N. sanctions because of its nuclear weapons program. The ship also delivered heavy machinery back to North Korea.

The vessel was owned by a subsidiary of a North Korean shipping company that is controlled by the country's military and is on a Treasury Department sanctions list, officials said.

North Korea sought to disguise the nationality of the ship and the origin of its cargo, according to the complaint. The ship, in what U.S. officials say was a clear act of concealment, also turned off an automatic signal system intended to alert other ships of its course and location. The ship had not broadcast a signal since August 2017 despite having made at least one voyage since then, according to the complaint.

Indonesian authorities intercepted and seized the Wise Honest in the East China Sea a month after it was photographed at the port of Nampo, North Korea, where it took on a load of coal. The captain of the ship was charged in Indonesia with violating that country's maritime laws and convicted, the complaint says. It was not immediately clear what happened to the rest of the crew, which at least at one time totaled two dozen members.

The U.S. has prosecuted people and businesses for violating sanctions but has never before seized a North Korean ship. The country will have an opportunity to contest the seizure in court. If the U.S. prevails, it will be able to sell the vessel.

"When nations who have stated an intent to do harm to the United States evade international sanctions, Americans become less safe," said Geoffrey Berman, the United States attorney for the Southern District of New York.

Asked whether North Korea's largest merchant ship was similarly involved in illegal coal exports, Demers said that he did not know, but added, "If it is, we'd love to get our hands on it."

President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un have held two summits focused on the North's nuclear program but have made no discernible progress toward a deal that would eliminate its weapons. At the White House on Thursday, Trump said the U.S. was looking "very seriously right now" at North Korea's recent military tests.

"Nobody's happy about it."

## Q&A: Syria's Assad sets sights on Idlib, the final showdown?

By ZEINA KARAM Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — After eight months of relative calm, Syria's northwestern province of Idlib is once again a theater for bloody military operations: heavy bombardment, airstrikes and waves of civilian displacement as Syrian government troops, backed by Russia, push their way into the rebel-held enclave in a widening offensive.

The violence of the past week threatens to completely unravel a crumbling cease-fire agreement reached between Turkey and Russia at the Black Sea resort of Sochi in September last year, which averted a potentially devastating assault by the Syrian government to retake the province.

"There are no good options when it comes to Idlib," an analysis by the Brussels-based International Crisis Group concluded in March, explaining why the province has oscillated between stagnation and bursts of bloodshed for years.

The area is among the last in the war-shattered country outside President Bashar Assad's control — and the last area still held by rebels. Confident in the support from Russia, Assad has pledged to recover the province and every other inch of Syrian territory lost during the war.

Here's a look at the rebellious region, and the fighting taking place:

### WHY IS IDLIB IMPORTANT?

For Assad, Idlib stands in the way of final victory against the armed opposition. After eight years of war, he has largely quashed the popular revolt that erupted against his family's decades-long rule in 2011, which was inspired by the Arab Spring protests that swept the region that year.

On the Syria conflict map, Idlib province in the country's northwestern corner bordering Turkey forms a green-colored, rebel-controlled region surrounded by a sea of red, code for Syrian government control. Recapturing it would constitute a definitive defeat for opposition forces that once controlled half the country and threatened Assad's seat of power in Damascus.

Russia and Iran, key international allies of Assad, want him to complete the victory. But while recapturing Idlib or even just regaining control of key highways around it has major economic benefits, a protracted, bloody battle will be costly in terms of soldiers' lives, rekindling criticism over deaths just as his government may be starting to come in from the cold.

And the area is not just important for Assad. Idlib sits across the border from Turkey, which has long extended political and logistical support to the rebels fighting to topple Assad. Turkey also maintains about a dozen military observation posts around Idlib and has carried out patrols around the area.

Turkey, which already hosts 3 million Syrian refugees, fears a spillover of refugees across the border into its territories in case of an all-out assault.

### WHY IS THERE FIGHTING AGAIN NOW?

The truce reached in September by Turkey and Russia has been fraying, with violations taking place on an almost daily basis in recent weeks. Parts of the agreement have yet to be implemented, including the withdrawal of al-Qaida-linked militants from the front lines, which Turkey was supposed to facilitate.

Two major highways that cut through rebel-held areas were also supposed to be reopened before the end of 2018 but remain closed.

A large government military buildup and advances on key villages in nearby areas suggests an assault is already underway.

But the current government offensive is likely to be limited in scope for now, aimed at regaining government control over the strategic M4 and M5 highways to open the way between the Mediterranean city of Latakia, a government stronghold which houses a huge Russian air base, Hama further to the north and the city of Aleppo.

Fighting currently is concentrated in towns and villages in northern Hama and parts of southern Idlib, where the government has captured a number of villages, including a village known for its medieval fortress, Qalaat al-Madiq on Thursday.

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Russia and the Syrian army say they are responding to stepped-up attacks by al-Qaida linked militants on government-held areas. One such attack in April in Aleppo province killed 22 soldiers and pro-government gunmen. The rebels say Russia and the government are using military pressure after failed negotiations to secure access to the highway and protect the coastal area, where Russia has its air and naval base.

## WHO'S IN IDLIB?

Idlib is the opposition's last refuge. Its prewar population of 1.5 million has swelled to around 3 million after it was designated a "de-escalation zone" under an agreement between Turkey, Russia and Iran in May 2017. Tens of thousands of Syrians trapped in other parts of the country were evacuated there under various cease-fire agreements.

Now they have nowhere left to turn, after other opposition pockets have collapsed, and Turkey is building a wall along its borders, sealing them to new refugees.

It is estimated that there are tens of thousands of rebel fighters and jihadis in Idlib, the most dominant of these groups being Hayat Tahrir al-Sham — the latest iteration of al-Qaida's former affiliate known as Jabhat al-Nusra. Other factions have coalesced under the umbrella of the National Front for Liberation, and include Islamists, army defectors and some of the early armed opposition formations. Earlier this year, Hayat Tahrir al-Sham seized control of most of the enclave after clashing with other rebel groups.

In 2017, the U.S. envoy to the coalition fighting the Islamic State, Brett McGurk, described Idlib as "the largest al-Qaida safe haven since 9/11."

## THE BLOODIEST CHAPTER YET?

A full-blown military offensive to recapture Idlib is expected to bring some of the most brutal and bloody fighting to date in Syria's civil war, which has killed close to half a million people and displaced millions of others.

The mix of cornered, hard-core militants who will likely fight till the end with hundreds of thousands of trapped civilians is potentially disastrous, aid organizations warn.

"As bad as Idlib's status quo is, all military solutions would be worse," the International Crisis Group report said. "There is no obvious way to neutralize" Idlib's jihadis without a terrible human toll.

According to the United Nations, airstrikes and shelling caused at least 80 civilian fatalities and over 300 injuries over a period of 10 days, starting April 28, while over 150,000 were displaced within the enclave to safer areas.

It also said shelling, airstrikes and active fighting in and around some 50 villages caused destruction of at least 10 schools. At least 12 health facilities were hit by airstrikes. The U.N. and aid workers warn that up to 800,000 people are in danger of renewed displacement.

With Turkey closing its borders to new refugees, it is unclear where civilians would go.

## Sen. Burr takes GOP fire over Trump Jr subpoena

By MARY CLARE JALONICK, JONATHAN LEMIRE and LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans lashed out Thursday at fellow GOP Sen. Richard Burr for his committee's subpoena of President Donald Trump's son, a move that suggested the Russia investigation is not "case closed," as some in the party insist. Trump said he was "very surprised" at the move.

The revolt by some against the Senate intelligence committee chairman comes after The Associated Press and other news outlets reported it had called in Donald Trump Jr. to answer questions about his 2017 testimony as part of its probe into Russian election interference. The issue of re-calling Trump's son laid bare the conflict inside the president's party over whether probes involving Russian election meddling are still merited.

It's the first known subpoena of a member of Trump's immediate family and a new sign that the Senate panel is continuing with its own two-year-long investigation, even after the release of special counsel Robert Mueller's report and Republican Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell's call from the Senate

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floor on Tuesday to move on.

"This case is closed. The Mueller Report cleared @DonaldJTrumpJr and he's already spent 27 hours testifying before Congress," tweeted Burr's fellow North Carolina Republican senator, Thom Tillis, one of several GOP senators who criticized Burr. "It's time to move on & start focusing on issues that matter to Americans."

A source familiar with the committee's deliberations said the subpoena went out "weeks ago" and all committee members were aware of it. The person, who requested anonymity to discuss the internal negotiations, said members had been regularly briefed on communications with Trump Jr.

Burr wouldn't comment on the subpoena or the backlash Thursday. But at a Republican policy lunch, he walked through the timeline of events that led to the committee's decision, according to a person familiar with his comments who requested anonymity to discuss the private meeting. McConnell then stood up and defended him, saying he trusts Burr, according to the person.

The subpoena appeared to catch the president and many of his allies by surprise. Trump said as much, adding that "my son is a very good person." Trump Jr., the president said, had already testified for a "massive" amount of time.

Chief of staff Mick Mulvaney said Thursday he was not given a heads-up. But Trump's advisers had not yet decided if he would publicly attack Burr, according to two Republicans close to the White House not authorized to speak publicly about private discussions.

The subpoena highlights a delicate bind facing Burr, a third-term senator who is not expected to run for re-election when his term is up in 2022. He has been adamant that the panel's Russia probe be bipartisan and fair and has worked closely with the panel's top Democrat, Virginia Sen. Mark Warner.

The blowback against him inside the Senate was especially fierce from Republicans up for re-election in 2020, including Tillis and Sen. John Cornyn, R-Texas, who said he understands the younger Trump's "frustration."

"I think we have an important job to do to try to keep the intelligence committee out of politics," he added. Cornyn, who is on the intelligence panel, later said he has confidence in Burr.

Other Republicans joined in. Kentucky Sen. Rand Paul tweeted that Burr "didn't get the memo" that the Mueller case was closed. Texas Sen. Ted Cruz tweeted: "There's no need for another subpoena for @DonaldJTrumpJr. It's time to move on & focus on issues Americans care about."

Criticism also came from the top Republican in the House.

"Endless investigations — by either party — won't change the fact that there was NO collusion. It's time to move on. It's time to focus on ISSUES, not investigations," tweeted House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif.

But Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, a Republican member of the panel, said he thinks the criticism of Burr is "a fundamental misunderstanding of what the Senate intelligence committee is about," which is congressional oversight and not prosecution.

The suggestion that Burr is failing to properly lead the committee is the first real sign of any dissent among its members, who have worked together quietly since the panel's Russia investigation began in early 2017. Burr and Warner have often won praise from the panel's members, and also from McConnell, throughout the probe.

As the subpoena drew criticism from GOP ranks, Republicans scrambled Thursday to develop a more cohesive response.

McConnell said in his Tuesday speech that it was "case closed" on the Mueller probe, but his office noted that he didn't go so far as to say the intelligence panel's work was done. McConnell's speech noted the importance of the committee's "upcoming report."

Mueller did not find evidence that Trump conspired with the Russians to meddle in the 2016 campaign, but did not make a recommendation on whether he obstructed justice.

Burr's committee had renewed interest in talking to Trump Jr. after Trump's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, testified earlier this year. Cohen told a House committee in February that he had briefed Trump Jr. approximately 10 times about a plan to build a Trump Tower in Moscow before the presidential election.

Trump Jr. told the Senate Judiciary Committee in a separate interview in 2017 he was only “peripherally aware” of the proposal.

The panel is also interested in talking to him about other topics, including a campaign meeting in Trump Tower with a Russian lawyer.

Burr was named in Mueller’s report as having possibly shared information with the White House after a confidential FBI briefing in 2017. But the senator has since denied that he brought that information to the White House. He says he was talking about his own committee’s investigation.

Associated Press writers Lisa Mascaro, Catherine Lucey and Eric Tucker and video journalist Padmananda Rama contributed to this report.

## **Burned before, US pushes for way to enforce China trade deal**

**By PAUL WISEMAN and JOE MCDONALD AP Business Writers**

WASHINGTON (AP) — In trying to hammer out a trade agreement with China, the Trump administration may be drawing inspiration from classic rock, specifically The Who’s anthem “Won’t Get Fooled Again.”

Fed up with China for breaking past promises, the administration is insisting on provisions designed to force the Chinese to live up to any commitments they make in trade talks that entered an 11th round on Thursday.

In fact, top U.S. trade negotiator Robert Lighthizer and Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin this week accused the Chinese of already renegeing on concessions they’d made earlier in the negotiations.

In retaliation for that alleged backsliding, the United States is poised to dramatically escalate the trade war between the world’s two biggest economies at 12:01 a.m. Friday Eastern time — by raising import taxes on \$200 billion in Chinese goods from 10% to 25%.

And President Donald Trump said he’s preparing to slap 25% tariffs on another \$325 billion in Chinese imports, covering everything China ships to the United States.

The two countries are battling 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 U.S. currently is levying 10% tariffs on \$200 billion of Chinese imports and 25% on another \$50 billion. The Chinese have retaliated by targeting \$110 billion in U.S. products and are threatening more sanctions if Washington goes ahead with its plan to raise tariffs Friday.

When the talks began last year, it appeared that the Chinese might try to appease Trump by agreeing to buy lots of American products — especially soybeans and liquefied natural gas — and put a dent in America’s massive trade deficit with China, a whopping \$379 billion last year.

But as the talks dragged on, it became increasingly apparent that “a heap of soybeans isn’t going to get the job done,” said Amanda DeBusk, chair of the international trade practice at the law firm Dechert LLP and a former U.S. Commerce Department official.

Business groups, disappointed that China didn’t fully open up to foreign competition after joining the World Trade Organization in 2001, are pressuring the administration to hold out for a deal that requires China to abandon predatory trade practices, stop subsidizing homegrown companies and treat foreign firms more fairly.

“It was way past time to confront China on many of these problems,” said Michael Wessel, a member of the congressionally created U.S.-China Economic Security Review Commission and president of The Wessel Group consulting firm. “They’ve been allowed to skate for far too many years.”

Reaching a deal with China to end the tariff war would be only the first hurdle for the Trump administration. Next would come the hard part: enforcing the agreement.

“The details will matter a lot,” said Dean Pinkert, partner at the law firm Hughes Hubbard & Reed and a former member of the U.S. International Trade Commission. “In regard to the ‘structural’ issues — including intellectual property and forced technology transfers — what sort of enforcement mechanism will be

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established? Who gets to judge whether structural commitments are being honored? "

The Trump administration wants Beijing to accept an enforcement mechanism with penalties to make sure it carries out its commitments.

U.S. officials say they must be cautious because Beijing has made empty promises before: A 2018 report by the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, for instance, found that China has promised eight times since 2010 not to force foreign companies to transfer technology to China. Yet the coercion continued, the U.S. said.

"They didn't comply and aren't complying with their WTO obligations, and they aren't following through on the commitments they've made repeatedly over the last decade," said trade lawyer Stephen Orava, a partner at King & Spalding.

Enforcement would require lifting the lid of secrecy on Communist Party policies toward acquiring technology, subsidizing industries and shielding them from competition.

But China is likely to balk at accepting intrusive monitoring of its behavior, something that President Xi Jinping's government likely would see as a violation of Chinese sovereignty.

Meantime, the U.S. is pushing to keep tariffs in place as leverage to pressure China to comply with any agreement.

Xi's government has yet to make clear whether it is really willing to scale back ambitious plans to turn China into a technological superpower, something Chinese leaders see as a route to prosperity and global influence.

Beijing is willing to tweak the plans, but the Communist Party wants to keep its dominant economic role. Chinese officials deny Beijing steals or pressures companies to hand over technology, despite what security experts say is a mountain of evidence the ruling party rewards those who acquire it and sometimes directly carries out theft.

For decades, the ruling party has showered Chinese businesspeople, academics and others who "localize foreign technology" — the official euphemism for unauthorized copying of foreign know-how — with promotions, research grants, money and public praise.

Security researchers say the government operates a network of research institutes and business parks to turn stolen technology into commercial products.

In 2013, three Chinese scientists at New York University were charged with sending U.S. taxpayer-financed research on magnetic resonance imaging to a Chinese government-run institute.

The following year, five members of China's military cyber warfare unit were indicted on U.S. industrial spying charges.

Chinese companies "benefit from cyber espionage," the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission said in a report this month.

"Chinese government efforts to encourage and direct firms to acquire technology from the United States are likely to continue as Beijing seeks to further develop its domestic high-tech industries," the report said.

Obtaining foreign technology is a theme that runs through Chinese law and government. Ending tactics that irk Beijing's trading partners would require changing a thicket of rules, regulatory habits and incentives to local officials to promote technology development.

That includes a 2008 law that allows penalties for foreign companies deemed to be abusing control over technology. Businesspeople say Beijing uses that to pressure foreign companies to cut prices of patent licensing or drop complaints that Chinese partners have stolen technology.

Automakers and competitors in other industries are also required to work through joint ventures with state-owned local partners that cannot function unless the foreign company supplies technology and teaches a potential Chinese competitor to develop its own.

Analysts say the U.S. has been pushing China to write its commitments into law, and Beijing has been resisting. China specialist Derek Scissors, resident scholar at the conservative American Enterprise Institute, said the real "standoff is about how public the Chinese changes are going to be. The U.S. wants them entirely public. China is not willing to make high-profile public changes."

In the end, any enforcement plan is likely to fall short — unless Beijing decides it's really time to change. "Enforcement at the end of the day requires China to be transparent and abiding by its agreements. I can't think of any structure in law or diplomacy that can enforce that," said James McGregor, chairman for Greater China at the government relations firm APCO Worldwide. "It has to come from within China and a real desire to change its system."

McDonald reported from Beijing.

Follow Paul Wiseman on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/PaulWisemanAP>

## Against backdrop of controversy, Red Sox honored by Trump

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump honored the World Series champion Boston Red Sox — well, some of them — at the White House on Thursday, but made no mention of the controversy that shadowed the visit.

The team's manager, Alex Cora, did not attend the ceremony after citing his frustration with the administration's efforts to help his native Puerto Rico recover from a devastating hurricane. And nearly a dozen members of the team, all players of color, skipped the opportunity to shake Trump's hand. Meanwhile, every white player on the team — as well as outfielder J.D. Martinez, who is of Cuban descent — attended.

The Red Sox repeatedly denied there was any sort of racial divide caused by the White House visit, which has been transformed from moment of celebratory ritual to hyper-politicized event under Trump. And there was no sign of discord during the rained-upon ceremony on the White House South Lawn.

The U.S. Marine Corps band played versions of "Dirty Water" and "Sweet Caroline," two unofficial Red Sox anthems. A derogatory shout about Boston's rival, the New York Yankees, was heard. Trump was presented with a Red Sox jersey with No. 18 on the back.

The day was not without mishaps: The White House first incorrectly labeled the team as the "Red Socks" on its website and then later, in an email, dubbed them the champions of something called the "World Cup Series." But Trump himself stuck to the correct script, honoring the team's dominant run to the title.

"Frankly, they were unstoppable. I watched," said Trump, who noted that the squad had now won more World Series titles than any other franchise this century. He laughed when Martinez teased him for being a Yankees fan.

The president was accompanied by two of the team's stars, Martinez and pitcher Chris Sale, from the Oval Office and joined the rest of the team assembled under the South Portico. The team's third base coach, Carlos Febles, who is from the Dominican Republic, stood two rows behind the president. And dozens of administration officials and members of government, many of whom hail from the six New England states, stood on the lawn to cheer.

Tom Werner, the team's chairman, downplayed the no-shows, saying it was each player's personal decision whether to attend.

"We don't see it as a racial divide," he said after the team received a post-ceremony tour of the Lincoln Bedroom. "I think, to the extent that we can, baseball is apolitical."

A championship team's coach rarely, if ever, misses the White House visit, a tradition that began in earnest in 1924 when then-President 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 Hurricane Maria is estimated to have 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."

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Before the visit, Trump defended his stance on Puerto Rico, falsely asserting once again that the territory received \$91 billion in hurricane relief money, which he claimed was “the largest amount of money ever given to any state.”

In fact, Congress has allocated Puerto Rico just a fraction of that figure. The White House has said Trump’s \$91 billion estimate includes about \$50 billion in speculated 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, with about \$11 billion given so far. Hurricane Katrina in 2005 cost the U.S. government more than \$120 billion — the bulk of it going to Louisiana.

Trump nonetheless told reporters, “the people of Puerto Rico should really like President Trump.”

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 also visited wounded veterans at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on Thursday — have been honored at the White House under both Republican and Democratic presidents. 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 President Barack Obama. After several players on the Philadelphia Eagles and Golden State Warriors publicly declared that they would skip White House ceremonies, Trump disinvited 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. The Red Sox were not at the White House for a meal, Werner said.

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.

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Associated Press writers Kevin Freking in Washington, Jimmy Golen in Boston and David Ginsburg in Baltimore contributed to this report.

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## Nike’s plan for better-fitting kicks: Show us your feet

By JOSEPH PISANI AP Retail Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Nike wants to meet your feet.

The sneaker seller will add a foot-scanning tool on its app this summer that will measure the length, width and other dimensions of customers’ feet after they point a smartphone camera to their toes. The app will then tell shoppers what size to buy each of its shoes in, which Nike hopes will get you in the right fit and cut down on costly returns as it seeks to sell more of its goods through its websites and apps.

But Nike will also get something it has never had before: a flood of data on the feet of regular people, a potential goldmine for the shoe maker, which says it will use the information to improve the design of its shoes. Nike mainly relies on the feet of star athletes to build its kicks.

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"Nikes will become better and better fitting shoes for you and everyone else," says Michael Martin, who oversees Nike's websites and apps.

Nike won't sell or share the data to other companies, Martin says. And he says shoppers don't have to save the foot scans to their Nike accounts. But if they do, they'll only have to scan their feet once and Nike's apps, websites and stores will know your dimensions every time you need to buy sneakers. Workers at Nike stores will also be equipped with iPads to do the scanning, replacing those metal sizing contraptions.

The challenging part for Nike is convincing people they need to measure their feet in the first place. Most think they already know what their shoe size is, says Brad Eckhart, who was an executive at shoe store chain Finish Line and is now a principal at retail consultancy Columbus Consulting,

But Nike says it gets half a million complaints a year from customers related to fit and sizing. And it admits what many shoppers have already suspected: Each of its shoe styles fit differently, even if they are in the same size. A leather sneaker may be tighter and require a bigger size. Knit ones may be more forgiving. And shoelaces can throw everything off.

Shoe size is "effectively a lie," says Martin. "And it's a lie that we've perpetuated."

Matt Powell, a sports industry analyst at NPD Group Inc., says the tool might be most valuable for people want to run or play basketball in their sneakers, since the wrong fit can cause injury. But Powell says most people buy sneakers just to walk around in.

Still, finding the right size is a problem for shoppers: "There really is no industry standard for what is a size 10," Powell says.

Contact Joseph Pisani at <http://twitter.com/josephpisani>

## Uber shifts into lower gear, prices IPO at \$45

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ and MICHAEL LIEDTKE AP Business Writers

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Uber is about to embark on a wild ride on Wall Street with the biggest and most hotly debated IPO in years.

The world's leading ride-hailing service set the stage for its long-awaited arrival on the stock market by pricing its initial public offering at \$45 per share late Thursday.

The price is at the lower end of its targeted range of \$44 to \$50 per share, a decision that may have been driven by the escalating doubts about the ability of ride-hailing services to make money since Uber's main rival, Lyft, went public six weeks ago.

Even at the tamped-down price, Uber now has a market value of \$82.4 billion — significantly more than century-old automakers General Motors and Ford Motor.

Uber will face its next test Friday when its shares begin trading the New York Stock Exchange.

No matter how the stock swings, the IPO has to be considered a triumph for the company most closely associated with a ride-hailing industry that has changed the way millions of people get around while also transforming the way millions of more people earn a living in the gig economy.

The IPO raised another \$8.1 billion for Uber as it tries to fend off rival Lyft in the U.S. and help cover the cost of giving rides to passengers at unprofitable prices. The San Francisco company already has lost about \$9 billion since its inception and acknowledges it could still be years before it turns a profit.

That sobering reality is one reason that Uber fell well short of reaching the \$120 billion market value that many observers believed its IPO might attain earlier this year.

Another factor working against Uber is the cold shoulder that investors have been giving Lyft's stock after an initial run-up. Lyft's shares closed Thursday 23% below its IPO price of \$72 in April.

The jitters about an intensifying U.S. trade war with China also have roiled the stock market this week. Despite all that, Uber's IPO is the biggest since Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group debuted with a value of \$167.6 billion in 2014.

"For the market to give you the value, you've either got to have a lot of profits or potential for huge growth," said Sam Abuelsamid, principal analyst at Navigant Research.

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And Uber boasts growth galore. Its revenue last year surged 42% to \$11.3 billion while its cars completed 5.2 billion trips around the world either giving rides to 91 million passengers or delivering food.

Uber might be even more popular if not for a series of revelations about unsavory behavior that sullied its image and resulted in the ouster of its co-founder, Travis Kalanick, as CEO nearly two years ago.

The self-inflicted wounds included complaints about rampant internal sexual harassment, accusations that it stole self-driving car technology, and a cover-up of a computer break-in that stole personal information about its passengers. What's more, some Uber drivers have been accused of assaulting passengers, and one of its self-driving test vehicles struck and killed a pedestrian in Arizona last year while a backup driver was behind the wheel.

Uber hired Dara Khosrowshahi as CEO to replace Kalanick and clean up the mess, something that analysts say has been able to do to some extent, although Lyft seized upon the scandals to gain market share.

Kalanick remains on Uber's board, although he isn't expected to be on the podium to help ring the opening bell at the New York Stock Exchange to herald the company's debut Friday. Instead, he will be left standing on the sidelines while the spotlight shines on other Uber executives, although Kalanick can still savor his newfound wealth. At \$45 per share, his stake in Uber will be worth \$5.3 billion. Hundreds, if not thousands, of other Uber employees are expected to become millionaires in the IPO.

Meanwhile, scores of Uber drivers say they have been mistreated by the company as they work long hours and wear out their cars picking up passengers as they struggle to make ends meet. On Wednesday, some of them participated in strikes across the United States to highlight their unhappiness ahead of Uber's IPO but barely caused a ripple. A similar strike was organized ahead of Lyft's IPO to the same effect.

In its latest attempt to make amends, Uber disclosed Thursday that it reached a settlement with tens of thousands of drivers who alleged they had been improperly classified as contractors. The company said the settlement covering most of the 60,000 drivers making claims will cost \$146 million to \$170 million.

Now, Uber will focus on winning over Wall Street.

Uber may be able to avoid Lyft's post-IPO stock decline because it has a different story to tell other than the potential for growth in ride-hailing, says Alejandro Ortiz, principal analyst with SharesPost. Uber, he said, has plans to be more than a ride-hailing company by being all things transportation to users of its app, offering deliveries, scooters, bicycles and links to other modes of transportation including public mass transit systems.

"Whether or not that pitch will work kind of remains to be seen. It's nearly impossible to tell now," he said. "Obviously the risk to the company now is they have a lot more shareholders that they have to convince."

Bussewitz reported from New York.

## For thousands of asylum seekers, all they can do is wait

By **ELLIOT SPAGAT, NOMAAN MERCHANT and PATRICIO ESPINOZA** Associated Press

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP) — For thousands of asylum seekers, there are many ways to wait — and wait, and wait — at the threshold of the United States.

Parents and children sleep in tents next to bridges leading to Texas for weeks on end, desperately hoping their names and numbers are called so they can be let in.

Some immigrants complain of shakedowns and kidnappings by gangs and corrupt officials, particularly across the border in Texas. Others have paid to jump to the front of the line; the rest, determined to enter the country legally, wait patiently, even if it takes months.

This is what has happened since the Trump administration placed asylum in a chokehold.

The Associated Press visited eight cities along the U.S.-Mexico border and found 13,000 immigrants on waiting lists to get into the country — exposed to haphazard and often-dubious arrangements that vary sharply.

The lines began to swell in the last year when the administration limited the number of asylum cases it accepts each day at the main border crossings, leaving it to Mexican agencies, volunteers, nonprofit

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organizations and immigrants themselves to manage the lines.

Central American families have reached the border in growing numbers since October, creating what is widely considered a humanitarian crisis.

In some cities, days pass without anyone being processed, the AP found. In San Diego, up to 80 are handled each day, but the line in Tijuana, across the border, is the longest anywhere — about 4,800 people.

Each day at each crossing, U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials alert Mexican counterparts how many people they will take — a system that U.S. authorities call metering. Then the keeper of the list lets immigrants know who can go into the U.S. for asylum interviews.

It is impossible to predict how many. Migrants pick their route based on a best guess of which city will offer the fastest crossing, and which will offer the safest stay in the meantime.

A federal lawsuit says the administration is violating U.S. and international law by refusing to take asylum seekers when they show up at a crossing, even temporarily. U.S. authorities argue that processing capacity dictates how many people it can handle.

"It's not turning people away, it's asking them to wait," then-Customs and Border Protection Commissioner and current acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan said in October.

But some feel they cannot. They try to enter illegally, sometimes with tragic consequences.

A Honduran family, arriving at Piedras Negras, Mexico, decided the line was too long. Crossing the Rio Grande, they were swept away; a father and three children, including a baby, are believed to have died.

**CIUDAD JUAREZ: Black ink, wristbands, and thousands in line**

A government employee emerges from an office building around 9 a.m. and stands atop a short stairway. A large group of Cubans push forward, eager to learn about their progress in line. "Move back, move back!" she says.

Another official shouts the numbers of asylum seekers at the top of the list.

"7,449!" he yells, and a man steps forward with identification to join 19 others who will be escorted across a bridge to El Paso, Texas.

The sprawling industrial city began its waiting list in October when many Cuban asylum seekers began sleeping on the narrow sidewalk of a busy international bridge. Mexican authorities decided they had to go.

Casa del Migrante, the city's largest migrant shelter, is located about a half-hour drive from the bridge. It began registering asylum seekers and writing numbers on their arms with black ink. After widespread criticism, migrants were given numbers on plastic wristbands instead.

Some sold wristbands to people eager to skip the line or gave them to others when they decided to cross illegally, said Enrique Valenzuela, executive secretary of Chihuahua state's Migrant Services Center. Others made fake bracelets to cut in line. Arguments would erupt when two people showed up with the same number.

"Opportunists made a business out of it," he said. "It was easy to make money from it."

In late March, the state government took over from the shelter, taking custody of four notebooks with handwritten names paired with numbers, up to No. 10,221. Names and photos are now entered into a computer; the government created a closed Facebook group that is updated twice a day, so asylum seekers can check how many people the U.S. will take that day.

There are currently about 4,500 names on the list.

**REYNOSA: 'River owners' run the show**

The challenges faced by asylum seekers waiting in Reynosa, across from McAllen, Texas, are compounded by rampant violence.

There were 1,472 murders recorded last year in the state of Tamaulipas, where Reynosa is located. Gunfights between cartels and police occur daily, and the U.S. State Department has warned Americans not to travel there. Few Americans are willing to visit the shelter that maintains the list of asylum seekers, or the other churches and hotels where asylum seekers wait.

Jennifer Harbury, a longtime human rights advocate based in Texas, spoke recently to a large group of

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asylum seekers at the Senda de Vida shelter and met with people who had been kidnapped by cartels.

"The owners of the river, you know who they are," Harbury said. Several nodded.

Rather than stopping the cartels, Harbury alleges, some Mexican government officials shake down migrants. She said she's spoken to two people who were detained in the basement of a Mexican government office by security who demanded ransom payments to release them.

One woman from Central America told the AP that she and her two children had been smuggled from southern Mexico to the Rio Grande for \$3,000. But when they arrived in Reynosa, she says, the coyote demanded \$1,000 more.

She was held with her 2-year-old son in one room of a house, and her 4-year-old son was detained in another. The smuggler released them after six days after she didn't produce the extra money and left them at the international bridge. They were told to say they had been robbed and had nowhere to go.

A man on the street gave her a few pesos for a taxi to Senda de Vida. She and her children now wait with hundreds of others, some of whom have been there since January.

"I'm still afraid," said the woman, who spoke on condition of anonymity because she fears retribution from the smugglers. "I'm afraid they will see me, they will recognize me, and they will grab me."

Reynosa's list, handled by shelter director Hector Silva, has 370 people. Standing next to Harbury, Silva told asylum seekers that he wanted Senda de Vida to be a refuge from the organized crime and bribery outside its white concrete walls.

"There is no corruption in this house," he said.

## PIEDRAS NEGRAS, MEXICO: The WhatsApp List

When asylum seekers arrive at the Frontera Digna migrant shelter in Piedras Negras, they are given a phone number to text on the messaging service WhatsApp. They're supposed to send the names and photos of everyone in their group. Then they're told to wait.

Managing the list is a local restaurateur named Hector Menchaca, who also serves as the local government's liaison to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

Sitting in the dark lobby of his Piedras Negras steakhouse, Menchaca said U.S. officials call him daily to tell him how many people they would accept at one of the bridges heading to Eagle Pass, Texas. He then sees who's at the top of the list and sends them a WhatsApp message.

About 360 people are on the list, with another 200 people waiting to join it because the government has closed it to new entrants for the time being, Menchaca said.

"I tell everyone: Live with your telephone. Keep it in your hand," he said. "If I call you and you don't answer, I'm not going to search for where you are."

The list includes people from Central America, Mexico, Brazil, and countries an ocean away like Cameroon. They aren't told how close to the top they are, only that they might wait for two or three months.

Bernardo Blanco Romero said he left Mexico's southern state of Guerrero because of drug cartel violence and a lack of jobs and chose to go Piedras Negras because it is considered safer than other cities on the border.

"I'm going to wait; I have no other option. I don't have money to return," he said. With him were his wife and four children.

Obed Cuellar, a subdirector at the shelter, said a typical family stays two nights and three days before having to seek lodging elsewhere. Churches across the city have opened shelters, and advocates rely on a loose network of boarding houses.

But many people say they can't wait — among them the four who are believed to have drowned in the Rio Grande last week. Cuellar said he met the father weeks earlier when he and his family were at the shelter and decided to cross the river. Cuellar tried to persuade the family not to go.

"He said, 'God will help me to cross the river with the kids,'" he said.

The Border Patrol later rescued four people from the river, including two children, and recovered the body of a baby. The missing father and two children have not been found and are presumed dead.

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**NOGALES:** A family affair

Ninoska Marisol Martinez Ortiz cradles her 15-month-old baby in her arms, occasionally wiping the child's runny nose, as she describes the time she has spent in Nogales. She had spent 45 days on the Mexican border town's wait list, which has about 1,000 names on it.

She was among several dozen immigrants, mostly from Central America and Mexico, who gathered at a chapel adorned with images of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"How many people have been here 30 days?" a reporter asks. About half of the hands go up.

Sheyla Matamoros has been there 48 days. Carlos Quintero doesn't know how long his wait has been.

Brenda Nieblas, whose family manages another local shelter, keeps the list of new arrivals.

Before she was involved, Nieblas says hundreds of migrants would wait at the border crossing and many would try to rush in when U.S. authorities called people for processing.

Now, she keeps track of names and assigns numbers. Most days, only a few migrants are admitted. Some days, no one gets in.

When they first arrive, some of the migrants are sent to a Red Cross first aid station — like the mother whose 3-year-old wouldn't stop crying. A medical staffer found no infection but said she was dehydrated from the journey north.

They are then connected with Nieblas, who puts them on the list, assigns them to a shelter in Nogales and notifies them when their time comes.

**SAN LUIS RIO COLORADO:** 'There really is no schedule'

Darwin Mora manages two giant white boards with hundreds of numbers in black marker, each one representing a family or single adult. When CBP tells Mexican authorities how many people it wants, it falls to Mora to have them ready. Each family that crosses or cancels is marked with an X.

Mora, a towering figure and fast talker who prides himself on attention to detail, says CBP can call any day from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. During those hours, he never strays far from the boards under a green canopy, which are divided in neat columns and rows. In the lower left corner of each box is a number to represent the number of people in the family.

"There really is no schedule," he said. "It would be so good if we had a fixed schedule but, in reality, it could be at 7 at night, 3 in the afternoon. There is no regular number. 'Hey, I need a group of two. I need a group of five.' Nothing is the same."

After a large encampment of asylum seekers was shut down earlier this year — with more than 200 families lined up under tarps on a strip of dirt and breathing exhaust fumes from cars — Mora enforces a new rule that limits camping on the border to six tarps and 15 families. Those slots are for families about to be called, allowing them to be ready on a moment's notice.

There are about 900 people on the list, assuming three people per family. Recent arrivals are expected to wait at least five months.

Isabel Mola, 29, fled an abusive marriage in central Mexico two months ago with her three sons, ages 8, 5 and 1. A friend told her San Luis Rio Colorado was safe and the waits to cross the border were tolerable. She is No. 306 on the white board and doesn't know how long she will be there.

"Some days they take people, then they don't, then it's every third day," she said after preparing a large pot of vegetable soup for at the migrant shelter for women and children where she stays.

Mora knows his ownership of the list is temporary. The Venezuelan immigrant is waiting with his wife and two sons and hopes to settle with family in Phoenix after claiming asylum.

Mora is training a Mexican asylum seeker to manage the list when his number, 181, is called.

"When the time comes for me to cross, he knows everything," Mora said of his successor. "I have total faith in him. You have to pick the right replacement because the list is a big, big, big responsibility."

**TIJUANA and MEXICALI:** A notebook, and waiting for the phone call

Tijuana is most experienced with a numbering system, having established one in 2016 when Haitians

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had to wait in Mexico for a chance at refuge in the United States. Its waiting list stands at about 4,800. Grupos Beta, a unit of Mexico's immigration agency that provides food, transportation and aid to migrants, keeps guard at night over tattered notebooks and hands them over to volunteers during the day to register new arrivals. On a recent Saturday, there were nearly 100 people in line to get a spot in the notebook — almost exclusively Cameroonians who arrived the previous day.

A volunteer with a bullhorn then ran through 110 numbers to fill 70 slots to cross that day.

In nearby Mexicali, Grupos Beta employees in bright orange shirts call out those whose numbers are up. Mexicali — a city of about 1 million across from Calexico, California — has about 800 names on its list.

Two migrant shelter managers said they get a day's notice of the next numbers to be called, but Heidi Lainez and her 3-year-old son, Gonzalo, got only a half-hour warning that their slots — 2,155 and 2,166 — were up. She had waited a month.

"You have to have your suitcase packed," said Lainez, 29, of Honduras. "If you're not ready, you lose your turn. You always have to have your telephone in reach."

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**MATAMOROS:** A long wait and 'no space' for families

At the foot of the bridge connecting Matamoros, Mexico, to Brownsville, Texas, more than 20 sheets of paper have been taped to a large board with the typewritten names of more than 800 people. The migrants waiting in Matamoros check the board daily to see whose names have been crossed off with a black marker.

Some of the names have a line next to them with the word "rio," Spanish for river, denoting that they were believed to have crossed the Rio Grande to enter the U.S. without authorization.

Around 50 people can sleep in tents closest to the bridge if they are at the top of the list. The rest stay in nearby hotels, boarding rooms, or shelters.

Many who had questions about the list relied on Cynthia Mayrena, a 29-year-old woman from Nicaragua who had been on the list since January with her husband and 4-year-old son. She said she sees single adults and teenagers pass through far more quickly than families.

"Sometimes 20 days go by without a single one passing," she said. "They say there's no space there for families."

There are frequent allegations that Mexican government officials or security agents demand bribes to let people join the list or move up the list. Several migrants waiting at the bridge said they had not been solicited for a bribe, and that the list was seemingly run fairly, but very slowly.

The people who wait in the tents by the bridge have formed their own enclosed community. On a recent weekday morning, a woman from Honduras braided the hair of a woman from Venezuela. A child swung his hips with a hula hoop. Whistles and cheers went up when volunteers from a group called Team Brownsville arrived with a breakfast of milk, cereal, and boiled eggs.

But the encampment is a harsh place, especially in temperatures that already hit 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32 degrees Celsius) a month before summer starts. Some people scrape together 4 Mexican pesos — about 25 U.S. cents — to use the bathroom on the international bridge, and then come back.

One man climbed into the Rio Grande to bathe. The country he was waiting to enter was a short swim away, but he stayed close to the bank on the Mexican side.

And then he went back toward the tents. To wait.

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Associated Press writer Cedar Attanasio contributed to this report.

## Guard who detained school shooting suspect opened fire

By P. SOLOMON BANDA and KATHLEEN FOODY Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — A security guard credited with capturing one of the two suspects in this week's suburban Denver school shooting fired his weapon inside the school, a law enforcement official with knowledge of the case told The Associated Press on Thursday.

The security guard has not been identified but is a former Marine who has stayed out of the public eye since Tuesday, when two suspects opened fire at the STEM School Highlands Ranch, killing one student and injuring eight.

Two news organizations cited anonymous sources reported that authorities are investigating whether the guard mistakenly fired at a responding sheriff's deputy and may have wounded a student.

The law enforcement official spoke to The Associated Press on anonymity because the official was not authorized to make information public. The official did not address whether anyone was hit by the security guard's firing.

An attorney for the guard declined to directly answer questions Thursday about the media reports.

But the attorney, Robert Burk, said his client acted in the best interests of protecting the children at the school and helped resolve the situation without further bloodshed.

"He ran there as quick as he could and took what I think is decisive action that helped save lives," Burk said.

Three students have been hailed as heroes for disarming one of the suspects during Tuesday's shooting. One of them, Kendrick Castillo, was shot and killed during the struggle and a second, Joshua Jones, is recovering at home after being shot twice.

The security guard ran to the area of the shooting and apprehended one suspect in a hallway, said his employer, Grant Whitus of Boss High Level Protection, a former SWAT team leader who responded to the 1999 Columbine High School shooting.

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

In the years after Columbine, Whitus trained police across the country how to immediately confront active shooters in similar situations.

Burk also said the security guard heard reports of gunfire over his radio and ran to the area as fast as he could. Burk would not describe what his client saw or did once he arrived, saying he did not want to interfere with the ongoing investigation.

But he said the guard, a Marine Corps veteran who was deployed to Afghanistan and previously worked for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office, was a hero.

"I know that he took action to protect the children and help resolve the situation without further bloodshed or violence, and I don't know of any facts to support anything that my client did that was legally wrong or wasn't in the best interests of protecting the children," Burk said.

Officials have identified the suspects as 18-year-old Devon Erickson and 16-year-old Maya McKinney, whose attorney said uses male pronouns and the name Alec.

The two allegedly walked into the school through an entrance without metal detectors and opened fire in two classrooms just miles away from Columbine High School and just weeks after the 20th anniversary of a massacre there.

Investigators have not offered a motive for the shooting. Erickson and McKinney are scheduled to appear in court Friday to hear the charges filed against them.

An anonymous person who said she was the parent of a student at the school called the school district in December to make a number of complaints about the school, including that there was a lot of drug dealing and use and that there was student violence because of the high-pressure environment there.

The call was described in a defamation lawsuit filed by the school in response to the complaint. The other allegations included that the school was embezzling funds and sending money to China and Mexico and that students had learned to build a bomb at the school. The school denied all of the allegations.

KUSA-TV reported that a district letter summarizing the complaint said that the parent expressed concerns

about the possibility of a repeat of the school shootings at nearby Columbine and Arapahoe high schools. But the lawsuit does not mention specifically mention anything about a shooting.

Castillo was remembered Wednesday night at a vigil that was hit by disruptions, with many students staging a walkout amid complaints the vigil had been politicized and failed to include their voices.

Hundreds packed a high school gym for the event organized by the student arm of the Brady gun control group that included pro-gun control speeches by presidential hopeful Sen. Michael Bennet and U.S. Rep. Jason Crow, both Democrats.

At one point, someone shouted that students should be allowed to speak, and organizers talked with students in a hallway about how to include them.

Some students chanted and others railed against the media and called for remembering Castillo. Students eventually were invited to speak.

Teacher Emily Muellenberg told Colorado Public Radio that organizers had reached out to students before the event but didn't hear back.

## One by one, D-Day memories fade as war's witnesses die

By ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — One more funeral, one less witness to the world's worst war.

Bernard Dargols lived almost long enough to join the celebrations next month marking 75 years since the D-Day, 75 years since he waded onto Omaha Beach as an American soldier to help liberate France from the Nazis who persecuted his Jewish family.

Just shy of his 99th birthday, Dargols died last week. To the strains of his beloved American jazz, he was laid to rest Thursday at France's most famous cemetery, Pere Lachaise.

An ever-smaller number of veterans will stand on Normandy's shores on June 6 for D-Day's 75th anniversary. Many will salute fallen comrades from their wheelchairs. As each year passes, more firsthand history is lost.

Four weeks from now, U.S. President Donald Trump and other world leaders will pay homage to the more than 2 million American, British, Canadian and other Allied forces involved in the D-Day operation on June 6, 1944, and the ensuing battle for Normandy that helped pave the way for Hitler's defeat.

Dargols outlived most of them, and knew the importance of sustaining their memory.

"I'm convinced that we have to talk about the war to children, so that they understand how much they need to preserve the peace," he wrote in a 2012 memoir.

Until the end, Dargols battled complacency, intolerance and Holocaust deniers who claim that D-Day was "just a movie."

In recent years, "seeing any type of violence, of anti-Semitism and racism, either in France in Europe or in the U.S." really upset him, granddaughter Caroline Jolivet said.

Normandy schoolteachers, veterans' families and military memorials are laboring against time to record survivors' stories for posterity.

In history's biggest amphibious invasion, on that fateful June 6, some 160,000 Allied forces came ashore to launch Operation Overlord to wrest Normandy from Nazi control. More than 4,000 Allied forces were killed on that day alone. Nearly half a million people were killed on both sides by the time the Allies liberated Paris in August 1944.

It's unclear exactly how many D-Day veterans are alive today. The survivors are now in their 90s or 100s.

Of the 73,000 Americans who took part, just 30 are currently scheduled to come to France for this year's anniversary. The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs estimates that about 348 American World War II veterans die every day. All but three of the 177 French forces involved in D-Day are gone.

Every day, the names of the departed accumulate, tweeted by veterans groups, published in local newspapers.

Dargols might have made it to Normandy this year. It meant a lot to him.

His story is both unusual and emblematic: Born in France, he left Paris in 1938 for New York to learn his

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father's sewing machine trade. He watched from afar, sickened, as the Nazis occupied his homeland. His Jewish relatives were sent to camps, or fled in fear.

Determined to fight back but skeptical of French General Charles de Gaulle's resistance force, he joined the U.S. Army instead.

With the 2nd Infantry Division, Dargols sailed from Britain on June 5 and only made it to Normandy on June 8, after three interminable days on choppy seas. The road he took inland from Omaha Beach now carries his name.

The battle to wrest Normandy from the Nazis took longer than the Allies thought, but for Dargols the prize at the end was invaluable. When he made it to Paris, he went to his childhood apartment and found his mother — unexpectedly alive.

For four decades, he didn't talk much about the war. But as more and more survivors died, and at his granddaughter's urging, he realized the importance of speaking out and sharing his stories with schools and journalists.

Friends and family remembered him Thursday as shy but courageous, a lover of oysters and pastrami sandwiches, known for his mischievous smile.

Jolivet, his granddaughter, told the AP of his yearning for leaders who "bring people together, instead of divide them."

Dargols would have had a clear message for the D-Day anniversary, she said: "Never take democracy for granted. Dictatorship is always a bad solution. Violence is always a bad solution. Keep democracy alive. Fight for democracy, for freedom, for peace."

The cultural director at Normandy's World War II memorial in Caen, Isabelle Bournier, frets about this fading message, as she watches schoolchildren cycle through her museum every day.

"The parents and grandparents of 13-year-olds today didn't experience the war, so the family stories, the family history — where helmets are brought out, where we spoke about what it was like — has been lost," she said.

"They don't know the names of the landing beaches," she said. "Pupils spend less time studying World War II than they did 30 years ago, and so the role of D-Day has been reduced."

Dargols himself worried about the day when all the veterans will be gone.

"It could start again," he wrote in his memoir. "We must be vigilant, at all times."

John Leicester and Jeffrey Schaeffer contributed.

## Fake German heiress sentenced to 4-12 years behind bars

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Anna Sorokin, the German con artist who passed herself off as a wealthy heiress to swindle banks, hotels and even close friends as she lived out a high-society, Instagram-ready fantasy in New York, was sentenced Thursday to four to 12 years in prison.

The 28-year-old, who had played with her own tabloid image during the trial by wearing stylish dresses to court, looked despondent as the verdict was announced. She pressed her hand to her face and squeezed her eyes shut, appearing to hold back tears.

Judge Diane Kiesel said Sorokin had been "blinded by the glitter and glamour of New York City" as she turned to fraud to finance a life she could never afford. But the judge turned down a request by Sorokin's lawyers to sentence her to the time she has already spent in jail awaiting trial.

"I am stunned by the depth of the defendant's deception," Kiesel said, adding that she hoped to send a message to Sorokin's internet following "that her behavior is unacceptable."

"Certainly she didn't think about the people she scammed," the judge added.

The sentencing capped a spectacular case that drew international attention and tabloid headlines. Netflix and HBO are both working on shows based on Sorokin's audacious efforts to finagle her way into the Manhattan socialite scene.

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She was convicted last month on multiple counts of larceny and theft and has been in custody since her October 2017 arrest—time behind bars that will be credited toward her sentence. The judge also ordered Sorokin to pay nearly \$200,000 in restitution and a \$24,000 fine.

U.S. Immigrations and Customs Enforcement said it will seek to deport Sorokin to Germany following her release from state prison.

Moments before she was sentenced, Sorokin briefly addressed the court, saying, "I apologize for the mistakes I made."

Her defense attorney, Todd Spodek, told a gaggle of reporters that Sorokin was "holding up OK." He described the prison sentence as "expected" but said Sorokin will pursue an appeal.

"She's a tough woman," Spodek said, noting she has been at Rikers Island for more than 500 days.

Sorokin forged a new identity — Anna Delvey — and defrauded financial institutions and Manhattan celebrities into believing she had a fortune of \$67 million (60 million euros) overseas that could cover her jet-setting lifestyle, high-end clothing and lavish hotel stays. She falsely claimed her father was a diplomat or an oil baron and falsified bank records. In fact, her father told New York magazine he's a former trucker who runs a heating-and-cooling business.

Her ruse included an application for a \$22 million loan to fund a private arts club, complete with exhibitions, installations and pop-up shops, prosecutors said. She was denied that loan but persuaded one bank to lend her \$100,000 that she failed to repay.

In all, prosecutors accused her of stealing some \$275,000, including a \$35,400 bill she failed to pay for a plane she chartered to and from the Berkshire Hathaway shareholders meeting in Omaha, Nebraska. She went to great lengths to ensure others paid her way, even as she had "not a cent to her name, as far as we can determine," prosecutor Catherine McCaw said following Sorokin's arrest.

"An ordinary person would just take coach," McCaw told Kiesel at Thursday's hearing. "The defendant did not want an ordinary life, and she was willing to steal in order to get that."

The jury convicted Sorokin of four counts of theft of services, three counts of grand larceny and one count of attempted grand larceny.

Jurors acquitted her of two counts, including an allegation that she promised a friend an all-expenses paid trip to Morocco and then stuck her with the \$62,000 bill. She was also found not guilty of one of the most serious charges in the indictment: attempting to steal more than \$1 million from City National Bank.

Spodek argued that Sorokin had been "buying time" and always intended to settle her debts. He portrayed her as an ambitious entrepreneur and said she lacked criminal intent.

McCaw rejected that characterization, saying Sorokin showed "almost no remorse" throughout the proceedings. The prosecutor said Sorokin seemed to revel at the plight of her victims and showed more concern for her attire than the emotions of those she hurt.

## Trump to nominate Shanahan for top Pentagon post

By **ROBERT BURNS** and **LOLITA C. BALDOR** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday said he will nominate Patrick Shanahan to be his second secretary of defense, putting an end to months of speculation about the former Boeing executive's standing in the administration.

Shanahan has been leading the Pentagon as acting secretary since Jan. 1, a highly unusual arrangement for arguably the most sensitive Cabinet position. He took over after Jim Mattis resigned.

"Acting Secretary Shanahan has proven over the last several months that he is beyond qualified to lead the Department of Defense, and he will continue to do an excellent job," White House press secretary Sarah Sanders said in a statement.

Moments later, Shanahan spoke to reporters outside the Pentagon, saying he was very excited about the nomination and looking forward to a job he said requires him to "spin a lot of plates."

"The biggest challenge is balancing it all. For me it's about practicing selectful neglect, so that we can stay focused on the future," Shanahan said, adding with a grin, "I called my mom. She was super happy."

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Indeed, in Shanahan's tenure at the department he's had to deal with a wide array of international hotspots, ranging from missile launches by North Korea to the sudden shift of military ships and aircraft to the Middle East to deal with potential threats from Iran.

The announcement comes close on the heels of an investigation by the Defense Department's inspector general over accusations that Shanahan had shown favoritism toward Boeing during his time as deputy defense secretary, while disparaging Boeing competitors. The probe appeared to stall his nomination, but the IG wrapped up the investigation rapidly and cleared Shanahan of any wrongdoing.

The IG interviewed Shanahan as well as 33 witnesses under oath, including Mattis and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"We did not substantiate any of the allegations. We determined that Mr. Shanahan fully complied with his ethics agreements and his ethical obligations regarding Boeing and its competitors," the report said.

Shanahan wields none of the star power of Trump's first defense secretary. And that may be just the thing for a commander in chief who seemed to resent Mattis for his reputation in Washington as a superior strategist and a moderating influence on an impulsive president.

Two months before Mattis resigned, citing policy differences, Trump publicly questioned whether he was "sort of a Democrat." After the former Marine general quit, Trump spoke more harshly, calling Mattis a failure, and insisted he had fired him, even though Mattis had resigned first.

Shanahan, 56, has a lifetime of experience in the defense industry but little in government. In more than four months as the acting secretary, he has focused on implementing the national defense strategy that was developed during Mattis' tenure and emphasizes a shift from the resources and tactics required to fight small wars against extremist groups to what Shanahan calls "great power" competition with China and Russia.

The Shanahan nomination is not known to face any organized opposition in Congress, although some members have been lukewarm on him. Sen. James Inhofe, the Oklahoma Republican who is chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, has questioned why Trump was taking so long to seek the Senate's consent but has indicated he would support Shanahan. Others have questioned whether Shanahan might be more willing to endorse plans or policies coming out of the White House.

This is only the third time in history that the Pentagon has been led by an acting chief. The last was William H. Taft, who served for two months in 1989 after President George H.W. Bush's first choice to be defense secretary, John Tower, became mired in controversy and ultimately failed to be confirmed by the Senate. Dick Cheney, the future vice president under President George W. Bush, then was nominated and confirmed.

Presidents typically take pains to ensure the Pentagon is being run by a Senate-confirmed official, given the grave responsibilities that include sending young Americans into battle, ensuring the military is ready for extreme emergencies like nuclear war and managing overseas alliances that are central to U.S. security.

Shanahan, who grew up in Seattle, earned a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Washington and two advanced degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He joined Boeing in 1986, rose through its ranks and is credited with rescuing a troubled Dreamliner 787 program. He also led the company's missile defense and military helicopter programs.

Trump has seemed attracted to Shanahan partially for his work on one of the president's pet projects — creating a Space Force. Trump also has publicly lauded Boeing, builder of many of the military's most prominent aircraft, including the Apache and Chinook helicopters, the C-17 cargo plane and the B-52 bomber, as well as the iconic presidential aircraft, Air Force One.

Although a few members of the Senate have rhetorically roughed up Shanahan, he has not generated broad opposition during his months of auditioning for the nomination. Sen. Lindsey Graham, a South Carolina Republican, butted heads with Shanahan over the administration's Syria policy, but that confrontation quickly faded after the White House partially reversed course by agreeing to keep a few hundred troops in Syria rather than withdrawing all 2,000.

Shanahan was the deputy secretary of defense during Mattis' two-year tenure. No one thought of him then as a potential No. 1 since he had never previously served in government and carried little political

sway in Washington or in foreign capitals. Aides say that during his 17 months as deputy, Shanahan was deeply engaged in the full range of policy issues and briefed on military operations. He shares Mattis's conviction that the Pentagon needs to shift its focus from fighting insurgent wars to preparing for and deterring armed conflict with big powers like China.

"China, China, China," was his message to senior department officials the day he took over from Mattis, aides said.

## **Pope mandates reporting of sex abuse to church, not police**

**By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press**

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

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

Abuse victims and their advocates said the law was a step forward, but not enough since it doesn't require the crimes to be reported to police and essentially tasks discredited bishops who have mishandled abuse for decades with policing their own.

It's the latest effort by Francis to respond to the global 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 as they prepare to adopt accountability measures next month to respond to the scandal there.

"People must know that bishops are at the service of the people," said Archbishop Charles Scicluna, the Vatican's longtime sex crimes prosecutor. "They are not above the law, and if they do wrong, they must be reported."

The decree requires the world's 415,000 Catholic priests and 660,000 nuns to tell church authorities when they learn or have "well-founded motives to believe" 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.

It doesn't require them to report to police, however. The Vatican has long argued that different legal systems make a universal reporting law impossible, and that imposing one could endanger the church in places where Catholics are a persecuted minority. But the procedures do for the first time put into universal law that victims cannot be silenced, that clergy must obey civil reporting requirements where they live, and that their obligation to report to the church in no way interferes with that.

The global victims group Ending Clergy Abuse, or ECA, said the Vatican shouldn't hide behind the argument that mandatory reporting to police is a problem in some countries.

"The church should establish the law for reporting and justify the exception," said ECA's Peter Iseley. "Instead, they are using the exception as a pretext for not reporting sexual abuse to civil authorities and to keep abuse secret."

If implemented fully, though, the Vatican could well see an avalanche of abuse and cover-up reports. The decree 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 to the conscience of individual priests and nuns.

Canon lawyer Kurt Martens called the new law "revolutionary" by making sex abuse of minors and adults, as well as official cover-ups, subject to mandatory reporting.

"We owe gratitude to Pope Francis for this universal law of the Church, ensuring that a victim who wishes to tell his or her story cannot be silenced," Martens tweeted.

Anne Barrett Doyle of BishopAccountability praised some of the provisions but said they weren't enough, primarily because there were no sanctions envisaged for violations, and because the process remained

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entirely internal.

"Bishops watching bishops does not work," she said.

While there are no punitive measures foreseen for noncompliance, 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 against them.

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.

Cardinal Marc Ouellet, head of the Vatican's bishops' office, 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 recently following reports, including by The Associated Press and the Vatican's own women's magazine, of sisters being sexually assaulted by priests.

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.

The law says victims can't be forced to keep quiet, even though the investigation itself is still conducted under pontifical secret. And in a novelty, the law requires that if victims request it, they must be told of the outcome of the investigation — again a response to complaints that victims are kept in the dark about how their claims were handled.

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 with adults against him that the Vatican had received. Francis defrocked McCarrick 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 bishop 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. And it recommends that a special fund be set up to pay for the investigations, particularly in poorer parts of the world.

Once the investigation is over, the metropolitan sends the results to the Vatican for a decision on how to proceed.

The new law requires 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.

The procedures published Thursday are likely to form a key legal framework for U.S. bishops when they meet in Baltimore June 11-13 to adopt new accountability procedures, though it will certainly force them to scrap their existing proposals and make them conform to the new law.

The head of the U.S. conference, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, said the law was a "blessing" and that the conference was already working on how to implement it.

But the law is essentially a variation of a counterproposal to DiNardo's planned measures made last year by Chicago Cardinal Blase Cupich, envisaging using the metropolitan bishop aided by lay experts to investigate bishops.

The law takes 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.

## Parents can't delete what kids tell Amazon voice assistant

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.

Consumer Reports said that its own tests also found that the Echo Dot Kids remembered information that was deleted, including a birth date and the color of a dog. The nonprofit organization said its researchers were able to delete data from regular versions of Echo Dot and Alexa.

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 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, as 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. That 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.

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AP Business Writer Joseph Pisani contributed to this report.

## Juul's 'switch' campaign for smokers draws new scrutiny

By **MATTHEW PERRONE AP Health Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The young models and the candy-colored graphics that helped propel Juul to the top of the e-cigarette market are gone. In their place are people like Carolyn, a 54-year-old former smoker featured in new TV commercials touting Juul as an alternative for middle-age smokers.

"I don't think anyone including myself thought that I could make the switch," Carolyn says, sitting in a suburban living room as piano music quietly plays in the background.

The tagline: "Make the switch."

Under intense scrutiny amid a wave of underage vaping, Juul is pushing into television with a multimillion-dollar campaign rebranding itself as a stop-smoking aid for adults trying to kick cigarettes. But the strategy is raising concerns from anti-smoking experts and activists who say the company is making unproven claims for its product.

On Thursday, six anti-tobacco and health groups called on the Food and Drug Administration, which regulates e-cigarettes, to investigate Juul's marketing efforts across TV, radio and other formats.

"Juul, a product that FDA has found to be largely responsible for the current epidemic of youth usage of highly addictive e-cigarettes, is being advertised and marketed on a massive scale as a smoking cessation product, without the required review and approval by FDA," said the letter from the American Heart Association, the Truth Initiative, the American Academy of Pediatrics and three other groups.

In a statement, FDA spokesman Michael Felberbaum said only that the agency "continues to closely scrutinize potentially false, misleading or unsubstantiated claims" to make sure the public is "not misled into mistakenly using inherently dangerous tobacco products for medical uses."

Neither Juul nor any other e-cigarette has been approved by the FDA to help smokers quit.

Indeed, Juul's website carries the disclaimer: "Juul products are not intended to be used as cessation products, including for the cure or treatment of nicotine addiction" — a point underscored Thursday by a Juul representative.

Over the past half-century, the FDA has granted approval to just a few kick-the-habit products, including nicotine gums, patches, lozenges and prescription drugs.

Anti-tobacco experts are perplexed that the FDA hasn't stopped Juul from pitching its nicotine-emitting device to millions of American smokers looking to quit cigarettes.

"I think Juul is skirting the edge of the law, and I think that the FDA is letting them get away with it," said Stan Glantz, a tobacco control researcher at the University of California San Francisco.

FDA enforcement is especially important, Glantz and others argue, because e-cigarettes are not subject to the decades-old laws that ban advertising of traditional cigarettes on TV, radio and billboards.

Most experts agree e-cigarettes are less harmful than the paper-and-tobacco variety because they don't produce all the cancer-causing byproducts found in smoke.

But researchers are only beginning to understand the unique risks of e-cigarettes, which emerging science suggests can damage the lungs and airways and contribute to precancerous growths. Those risks have led some experts to conclude that smokers who use both cigarettes and e-cigarettes are unlikely to get any health benefit.

Survey and study results suggest about 10% to 30% of smokers who vape are able to quit cigarettes. The rest use both products.

Juul points to recent survey results that suggest nearly 50% of smokers who tried Juul stopped using cigarettes within three months. The company-funded research is based on online questionnaires. Participants did not undergo chemical testing to verify they had quit, a technique used in more rigorous studies.

Juul spent more than \$11.8 million on the TV ads over the first four months of the year, according to ad tracker iSpot.tv. The spots aired more than 2,800 times on cable channels including A&E, the Food Network and the Discovery Channel.

The TV campaign followed more than \$75 million in spending on radio, print, online and outdoor display advertising last year, according to Kantar, a tracking and analytics company. That was more than what was spent by tobacco giant Altria, the maker of Marlboro cigarettes and a recent investor in Juul. Because

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of the restrictions on tobacco advertising, Altria and other tobacco companies spend most of their marketing budgets on in-store displays and promotional mailings to smokers.

The Juul ads carefully avoid key words associated with FDA-approved smoking aids, such as "quit," "addiction" and "health." Instead, the company's testimonials refer to "switching" to Juul to get a "nicotine fix" and "improve" one's life.

"I think the Juul ads are very carefully written and lawyered to confuse the public," Glantz said.

The FDA has broad leeway to decide which regulations it will actually enforce. In the case of e-cigarettes, all vaping products now on the market are technically illegal, under an Obama-era regulation that required manufacturers to submit applications by 2018. But recently departed FDA Commissioner Scott Gottlieb decided the FDA would not enforce the policy until 2021, in part because of industry complaints that earlier regulation would wipe out most vaping businesses.

"There are a ton of non-enforcement decisions going on at FDA, and that's clearly what's happened with the advertising by Juul," said Eric Lindblom of Georgetown University's law school, who previously served as a senior official in the FDA's tobacco center.

The light U.S. approach to regulation contrasts with that of Europe, where nicotine levels are capped and advertising is tightly restricted.

Britain and other countries have had success promoting e-cigarettes as a reduced-risk product to smokers without seeing the surge in underage vaping gripping the U.S. But they also ban most e-cigarette advertisements from television, newspapers, magazines and websites.

FDA rules permit marketing across all those formats, provided ads carry a single warning message: "This product contains nicotine. Nicotine is an addictive chemical."

Paul Cheeseman of Philadelphia said smokers may need to try a number of options before finding something that helps them quit. The 37-year-old accountant quit smoking two years ago after a neighbor gave him a Juul device he had confiscated from his child.

Cheeseman said he thinks the Juul ads are effective because they tap into smokers' negative feelings about being "controlled by the ritual of smoking." He said Juul works because it helps replace both the nicotine and the physical ritual of smoking.

"While Juul might not be the most trustworthy company, and the science isn't very clear yet, I can positively say that Juul has worked out very well for me," he said.

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## **Trump calls on Congress to end 'surprise medical bills'**

**By KEVIN FREKING and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday called for an end to "surprise medical bills," the astonishingly high charges insured patients can face when a member of a medical team that treats them is not in their insurer's network.

"Not a pleasant surprise," Trump said of bills that arrive in the mail and run to tens of thousands of dollars. "A very unpleasant surprise."

The administration threw its support behind efforts by lawmakers of both parties to address the problem, laying out a set of goals for legislation.

With polls showing that voters trust Democrats over Republicans on health care, Trump has been hitting pocket-book medical issues that resonate with the middle-class, like prescription drug costs. He was joined at a White House event by patients, one who got a \$110,000 bill after a heart attack, and another who got a bill for \$17,850 for a test her insurer would have paid \$100 for.

"So this must end," Trump said. "We're going to hold insurance companies and hospitals totally account-

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able." The president said he wants to get it done "quickly," and Sen. Lamar Alexander, R-Tenn., chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, said he hoped to deliver a bill in July.

Just before Trump spoke, the Democratic and Republican leaders of a key House committee said they are ready to move on legislation.

"No family should be left in financial ruin through no fault of their own, which is why we have been working together on a bipartisan solution to protect patients that we hope to announce soon," Energy and Commerce Chairman Frank Pallone, D-N.J., and ranking Republican Greg Walden, R-Ore., said in a joint statement. The panel oversees the health insurance industry.

Pallone and Walden are not alone; more than a half-dozen senators and representatives have floated ideas or drafted legislation. Rep. Lloyd Doggett, D-Texas, chairman of the Ways and Means health panel, has a bill. Sens. Bill Cassidy, R-La., and Michael Bennet, D-Colo., collaborated on a bipartisan proposal, and other plans come from New Hampshire Democratic Sens. Maggie Hassan and Jeanne Shaheen.

"Surprise" bills amounting to tens of thousands of dollars can hit patients and their families when they are most vulnerable — after a medical emergency or following a complex surgical procedure. Often patients are able to negotiate lower charges by working with their insurers and the medical provider. But the process usually takes months, adding stress and anxiety. Sometimes it doesn't work out and the bills are sent to collection agencies.

White House officials outlined a set of principles for legislation that Trump can back:

- Patients who receive emergency care should not be hit with charges that exceed the amount paid to in-network providers. In an emergency, patients are in no position to check whether their insurers have contracted with the surgeons or anesthesiologists who provide care.

- Patients going in for a scheduled procedure should get upfront information about whether their clinicians are in their insurer's network and what costs they will face. Patients should not get out-of-network bills from a provider they did not pick.

- Fixes should not add to federal health care costs.

States also have been working to protect consumers from surprise medical bills. A survey of states by Georgetown University found that about half have acted to protect consumers. California, Connecticut, Florida and a handful of others, have the most comprehensive protections.

But states don't have jurisdiction over most health plans sponsored by large employers, which cover about 100 million people and operate under the umbrella of a federal law.

A coalition that includes major insurers, business groups and consumer organizations has been pressing Congress for federal legislation. The basic elements would include informing patients when a doctor or service provider is out-of-network, setting a federal standard for what out-of-network clinicians can charge, and guaranteeing that the changes do not lead to premium increases.

A major hang-up has been agreeing on payment rates for out-of-network services that are mutually acceptable to medical specialists, hospitals and insurers, who have conflicting interests.

Another sticking point is the role of arbitration in settling billing issues. Some doctors' groups favor arbitration, but White House officials who spoke with reporters Thursday said they're not keen on it.

Trump's move was applauded by America's Health Insurance Plans, the main industry trade group. The Federation of American Hospitals, which represents for-profit institutions, expressed support for the goal of ending surprise billing, but cautioned against some proposed fixes.

Insurers form networks of doctors and hospitals, in part, to gain some leverage for negotiating reimbursements. Usually patients pay a bigger share of the bill for any care sought outside those networks.

But sometimes, patients don't know they got care outside of their network until they get their bill.

Jack Hoadley, a research professor emeritus at Georgetown, told lawmakers last month that unexpected medical bills are a major concern for consumers, with two-thirds of Americans saying they are "very worried" or "somewhat worried" that they or someone in their family will receive a surprise bill.

He said programs like Medicare, Medicaid and veterans care protect consumers from out-of-network bills. But the same protections do not exist for most private insurance.

## 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 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.

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."

Reacting to the AP's reporting, Rep. Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., the chairman of the House Homeland

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Security Committee expressed frustration that Facebook has made so little progress on blocking content despite reassurances he received from the company.

"This is yet another deeply worrisome example of Facebook's inability to manage its own platforms — and the extent to which it needs to clean up its act," he said. "Facebook must not only rid its platforms of terrorist and extremist content, but it also needs to be able to prevent it from being amplified."

But as a stark indication of how easily users can evade Facebook, one page from a user called "Nawan al-Faransa" 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.

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

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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 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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Have a tip? Contact the authors securely at <https://www.ap.org/tips>.

## **Louis Vuitton show transports guests without flight at JFK**

**By NEKESA MUMBI MOODY AP Entertainment Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Louis Vuitton's cruise show transported guests back in time as it showcased flashy 1980s-inspired outfits in a decidedly retro venue: the spacey, once-abandoned TWA terminal at JFK Airport.

The white concrete and glass structure, with its smooth curves invoking an aircraft from the future, was as much a draw as the designs by Louis Vuitton creative director Nicolas Ghesquière. Designed by Finnish architect Eero Saarinen, the terminal was a sensation when it debuted in the early 1960s and is on the National Register of Historic Places. It was closed in 2001 when the TWA airline shut down but is getting a new life and is set to reopen next week as an attraction that includes a hotel, shopping and restaurants.

For the Louis Vuitton show, the inside was transformed into a tropical oasis overflowing with tropical foliage that stretched even into the bathrooms; the centerpiece staircase above was made even more dramatic amid a sea of green, while retro signs including an old school flight departure board hung above.

Jennifer Connelly, part of a starry celebrity contingent that included Emma Stone, Cate Blanchett, Julianne Moore, Karlie Kloss, Willow Smith, Michelle Williams and newlyweds Joe Jonas and Sophie Turner, said the terminal was among the reasons she came out Wednesday night.

"It's bold and innovative," she told The Associated Press. "There's nothing that looks quite like it."

Connelly wore a Louis Vuitton piece from last year's cruise show, a flowery blue and pink dress that looked partly inspired by the Victorian era with its layered, wide collars.

But for this show, Ghesquière seemed to be inspired by the glamour of the 1980s; models walked down the expansive two-level runway in satin-like miniskirts accented with a billowing top layer; a white leather jacket that had black lower sleeves with a checkered print looked like it could have fit in any video from the early days of MTV. One black suit dress with pinstripes had its shoulders cut out, so there were no shoulder pads, but the piece gave a nod to the 80s with its poofy sleeves. And several skirts had the ribbon pattern of the era.

The collection had a fall feel, with plenty of leather jackets, skirts and coats, but also pieces that mixed materials, like a blue, white and black leather jacket that transformed into a flowing gold material at the chest.

There of course were also the Louis Vuitton famous bags, including clutches and one that was electronic with images flashing on it, yet another eye-catching moment of the evening.

## **Powell: Policies needed to address slowdown in income growth**

**By MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said Thursday the United States needs to find ways to address a decades-long slowdown in income growth and upward economic mobility.

In a speech at a Fed research conference, Powell said that incomes have grown more slowly for middle-class families since the 1970s than for higher-income households.

In the 1950s, more than 80 percent of children born into middle-class households grew up to out-earn their parents. But more recently, only about half do, the Fed chairman said.

"The kind of generational improvements in living standards that were long the hallmark of the American middle class have steadily diminished," Powell said.

Powell pointed to two factors contributing to the problem: an increase in income inequality and slower growth in worker productivity. Productivity, a key factor to boost living standards, has been weak over the past 10 years of this economic expansion.

Powell also noted a widening gap in economic prospects between those with a college degree and those without one. Well over 90 percent of working-age men in the 1960s held a job, with little difference in employment between those with or without a college degree.

While the share of college-educated working-age men with a job has slipped slightly from more than 95 percent in 1967 to around 90 percent today, it has plunged for other groups, Powell said. In 1967, 90 percent of male high school graduates were working, but that figure has fallen to only about 80 percent today.

In addition to educational discrepancies, Powell said economic resources differ markedly by race, education, occupation and geography. He said it was "crucial" to address these concerns.

"Sound public policies can support families and businesses and help more Americans reach and remain in the middle class," he said.

Powell did not offer solutions to the problems he raised but said the Fed's two-day research conference would examine these issues through various research papers.

## **US sanctions to hit Iran's metals industry, a major employer**

**By NASSER KARIMI and MEHDI FATTAHI Associated Press**

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — U.S. sanctions have targeted Iran's government, its paramilitary forces and the oil exports that fund them. Now they are hitting its vital steel, aluminum, copper and iron industries.

The new sanctions, imposed as Tehran announced its partial withdrawal from its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, seem to be moving ever closer to directly affecting the country's 80 million people, rather than the leadership. The metals industry is a major employer and a rare bright spot for Iran's anemic economy.

Many Iranians already feel the vise squeezing ever tighter around the country, which has caused its currency, the rial, to depreciate rapidly and push the price of nearly everything beyond the reach of ordinary consumers.

"I don't think (the U.S.) can, or wants to fight Iran ... because wars are no longer a thing," said Ahmad Hashemi, who sells steel products like sheet metal and beams in southern Tehran. "Nowadays, wars are economic wars. Look at these sanctions. It's so easy."

U.S. President Donald Trump issued his executive order Wednesday announcing the sanctions. That came just after Iran threatened to enrich its uranium stockpile closer to weapons-grade levels in 60 days if European leaders fail to negotiate new terms of the nuclear deal to protect Iran's ability to trade on the global market.

The new sanctions are part of Trump's maximalist policy targeting Iran after he pulled the U.S. out of the nuclear deal a year ago. The United States, Germany, Britain, France, Russia, China and the European Union signed the deal in 2015, lifting international sanctions on Iran in exchange for Tehran limiting its nuclear program.

But the Trump administration contends that the deal, reached under former President Barack Obama, should have included limits on Iran's ballistic missile program and curbed its regional influence. Supporters of the deal describe it as an important measure freezing Iran's nuclear program while offering a step toward further negotiations.

"We have imposed the toughest sanctions ever on this Iranian regime," said Brian Hook, a U.S. envoy for Iran. "We have designated nearly 1,000 individuals and entities since the beginning of the administration. We have taken Iran's oil exports to historic lows. And we have stopped issuing oil waivers to those who import Iranian oil, which means zeroing out the purchases of Iranian crude."

Iran's domestic metal industry includes dozen of steel mills, mainly government-owned, that employ about 50,000 workers. Of the 25 million tons of steel produced, Iran exports over 30%, earning nearly \$4 billion yearly. Its top markets have been Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, Iraq and Indonesia, according to the U.S. Commerce Department.

About 3,000 factories and workshops produce goods for Iran's domestic market ranging from kitchen utensils and building frames to offshore oil rigs and military vehicles. It also feeds into Iran's domestic car manufacturing plants.

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Metal-related industries employ about 10 percent of the country's 22 million workers, a report by Iran's parliament said. How the sanctions will affect Iran's miners remains unclear. About 6 percent of its 8,840 mines produce raw materials such as iron, copper and aluminum.

Tehran-based economic analyst Gholamreza Kiamenhr said he believed that the sanctions on the metals industry "possibly affects employment and production lines," although it won't be as crippling as those on Iran's oil industry.

Esfandyar Batmanghelidj, the founder of the Iranian economic website Bourse & Bazaar, said the measures appear aimed at stoking further unrest in the country. At the end of 2017 through the start of 2018, economic protests swept across 75 cities and towns, lasting for days and resulting in the deaths of dozens of people and the arrest of hundreds more.

Some demonstrations have already hit steel mills. In December, authorities detained an unspecified number of steelworkers after five weeks of protests over delays in paying salaries.

"Creating the conditions for mass unemployment — especially among the blue collar workers employed by state-owned enterprises who form the backbone of Iran's economy — is the likely aim of the Trump administration's latest round of sanctions," Batmanghelidj wrote.

It's also weakening the position of Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, the relatively moderate cleric whose signature accomplishment was the nuclear deal.

"The president should bravely admit the obvious defeat of his recent six years of strategies and resign," said Abdolreza Davari, a close adviser to former President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a hard-liner. "This will quickly prepare the ground for taking office by a new government that is capable to control the country in this current critical situation."

After the U.S. withdrew from the nuclear accord, it restored the crippling sanctions, exacerbating Iran's economic crisis. The rial, which traded at 32,000 to \$1 at the time of the accord, traded Thursday at 156,500, creeping further downward.

"Even before the latest sanctions, the previous ones already impacted our daily lives and have been effective," said a 52-year-old engineer who gave his name as Afshin. "If we say they had no effect we are deceiving ourselves. I can say that my family has gone from a middle-class family to a lower-class family. The situation is much worse than before."

Many believe the situation will only get worse as time goes on. Many of those who are young and unmarried discuss fleeing the country with friends. Those who are older simply shrug and watch as prices of everything from meat to medicines climb out of reach.

"We made a mistake when we shut down our nuclear program. As an Iranian, I say that was a mistake. If we start again and they impose sanctions, then we can at least say we are under sanctions for the nuclear program," said Hashemi, the steel products merchant. "Now we are wondering why we are under sanctions. We shut down the nuclear program, so why we are being punished with sanctions?"

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Associated Press writer Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed.

## **Pelosi pledges methodical action on 'constitutional crisis'**

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

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Thursday the country faces a "constitutional crisis" over President Donald Trump's resistance to congressional investigation, and she promised a methodical, if lengthy, effort to pursue oversight of the White House.

Pelosi made no promise for a swift House vote to hold Attorney General William Barr in contempt of Congress over his refusal to release special counsel Robert Mueller's full report, deferring to a fresh subpoena for the document from the Intelligence Committee that's due back next week. She continued to tamp down talk of impeachment.

Instead, Pelosi foreshadowed a long-game strategy of Congress confronting a White House she suggested is all but goading her with its refusal to comply with oversight demands.

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"The president thinks it is a laughing matter," Pelosi said. "This is about the American people and their right to know, and their election that is at stake -- and that a foreign government intervened in our election -- so we can prevent it from happening again."

"We won't go any faster than the facts take us or any slower."

The step-by-step approach has been Pelosi's touchstone for the escalating standoff between the two branches of government in the aftermath of Mueller's report. By rebuffing Congress, she said, the White House is essentially committing the kind of obstruction of justice Mueller probed in his report.

"The president is almost self-impeaching," she said.

The House Judiciary Committee voted Wednesday to hold Barr in contempt of Congress, capping a day of ever-deepening dispute between congressional Democrats and the Republican White House. Ahead of the vote, Trump 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.

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 intensified.

Democratic Rep. Adam Schiff of California, whose committee had previously requested the documents, said he had 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, declaring the party's goal was simply to damage him politically going into his re-election 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.

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. 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."

But 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."

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

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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.

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."

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.

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.

## Notre Dame's melted roof leaves astronomical lead levels

PARIS (AP) — Notre Dame Cathedral's melted roof has left astronomically high lead levels in the plaza outside and adjacent roads.

Paris police say lead levels from the roof were found to be between 10 and 20 grams per kilogram of ground — between 32 and 65 times the recommended limit by French health authorities of 0.3 grams per kilogram. The areas closest to the cathedral are currently closed.

The statement Thursday said the main danger is lead dust that could coat surfaces of nearby homes and businesses. To avoid lead poisoning, authorities have recommended a good cleaning with a damp cloth, and that pregnant women and children wash hands frequently.

Hundreds of tons of lead were used in Notre Dame's frame, as well as the church spire that burned and collapsed.

## Asian shares give up early gains on China-US trade jitters

By YURI KAGEYAMA AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Asian shares were mostly higher Friday but benchmarks in Shanghai and Hong Kong gave up earlier strong gains amid uncertainty over the potential outcome of trade talks between China and the U.S.

Japan's Nikkei 225 slipped 0.2% to 21,377.72. Australia's S&P/ASX 200 lost 0.1% to 6,293.30. South Korea's Kospi gained 0.3% to 2,108.04. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gained 0.9% to 28,543.86, while the Shanghai Composite gained 1.5% to 2,898.34 after briefly trading 2% higher.

Tensions between the world's two largest economies dragged stocks on Wall Street lower ahead of a Friday deadline when the United States said it would impose more tariffs on Chinese goods. The worries about trade this week have stifled what has been the hottest start to a year for U.S. stocks in decades.

"The U.S. may deliver on its threat of higher tariffs on Chinese products and China may reciprocate. The markets maybe priced in all this, but a knee-jerk selling looks inevitable," says Prakash Sakpal, economist at ING.

China has threatened to retaliate if President Donald Trump goes ahead with the tariff hikes, adding to the heated rhetoric from both sides that was shaking stock markets around the world.

Negotiators from both countries met Thursday and are continuing to meet Friday.

The S&P 500 fell 0.3% to 2,870.72. The benchmark index has essentially given back all its April gains,

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though it's still up 14.5% for the year.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 0.5% to 25,828.36. It was down nearly 450 points in morning trading before regaining much of the ground it lost.

The Nasdaq composite slid 0.4%, to 7,910.59. The Russell 2000 index of small company stocks gave up 0.3%, to 1,570.06.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude rose 44 cents to \$62.14 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It dropped 0.7% to settle at \$61.70 per barrel overnight. Brent crude, the international standard, added 34 cents to \$70.72 a barrel.

CURRENCIES: The dollar inched up to 109.88 Japanese yen from 109.77 yen. The euro strengthened to \$1.1230 from \$1.1216.

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## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, May 10, the 130th day of 2019. There are 235 days left in the year.

Today's Highlights in History:

On May 10, 1994, Nelson Mandela took the oath of office in Pretoria to become South Africa's first black president.

On this date:

In 1611, Sir Thomas Dale arrived in the Virginia Colony, where, as deputy governor, he instituted harsh measures to restore order.

In 1865, Confederate President Jefferson Davis was captured by Union forces in Irwinville, Georgia.

In 1869, a golden spike was driven in Promontory, Utah, marking the completion of the first transcontinental railroad in the United States.

In 1924, J. Edgar Hoover was named acting director of the Bureau of Investigation (later known as the Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI).

In 1933, the Nazis staged massive public book burnings in Germany.

In 1940, during World War II, German forces began invading the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Belgium and France. The same day, British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain resigned, and Winston Churchill formed a new government.

In 1963, the Rolling Stones recorded their first single for Decca Records in London, covering Chuck Berry's "Come On" (which ended up being redone) and "I Want to Be Loved" by Willie Dixon.

In 1968, the "Night of the Barricades" began in Paris' Latin Quarter as tens of thousands of student protesters erected obstacles against riot police; in the pre-dawn hours of May 11, the police moved in, resulting in violent clashes that left hundreds of people injured. Preliminary peace talks between the United States and North Vietnam began in the French capital.

In 1975, Sony began selling its Betamax home videocassette recorder in Japan.

In 1994, the state of Illinois executed serial killer John Wayne Gacy, 52, for the murders of 33 young men and boys.

In 1996, two Marine helicopters collided in the dark and crashed in a swamp at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, during a U.S.-British training exercise, killing 14 people.

In 2013, the Internal Revenue Service apologized for what it acknowledged was "inappropriate" targeting of conservative political groups during the 2012 election to see if they were violating their tax-exempt status. U.S. government scientists said worldwide levels of carbon dioxide, the chief greenhouse gas blamed for global warming, had hit a milestone, reaching an amount never before encountered by humans.

Ten years ago: House Speaker Nancy Pelosi made a surprise one-day visit to Baghdad to discuss U.S.-Iraqi

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economic relations with the prime minister. Pope Benedict XVI urged Middle East Christians to persevere in their faith as 20,000 people filled a Jordanian sports stadium where the pontiff celebrated the first open-air Mass of his Holy Land pilgrimage. Russia defended its gold medal at the World Hockey Championships in Bern, Switzerland, beating Canada 2-1 in a rematch of the previous year's final.

Five years ago: First lady Michelle Obama, delivering the weekly presidential radio and internet address in her husband's place, decried the kidnapping of scores of Nigerian schoolgirls by the group Boko Haram. Arkansas began issuing same-sex marriage licenses a day after a judge lifted a ban on such unions. Michael Sam was picked by the St. Louis Rams in the seventh round of the NFL draft, becoming the first openly gay player drafted by a pro football team.

One year ago: President Donald Trump announced that he would meet in Singapore with North Korea's Kim Jong Un on June 12; the announcement came hours after Trump hosted a welcome-home for three Americans who had been held by Kim's government.

Today's Birthdays: Author Barbara Taylor Bradford is 86. Rhythm-and-blues singer Henry Fambrough (The Spinners) is 81. Actor David Clennon is 76. Writer-producer-director Jim Abrahams is 75. Singer Donovan is 73. Singer-songwriter Graham Gouldman (10cc) is 73. Singer Dave Mason is 73. Actor Mike Hagerty is 65. Sports anchor Chris Berman is 64. Actor Bruce Penhall is 62. Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith, R-Miss., is 61. Former Sen. Rick Santorum, R-Pa., is 61. Actress Victoria Rowell is 60. Rock singer Bono (BAH'-noh) (U2) is 59. Former Sen. Dean Heller, R-Nev., is 59. Rock musician Danny Carey (Tool) is 58. Actor Darryl M. Bell is 56. Playwright Suzan-Lori Parks is 56. Model Linda Evangelista is 54. Rapper Young MC is 52. Actor Erik Palladino is 51. Rock singer Richard Patrick (Filter) is 51. Actor Lenny Venito is 50. Actor Dallas Roberts is 49. Actress Leslie Stefanson is 48. Actor-singer Todd Lowe is 47. Country musician David Wallace (Cole Deggs and the Lonesome) is 47. Actress Andrea Anders is 44. Race car driver Helio Castroneves is 44. Rock musician Jesse Vest is 42. Actor Kenan Thompson is 41. Rhythm-and-blues singer Jason Dalyrimple (Soul For Real) is 39. Rock musician Joey Zehr (The Click Five) is 36. Singer Ashley Poole (Dream) is 34. Actress Odette Annable is 34. Actress Lindsey Shaw is 30. Actress Lauren Potter is 29. Olympic gold medal swimmer Missy Franklin is 24.

Thought for Today: "When your mother asks, 'Do you want a piece of advice?' it is a mere formality. It doesn't matter if you answer yes or no. You're going to get it anyway." — Erma Bombeck, American humorist (1927-1996).