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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

"IT'S NICE TO
BE IMPORTANT,
BUT IT'S MORE
IMPORTANT TO
BE NICE."

-AUTHOR UNKNOWN

ACTIVITIES DIRECTOR WANTED

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➤ 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.



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Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

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

Saturday, May 25, 2019

STATE TRACK MEET @ SIOUX FALLS

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China Trade Negotiations: A Primer

South Dakota's manufacturers and ag producers have been at the tip of the spear in our trade negotiations with China. At a time when farmers and ranchers are facing the worst agricultural crisis since the 1980s, it's more important than ever the administration finalizes a trade deal with them that is good for American producers.

For the past two years, President Trump and members of his administration have been working on a trade deal with China that will level the playing field and stop their trade 'cheating' once and for all. China has been an unfair trading partner for decades. When President Trump took office, the average tariff we imposed on China was approximately 4 percent. Conversely, China's tariffs on U.S. goods were about 10 percent. While this alone is concerning, they are also stealing U.S. intellectual property, committing cyber espionage and engaging in unfair trade practices in order to gain advantages for Chinese companies. According to the U.S. Trade Representative, "Chinese theft of American IP currently costs between \$225 billion and \$600 billion annually." This must be stopped.

While we appeared to be close to a deal just a few weeks ago, China backtracked at the last minute and tried to renegotiate previously-agreed upon terms. In response, the U.S. raised tariffs on some Chinese imports and China retaliated with additional tariffs on U.S. goods that will take effect June 1. Nobody wins in this situation - raising tariffs on China will ultimately hurt the economies of both countries. More importantly, our farmers, ranchers and manufacturers are already paying a price.

Ideally, we would have signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) and finalized new agreements with our trading partners in Europe, North America and elsewhere to create a united front and put pressure on China to come to the negotiating table in good faith. When we have access to more markets in which we can sell U.S. products, the stronger hand we have in dealing with China.

When I speak with South Dakota producers and manufacturers, the majority of them tell me they want a trade deal in place with China, but they understand it needs to be a fair deal. At the end of the day, their message to me and to the president is that they're hurting and they can't take much more of this uncertainty, but they support the president's goal and want him to get the job done, as soon as possible. I continue to share their message with the White House every chance I get.

South Dakota producers and manufacturers are also paying attention to the U.S.-Mexico-Canada (USMCA) trade agreement that would replace the North American Free Trade Agreement, or NAFTA. Canada and Mexico are vital trading partners that currently buy more than one-third of U.S. merchandise exports. The president has negotiated and signed the USMCA, and now it's up to Congress to act.

Trade deals are vital to the long-term stability and viability of our ag and manufacturing industries in South Dakota. We need stability in our commodity prices and we need strong trade deals. With net farm income down 50 percent for the fifth year in a row, farmers and ranchers need a good trade deal in place now so they can have access to markets in which to sell their products.

Like the many farmers, ranchers and manufacturers I talk to whose livelihoods depend on securing a trade deal, I continue to support the president's efforts to get the best deal possible. It's time for China to stop moving the goalposts and negotiate with us in good faith so we can finally get a trade deal in place.

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The 2019 GHS Graduating Class said farewell to Groton Area High School. The commencement service was held Sunday afternoon in the GHS Arena.

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Today in Weather History

May 20, 1965: A tornado hit north of Frederick. A barn and all outbuildings were destroyed on one farm. Windows exploded outward at the house. The tornado was estimated to be on the ground for about 5 miles.

May 20, 1974: Softball size hail fell in Kennebec, in Lyman County, breaking many windows in the schools and other buildings.

1894: A record late snow of two to eight inches whitened parts of central and eastern Kentucky. Lexington received six inches of snow, and Springfield Kentucky received 5 inches.

1916: In three consecutive years, a tornado passed near or through the town of Codell, Kansas. The tornado on this day was an estimated F2. The estimated F3 tornado in 1917 passed two miles west of town. Finally, an estimated F4 tornado moved through Codell on May 20th, 1918. This tornado killed 9 and injured at least 65 others.

1957: A tornado touched down to the southwest of Kansas City and traveled a distance of seventy-one miles cutting a swath of near destruction through the southeastern suburbs of Ruskin Heights and Hickman Mills. The tornado claimed the lives of forty-five persons and left hundreds homeless. It was the worst weather disaster on record for Kansas City. About all that remained of one house were a small table and a fishbowl atop, with the fish still swimming about inside the bowl. A canceled check from Hickman Hills was found in Ottumwa, Iowa, 165 miles away. Pilots reported debris at an altitude of 30,000 feet.

1987 - Thunderstorms in southern Texas produced grapefruit size hail, near the town of Dilley ("by dilly"), and produced wind gusts to 73 mph at Lake Amistad. The large hail broke windows, killed small animals, and damaged watermelon. Thunderstorms developing along a warm front produced severe weather from Indiana to the Dakotas. Thunderstorms produced baseball size hail at Denver IA, and wind gusts to 80 mph in southern Henry County IL. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)






1988 - Thunderstorms in the south central U.S. produced wind gusts to 70 mph at Omaha, NE, and wind gusts to 80 mph at Midland and Dallas, TX. Temperatures in California soared into the 90s and above 100 degrees. San Jose CA reported a record high of 97 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Pre-dawn thunderstorms produced large hail in eastern Oklahoma and northwestern Arkansas. Later in the morning thunderstorms in North Carolina produced dime size hail at Hanging Dog. Thunderstorms also produced severe weather from the Lower Mississippi Valley to the Central Plains Region later that day and night, with baseball size hail reported around Lawn, Novice and Eola TX. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather across the southeastern quarter of the nation through the day and night. Severe thunderstorms spawned six tornadoes, including one which injured two persons at Algoma, MS, and another which injured nine persons at Rogersville, MO. There were 119 reports of large hail or damaging winds. Thunderstorms produced baseball size hail at Houston MO and damaging winds which killed one person at Toccoa GA. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)



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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
Frost then Partly Sunny	Slight Chance Showers	Showers Likely and Windy	Showers and Windy	Showers Likely
High: 60 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 54 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 59 °F

~More Rain on the Way~

Today: Increasing clouds. Rain southwest. Highs 44-63°	Tonight: Rain spreading north. Lows in the 40s.	Tuesday: Widespread rain, some heavy, windy. Highs 45-58°
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National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD   Updated: 5/20/2019 4:41 AM Central

Published on: 05/20/2019 at 5:42AM

More rain is on the way. The first round will spread across southwest South Dakota today and tonight. The rest of the state will see widespread rain Tuesday and Tuesday night as a low pressure system moves into the region. It will also become windy on Tuesday.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 45 °F at 6:43 PM

Low Temp: 40 °F at 6:32 AM

Wind: 27 mph at 1:10 AM

Day Rain: 0.08 in

Today's Info

Record High: 96° in 1934

Record Low: 23° in 1907

Average High: 70°F

Average Low: 46°F

Average Precip in May.: 1.96

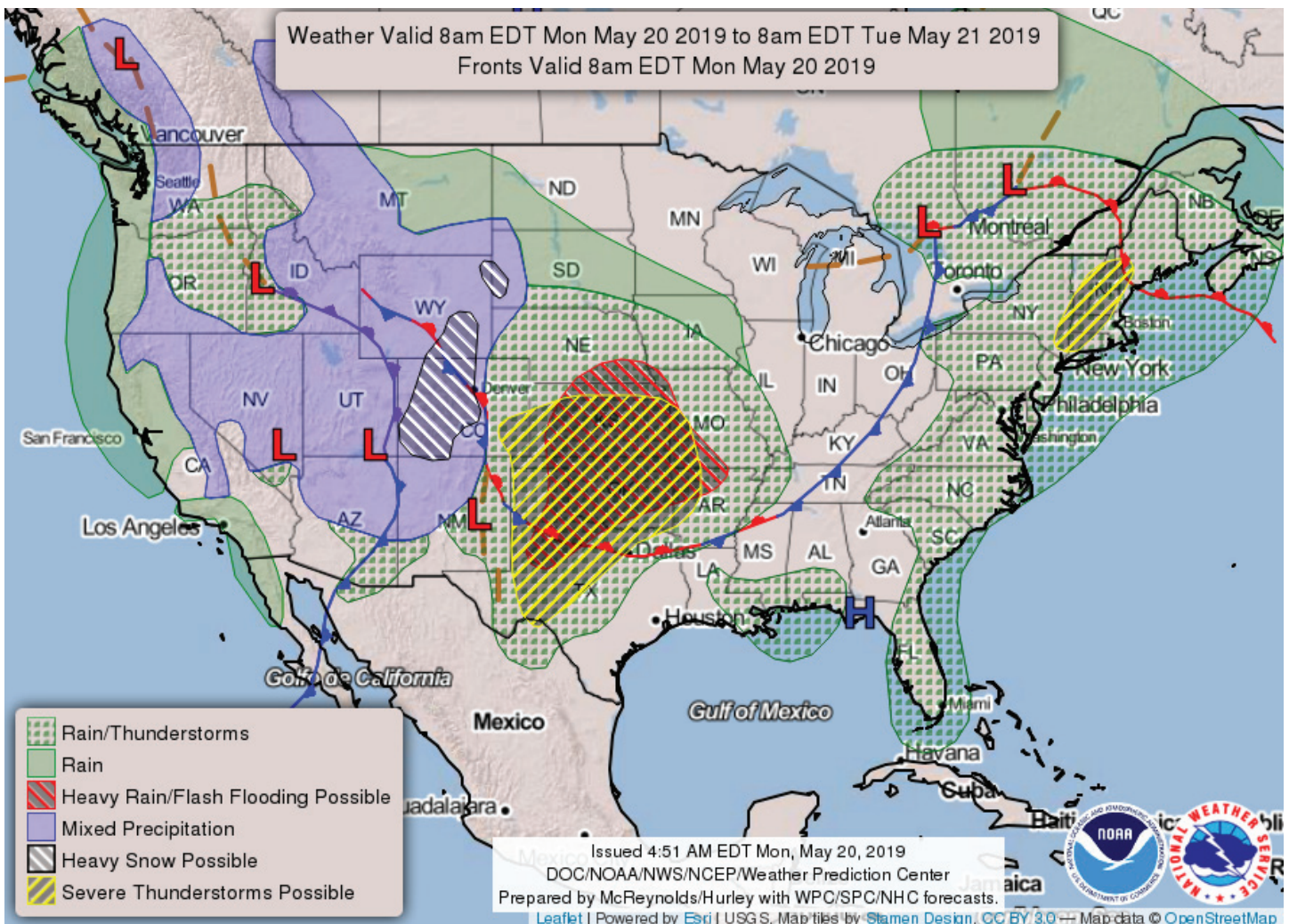
Precip to date in May.: 2.85

Average Precip to date: 5.99

Precip Year to Date: 7.56

Sunset Tonight: 9:03 p.m.

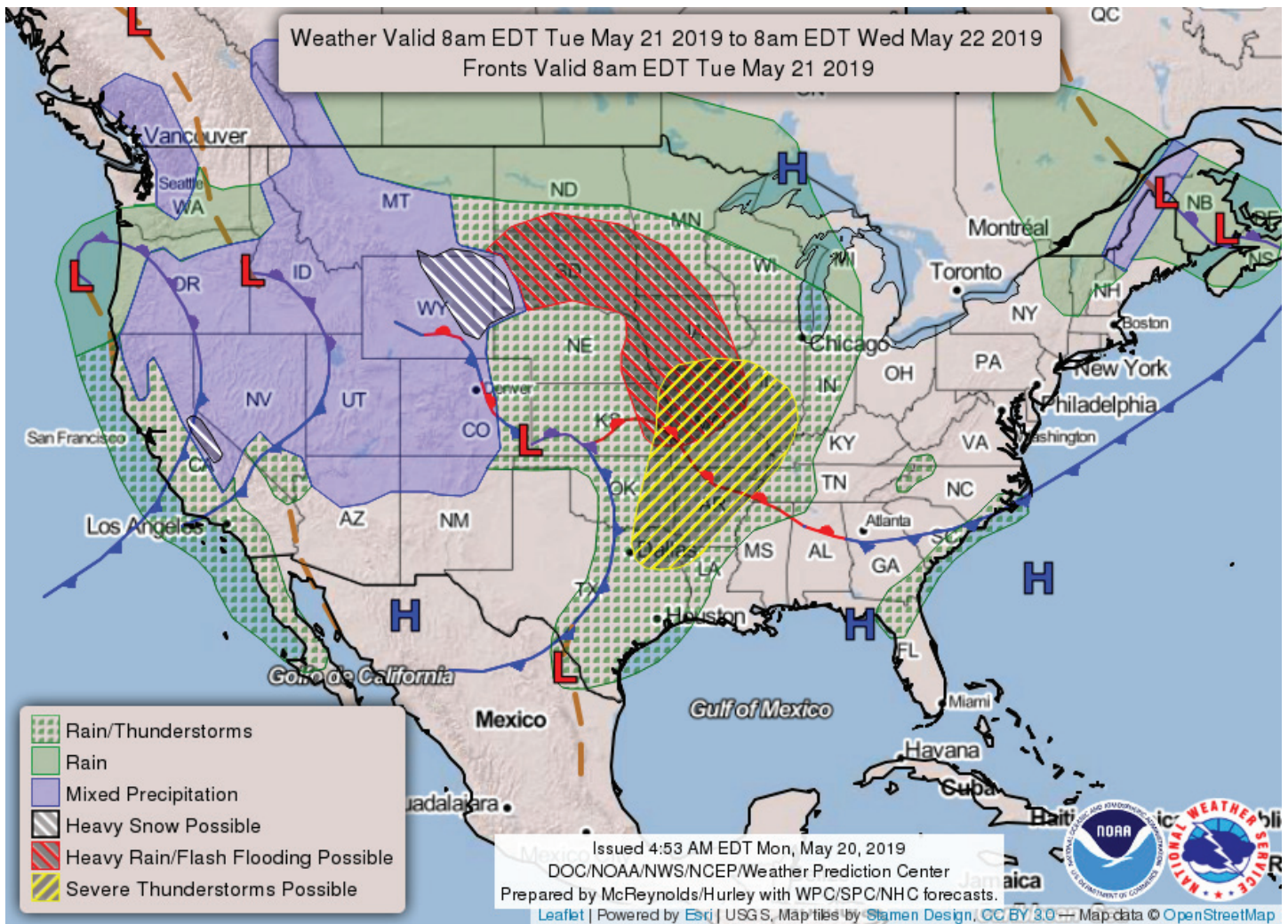
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:57 a.m.



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Tomorrow's Weather Map



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FINDING SECURITY

The fear of the Lord is the beginning...

Eight words, strung together by God, that give man the building blocks of life.

Eight words that provide the foundation for wisdom.

Eight words that are essential to understanding the meaning of life.

Eight words that guarantee a joyous life.

Eight words that lead to fulfillment in life.

Eight words that point the direction for what we must do if we want to please God.

Eight words that prove the faithfulness of God.

Eight words that are the beginning of our obedience to the Lord.

Eight words that eliminate the folly of talk and teach us how to walk before God.

And once we completely and unreservedly fear the Lord, we will have confidence and courage to face any obstacle in life because God is bigger than anything and everything else in the universe.

But those words do not end when our lives end. They are generational and, if the believer is faithful, will be passed from generation to generation.

Parents who want to provide safety and security and wellbeing for their children will do so because of their fear of the Lord. Scripture provides all the evidence any parent needs to realize the benefits that will come to their children if they - the parents fear the Lord and are obedient to Him - no matter the cost! Not parents? Pass the message on. Its lifesaving!

Prayer: Lord, may we take to heart the significance and importance of those eight words, the fear of the Lord is where life begins. May we recognize Your power and our limits.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 14:26 Amen. Whoever fears the Lord has a secure fortress, and for their children it will be a refuge.

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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)

News from the Associated Press

Rapid City woman motivates students with art after accident

By **ARIELLE ZIONTS** Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — “You can do hard things. Who believes that?” Leah Nixon asked an audience of fourth- and fifth-grade Rapid City students.

The students quickly shot their hands into the air, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Nixon, who delivered a multimedia talk recently at Wilson Elementary, knows a thing or two about completing difficult tasks and told students they too can achieve their goals through hard work, taking small steps and leaning on the support of those around you.

Last August, the 30-year-old Rapid City resident was working on a Habitat for Humanity home build when a forklift fell on top of her, leaving her trapped under the machine’s crushing weight for about 30 minutes until she was removed by the Rapid City Fire Department and rushed to the hospital.

There, Nixon had eight surgeries, including multiple amputation and back procedures. The forklift damaged her spinal column, leaving her back, core and legs paralyzed, and she needed an above-the-knee amputation.

“I didn’t care. I just wanted to survive,” Nixon told a student who asked if she was upset when she learned she wouldn’t be able to walk.

After 29 days in the intensive care unit, Nixon took a medical helicopter to Craig Hospital in Denver, which specializes in rehabilitating spinal cord injuries. Three months later she transferred to QLI in Omaha, where she re-learned skills such as how to cook, exercise and drive using adaptive hand controls. Three more months and she was back in Rapid City where she continues to heal and focus on her art.

“I think it’s a pretty amazing thing to come so close to dying and just being so grateful for what I have: My brain and my arms and my hands and a supportive family and a supportive community,” Nixon told the Journal. “Even though there’s a lot of things that I can’t do anymore, like run on the beautiful trails in Rapid City, I still get to be with my dog, I still get to be outside, and even just breathing or drinking a cup of coffee is something I can be really grateful for.”

During her presentation, Nixon projected photographs and videos of her life before the accident, working as a full-time builder with Habitat for Humanity and going on runs. She also documented her recovery from being immobilized in the ICU to learning how to sit up to returning home.

“It took me a long time to get here,” Nixon told the students.

She explained how she had to learn how to hold her torso up without being able to activate her back and core muscles, and how she must use her hands to move her legs every 30 minutes since she can’t feel pressure building up. Taking care of her body is equivalent to a “part-time job,” she said.

Nixon challenged the students to make their own goal, whether it’s being nice to their friends or finishing a long book. She said they should focus on taking small steps and using the support of others, like when her father motivated her to complete a marathon.

Nixon brought some of her paintings to show the students and projected daily comic sketches where she draws herself as a weasel or balancing egg going through recovery.

She first began drawing weasel cartoons at St. Thomas More High School, inspired by her Latin teacher who liked to use the word weasel, or *mustela*. Nixon renewed her interest in comics while studying art in college and drew daily comics for three years. She re-started the habit soon before her accident and began drawing her recovery-themed illustrations as soon as she could after the injury, about two weeks into her stay at the ICU.

Nixon, who had been focused on architecture and building before her accident, said she’s happy to return to her artwork and has rented a space at the Racing Magpie Gallery.

The accident “really pushed me back towards painting and illustration and so I think it was a really exciting opportunity in some ways to be re-directed,” she said. There are “paintings that I’ve been wanting to

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do for probably five years, I'm actually getting to do them now."

Nixon says she also hopes to create a graphic novel that illustrates her "journey through rehab" that would connect with other people dealing with spinal cord injuries as well as those who don't know anything about them.

Nixon and her sister Grace, who own a stationery company together, plan to launch a collection inspired by Leah's experience, focusing on sympathy and thank you cards, and ones that simply tell someone how much they mean to you.

"I think sometimes we don't really get to say those things to people and it was amazing to have so many people reach out to me and tell me that they love me and I think we often reserve those things for after people die, which is so disappointing," Nixon said. "We really believe that it's important to write those things and share those feelings with people."

Nixon hopes to buy a racing chair so she can get back into a sport that's similar to running, and is looking forward to marrying her fiance Kelsey Fitzgerald in July.

She said she was afraid to commit when Fitzgerald asked her to marry him a few years ago.

"In the ICU I realized that he was the exact right person to go through all of this with me and that I didn't want to do it without him," she said. "I asked him if he'd marry me and he said 'of course.'"

After her presentation to the students, she answered their questions about her injury, recovery and artwork. Questions included how did she learn to draw, how much does she sell her art for, what does she remember about the accident (nothing) and whom does she admire (her sister and U.S. Sen. Tammy Duckworth, an Army veteran, double amputee and the first senator to give birth in office).

It was Nixon's first time speaking about her accident in public and she wasn't sure if it would make sense to young kids. But she says the event went well and she hopes to do more.

"I hope that kids can kind of relate to (my journey) with setting goals in school, academically or in sports," she said.

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

Sioux Falls man reunites with birth mother after 50 years

By **STU WHITNEY Argus Leader**

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The phone call arrived last December during a faculty meeting at Augustana University, where Jason Harris teaches business law.

"I don't usually leave faculty meetings," he told the Argus Leader. "But I just sort of said, 'I'm going to take this one.'"

A series of events had led the 50-year-old Harris — who was adopted as a newborn during the summer of 1968 in Sioux Falls — to begin the painstaking and emotional process of seeking out his birth mother.

Though raised as part of a loving family in Rapid City, Harris felt a void for much of his life and a desire to learn more about his identity. Where did his ancestors come from? What did his parents look like? Why did his mother give him away? Did she ever think of him?

Using genealogy services and online research, Harris found a North Carolina family that matched "non-identifying information" he received decades earlier from the adoption agency. He reached out to a first cousin with no idea what the reaction would be. Weeks went by with only sporadic messages.

The phone call that drew his attention came from a North Carolina number belonging to a woman who turned out to be his aunt. She had served as a conduit as Harris inquired as to whether a semi-retired accountant named Sandi Gunning Arrington was the person who gave birth to him a half-century earlier at Sioux Valley Hospital.

"Jason," came the words through the phone. "You need to know that you've found her."

She arrived in South Dakota under the cover of secrecy in late March of 1968. Sandi Arrington was a junior at Florida State University who was unmarried and pregnant, a potentially scandalous combination at the time.

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Her parents had a friend with a sister who lived in Sioux Falls, where Lutheran Social Services could arrange an adoption. The biological father, who had dropped out of college and joined the Army, knew of the plan but was no longer part of Sandi's life. Her two younger brothers thought she was still at school.

"It was a lonely time," recalls Sandi, who stayed in a small basement apartment and had plenty of time to think. She sewed clothes and read books and watched baseball on TV with her hosts. As the daughter of a chemist, she had moved often with her family before attending high school in Mississippi. South Dakota represented another temporary stop on the path toward her own life.

Closed adoption, in which there is no interaction between the birth mother and prospective adoptive families, was common at the time, making the prospect of future reunions remote. The late 1960s were a particularly busy time for such adoptions, in contrast to the more open process that exists today.

The landmark Roe v. Wade court decision that legalized abortion was still five years in the future, further reducing options for unwed mothers-to-be. But Sandi would not have chosen that route.

One thing she didn't do during her four months in Sioux Falls was second-guess her decision. Circumstances dictated that she couldn't keep her baby, but she wanted her baby to be born.

"It was felt by the social worker," said a report compiled by LSS adoption staff, "that in other circumstances, she would have been very excited about becoming a mother."

Circumstances couldn't be changed, and her mind was made up. But when it came time for the delivery and nurses whisked the newborn away without Sandi being able to hold her newborn son, the emptiness was undeniable.

"I never even saw him," says Sandi, now 71 and living in Hendersonville, North Carolina, "I knew he was a boy and that's it. I would have preferred to have been able to see him, just to know that he was OK and had 10 fingers and 10 toes. That's a mom thing, I guess, regardless of whether the baby is coming home with you."

Jason Harris had a family. He was certain of that.

He was adopted on Aug. 14, 1968 by Russell and Mary Ann Harris of Rapid City, leading to a happy childhood that included a love of baseball, long days of downhill skiing and the prideful role of alto sax player in the school band.

With two older brothers who are developmentally disabled and an older sister, Jason was the youngest child and never had any illusions about the fact that he was adopted.

"I don't recall ever not knowing," says Harris, an assistant professor at Augustana since 2006. "My parents were always open about it, and I always felt like I belonged as a member of the family. I had everything I needed, but the feelings were always there."

In biology class, when the teacher discussed DNA and inheritance traits, most students talked about what color eyes their parents had and other genetic links. Harris sat silent.

"I didn't know any of those answers," he says. "I knew my birthday and that I was born in Sioux Falls, but there always that nagging feeling about wanting to know more."

He had a friend in high school who was adopted and familiar with state law regarding the availability of birth records when a person turns 18.

As a freshman at Augustana in 1986, Harris reached out to LSS and received basic facts about his biological mother. She was 20 years old when she had him and came from out of state. She was 5 feet, 5 inches tall with "hazel green eyes that changed from brown to blue." She had hay fever. Her nationality was half Scottish and the rest English and German, and she was "pleasant in appearance and manner."

The adoption agency staff offered to do a search for the birth mother for \$300, and he also could have sought a court order for certain records. But Harris balked. Whether it was the money or concerns about the feelings of his adoptive parents, he didn't feel comfortable at 18 years old taking that next step.

"I'm not ready," he told himself. He didn't know if he would ever be.

How do you miss someone you know nothing about, with no face or name to hang onto? Sandi couldn't describe the feelings exactly, but she also couldn't shake them.

They hit hardest on Christmas and Mother's Day and June 15, the birthdate he celebrated somewhere

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with someone. They stirred occasionally when she watched her other children play soccer or frolic in the yard, making her wonder if he enjoyed the same things.

She had met a fellow student named Phil Arrington before coming to Sioux Falls in 1968 and married him the next year. Both had fulfilling careers, with Sandi working for a time as a revenue agent for the Internal Revenue Service in Washington, D.C. Phil was an artist and writer who took a job as creative services director at WCCO-TV in the Twin Cities, where Sandi worked for the Veteran's Administration while raising a son, Bram, and daughter, Carrie.

Sandi even traveled to Sioux Falls for an event at the VA Medical Center in 2009, but it was a quick business trip with little time to dwell on the past.

She had no idea that the boy she gave birth to in 1968 was living in the city at the time — and they had much in common. Outside of a physical resemblance, both majored in government in college with a history minor. They rooted for the Minnesota Twins and enjoyed many of the same Twin Cities restaurants. Both had a dry sense of humor and loved to travel.

But by the time Sandi and Phil settled in Hendersonville, where she still prepares taxes and relishes time with her extended family, she had largely resigned herself to the fact that she would never know the son that she gave away. Most of her family, including her children, had no idea that part of her life even existed.

Her secret seemed secure. It had lasted 50 years.

The very idea of writing a letter to the mother he'd never met was agonizing for Jason. Where would we even come up with the words?

For one thing, he had a fulfilling life. He was blessed in many ways. His law degree from the University of South Dakota spawned a career that included private practice and public service, leading to a faculty position at his alma mater.

He married his wife, Wanda, at Chapel of the Hills in Rapid City and has a family that includes two sons, one from her previous marriage and one who is a sophomore at Washington High School.

It should have been enough. But a lack of healthy identity development, an unfortunate byproduct of closed adoption, has been shown to stall feelings of contentment well into adult life.

The void demanded attention. He decided it was time to listen.

"The pang really started occurring was when I turned 50 last June and my wife kept asking me what I wanted for my 50th birthday," says Jason. "I started thinking about what it means to be 50, and it was sort of a reaffirmation that family is important and that's what I wanted for my birthday. But that included renewing the search for my birth mother, because she was 20 when she had me and I was turning 50 — so I knew my window could be closing."

He talked to his wife, who was surprised to hear that thoughts of his past were so persistent.

"She didn't know that I had this void," says Jason. "She didn't know that I had this pain. I mean, I had a good life with an amazing wife and wonderful children and great parents growing up. I just didn't know how to talk to her about it. But once that conversation started, I made the decision that I was going to start putting pieces of the puzzle together."

The emergence of genetic testing sites such as 23andMe and Ancestry have made searching for biological parents and adoptees more accessible, with the caveat that not everyone wants to be found.

"Sometimes the other party is caught off guard when they get a phone call out of the blue," says Ryan Hanlon, vice president of the National Council for Adoption. "It's important to give them time and space to process the information."

After Harris learned of his first cousin last summer and sent her a message, leading to conversations with his aunt, the process moved slowly. Neither of them knew that an adoption had taken place.

More research led to North Carolina and the existence of Sandi, whose age matched the information Harris received as a college student. When he pinpointed a likely address last September, it was time to start writing a letter that would take him nearly two weeks to compose.

He assured her that he was loved by his adoptive family and he appreciated her "courageous decision" to give him life. He had questions about health-related issues and inquired about family medical history.

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And, most consequently, he expressed a desire for reunification so he could meet her and other members of his birth family.

"I made sure I gave her an out, because you don't know what's happening on the other side," he says. "I had a friend who was adopted and reached out to the birth mother and was told, 'I don't want to have anything to do with you.' So I took my time and was careful in my wording, because it was unlike any letter that I would ever write in my life."

Sandi Arrington walked down to her mailbox last October and started sifting through assorted bills. Then she spotted an envelope that changed everything in an instant.

"I saw the return address and knew exactly what it was," says Sandi, who also received a photo of her son. "My first reaction was joy in knowing he was OK, because I had no idea. I had wondered for many years. That was very reassuring."

There were other emotions as well, most of them complicated. Sandi had forged an entire existence after returning from Sioux Falls more than 50 years earlier, with a family and career and moments that comprised the story of her life. Only her husband knew that the story had a missing chapter.

Her niece was getting married and Thanksgiving was coming fast. The thought of tossing a family bombshell into the mix, however well it would be received, made her delay her response. She needed time to figure things out.

"Trying to maintain a balance was challenging," she says. "His letter was a gift to me, and it took me a while to process everything that was going on. I knew I was going to respond, but it took me a while to figure out exactly what I wanted to write."

Phil was a writer by trade and helped with the family history. But Sandi knew that no one else could adequately express the feelings of a mother toward her son, even one she had never laid eyes on. By the time she found her balance and composed an email that she felt was fit to send, it was nearly Christmas.

Her son had given her a gift. It was time to return the favor.

Jason Harris was not in the holiday spirit. His family was celebrating Christmas Eve in Sioux Falls and certain essentials had been forgotten, requiring a run to the grocery store. He had drawn the assignment.

His mood was already soured by the fact that he had not heard from his birth mother despite sending that carefully crafted letter several months earlier. The phone call from his aunt in early December let him know he had the right person and address, but no more progress had been made.

"So I find myself in the Hy-Vee checkout line and I've got my phone out and I'm thinking I might as well check my email," he says. "And there it was, an email from Sandi Arrington that said 'Happy Christmas' on the subject line, and I knew I needed to get out of there pretty quick."

He hurried to his car for privacy before pulling up the email and letting the words unfold.

Dearest Jason, he read while fighting back tears in the parking lot. Fifty Christmases and birthdays have passed, and I've thought of you on every one of them. I never saw you, so to have a visual image is a gift. Such a gift.

"I sat there and read through it and read it again and cried and then realized that I needed to get home," he says. "And I totally forgot what it was that I was mad about."

That sparked a line of communication that started with emails, moved to Facebook messages and led to the first phone call between mother and son on Feb. 3, 2019, which was Super Bowl Sunday.

"The first few minutes were sort of awkward," says Jason. "I mean, how do you have that conversation? And then we ended up talking for probably two hours that night and it seemed totally normal. I think 50-year-old Jason was a lot more ready for that conversation than 18-year-old Jason."

Both were busy in their daily lives. Jason had recently returned from a trip to England with a group of Augustana students where he taught a course on Brexit, and Sandi was feeling the brunt of tax season.

But they finally broached the subject of a reunion and negotiated a date in March, during Jason's spring break. He booked his flight to North Carolina and waited for perhaps the most meaningful moment in his life to arrive.

The flight was late, but she kept her cool. Sandi had gone 50 years without seeing her son and could

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wait a few hours more.

When Jason's plane finally touched down at the Asheville airport and passengers disembarked, she saw the 5-foot-7 law professor collect himself and head her way. To anyone watching as they smiled and embraced, the physical resemblance would have made it clear that this was a mother and her son.

"To be able to hold him was incredible," says Sandi. "It was just like holding your baby for the first time — one of the most emotional points in a parent's life. Mine was just a little bit bigger than most."

Jason spent five days in Hendersonville, talking baseball with his sister Carrie and viewing Phil's artwork. He talked about his trip to England and his son's upcoming high school tennis season. Although his brother Bram was busy chaperoning a Cub Scout camping trip, Jason met the aunt who had helped his search as well as an uncle from Texas, who traveled just to meet him.

But most of the time was devoted to quiet moments with Sandi, who asked about his childhood in Rapid City and shared insights into decisions she had made. Rather than focus on the past, though, they nurtured their new relationship and appreciated the time they had left.

There's a picture of them at a restaurant where Jason is showing her something on his phone and she rests her head on his shoulder, showing a sense of ease and comfort undeterred by time.

Fifty years after the heyday of closed adoptions, marred by secrecy and shame, most experts agree that open communication and relationships with birth parents promote health identity development.

"Back then, there was a move toward maintaining privacy for the individual that was placed for adoption, thinking it would be helpful for that person," says Hanlon of the National Council for Adoption. "But now we see a trend toward encouraging connections with the birth family and allowing individuals to really own their story — and choose with whom they want to share it."

For Jason and Sandi, the adventure continues. She will fly to Sioux Falls next month to meet Jason's wife and two sons, coming full circle from her experience as a 20-year-old college student trying to safeguard her future while still giving life to another.

The notion that she would be able to go on forever without those lives converging was flawed, though it took a son's persistence to help their story unfold.

"I had a hole in my heart, and that hole was Jason," says Sandi. "I don't have a hole in my heart anymore. It's filling out, and it's been such an incredible gift to get to know and love him and finally count all 10 of his fingers. I've decided I'm going to trust him on the toes."

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

South Dakota mulls ending no-wakes at Deerfield Lake

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks is considering a proposal to end a longstanding no-wake restriction on a popular Black Hills lake in the western part of the state.

The proposal would replace the no-wake restriction and 5 mph speed limit on Deerfield Lake with a 25 mph speed limit, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Ken Edel, a retiree and angler from Rapid City, said the no-wake restriction means wasted fishing potential. He said it can take 25 minutes to get across the lake to a fishing spot.

"Is anybody benefiting from that?" Edel said. "I don't think so."

Edel has led the effort to stop the no-wake restriction. The proposal will be considered during a meeting on June 6 in Pierre.

Dan Holsworth of Hermosa said many people benefit from the no-wake restriction, including his customers. He is one of the owners of a campground near the lake. Holsworth said a calm body of water is treasured by people who enjoy shore-fishing, canoeing, kayaking and other activities.

If the no-wake restriction on Deerfield Lake is removed, "it would be a horrible thing," Holsworth said.

Officials said the no-wake restriction has been in place for at least 55 years.

Deerfield Lake was created during the 1940s when the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation constructed a dam on Castle Creek in the rural west-central portion of the Black Hills National Forest.

Deerfield Lake is the second largest lake in the central portion of the Black Hills, behind the Pactola

Reservoir.

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

South Dakota VA hospitals banning tobacco use

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Department of Veterans Affairs is increasing the push for veterans to kick the habit by banning tobacco use at VA health care facilities nationwide.

The nationwide tobacco-free mandate is to take effect by October. But the Rapid City Journal reports that Black Hills VA hospitals at Fort Meade and Hot Springs have set May 29 as the date patients, visitors, contractors, volunteers and vendors may no longer use tobacco in any form on those campuses.

Spokeswoman Cynthia Heaton says negotiations concerning implementation of the ban for employees are under way with their union, the American Federation of Government Employees.

Exceptions will also be made for use of tobacco in Native American ceremonies and traditions.

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

APNewsBreak: Nearly all states use drones for range of work

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — In Utah, drones are hovering near avalanches to watch roaring snow. In North Carolina, they're searching for the nests of endangered birds. In Kansas, they could soon be identifying sick cows through heat signatures.

Public transportation agencies are using drones in nearly every state, according to a survey obtained by The Associated Press ahead of its release Monday. The report from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials shows a sharp increase in their use over the last few years, reflecting the rapid adoption of the technology by governments as well as hobbyists.

In 2016, the nonprofit group found no state transportation agency was using drones on a daily basis. Now, 36 states have certified drone pilots on staff. When the survey was done this month, all but one state was using drones in some way. Since then, the lone holdout — Rhode Island — has bought a drone, said Tony Dorsey, a spokesman for the group.

The small, unmanned aircraft are often used for prosaic tasks, like inspecting bridges and roads. With sophisticated cameras and thermal technology, they can detect tiny cracks and identify potential potholes before they're visible to the human eye.

Drones have caused their share of headaches for officials over the years as personal devices forced the grounding of planes at airports or those fighting wildfires.

But they also can be useful for work that's dangerous for people. In Utah, drones record from the air as state workers set off planned avalanches, allowing them to watch the slides close up in real time, said Jared Esselman, director of aeronautics at the state Department of Transportation.

Drones also can measure snow and other elements of the state's rugged terrain to keep them from blocking roads or other infrastructure.

"We can predict not only snow slides, but mudslides and water runoff as the snow melts," Esselman said. "Drones are a perfect tool for any job that is dangerous or dirty."

Utah is getting 40 new drones to take photos at traffic wrecks for the investigation.

In North Carolina, drones are finding the nests of endangered species like the red-cockaded woodpecker, said Basil Yap, unmanned aerial systems program manager at the state's transportation department.

People used to fan out in helicopters or all-terrain vehicles to check for evidence of the protected birds before building new projects, but the drones can do the job quicker with less disruption, Yap said.

They're also used to check for protected bats nesting under bridges and to spray herbicide on invasive plants near shorelines.

North Carolina is one of three states working with the Federal Aviation Administration to test drones beyond the operator's line of sight, at night and over people. The FAA doesn't usually allow those uses without a special waiver.

Also part of the program is Kansas, where workers are using drones to create sophisticated farming programs and monitor cattle heat signatures to prevent any illnesses from spreading.

A number of states are beginning to explore how to regulate a flood of private drone traffic expected in the future. In Ohio, the state is working on an air-traffic control system called SkyVision, which would allow drones to detect and avoid other aircraft in flight.

Trump warns Iran not to threaten US or it will face 'end'

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — President Donald Trump warned Iran early on Monday not to threaten the United States again or it'll face its "official end," shortly after a rocket landed near the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad overnight.

Iran's foreign minister quickly responded in kind on Twitter with his own message: #NeverThreatenAnIranian.

Trump's tweet comes after he seemingly sought to soften his tone on Iran following days of heightened tension sparked by his administration's sudden deployment of bombers and an aircraft carrier to the Persian Gulf over still-unspecified threats.

In the time since, officials in the United Arab Emirates allege four oil tankers sustained damage in a sabotage attack. Yemeni rebels allied with Iran launched a drone attack on an oil pipeline in Saudi Arabia. U.S. diplomats relayed a warning that commercial airlines could be misidentified by Iran and attacked, something dismissed by Tehran.

All these tensions are the culmination of Trump's decision a year ago to pull America out of Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers. And while both Washington and Tehran say they don't seek war, many worry any miscalculation at this fraught moment could spiral out of control.

The tweet from Trump early on Monday came just hours after a Katyusha rocket fell in Baghdad's heavily fortified Green Zone near the statue of the Unknown Soldier, less than a mile from the U.S. Embassy, causing no injuries. Iraqi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasoul told The Associated Press that the rocket was believed to have been fired from east Baghdad. The area is home to Iran-backed Shiite militias.

"If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran," Trump tweeted. "Never threaten the United States again!"

Trump did not elaborate, nor did the White House.

Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif posted his own message Monday on Twitter, saying Trump had been "goaded" into "genocidal taunts." Zarif namechecked both Alexander the Great and Genghis Khan as two historical leaders that Persia outlasted.

"Iranians have stood tall for a millennia while aggressors all gone," he wrote. He ended his tweet with: "Try respect - it works!"

Trump campaigned on pulling the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear accord, which saw Iran agree to limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Since the withdrawal, the U.S. has re-imposed previous sanctions and come up with new ones, as well as warned nations around the world they would be subject to sanctions as well if they import Iranian oil.

Iran just announced it would begin backing away from terms of the deal, setting a 60-day deadline for Europe to come up with new terms or it would begin enriching uranium closer to weapons-grade levels. Tehran long has insisted it does not seek nuclear weapons, though the West fears its program could allow it to build atomic bombs.

In an interview aired Sunday on the Fox News Channel, Trump called the nuclear deal a "horror show." "I just don't want them to have nuclear weapons and they can't be threatening us," Trump said.

However, the nuclear deal had kept Iran from being able to acquire enough highly enriched uranium for

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a bomb. U.N. inspectors repeatedly certified that Iran was in compliance with the accord.

In Saudi Arabia, the kingdom's military intercepted two missiles fired by the Houthi rebels in neighboring Yemen. The missiles were intercepted over the city of Taif and the Red Sea port city of Jiddah, the Saudi-owned satellite channel Al-Arabiya reported.

The channel cited witnesses for the information. The Saudi government has yet to acknowledge the missile fire, which other Saudi media also reported.

Hundreds of rockets, mortars and ballistic missiles have been fired into the kingdom since a Saudi-led coalition declared war on the Houthis in March 2015 to support Yemen's internationally recognized government.

However, the Houthis' Al-Masirah satellite news channel denied Monday that the rebels had any involvement with this round of rocket fire.

Between the two targeted cities is Mecca, home to the cube-shaped Kaaba that Muslims pray toward five times a day. Many religious pilgrims are now in the city amid the Muslim holy fasting month of Ramadan.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet on Sunday announced it would begin "enhanced security patrols" in international waters with members of the Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Already, the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier, the amphibious assault ship USS Kearsarge and others are in the Arabian Sea, waters close to the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a third of all oil traded at sea passes.

Associated Press writers Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Bassem Mroue in Baghdad, and Samy Magdy in Cairo contributed to this report.

Ukraine's new leader gets sworn in, dissolves parliament

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA and EFREM LUKATSKY Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian TV star Volodymyr Zelenskyy has sought to capitalize on his huge popularity, dissolving the country's parliament Monday minutes after he was sworn in as president.

Zelenskyy, who won 73% of the vote last month in his landslide victory, slammed parliament as a hot-bed of self-enrichment, and promised to stop the war in the east against Russian-backed separatists.

The president's bold move to dissolve the Supreme Rada followed the failure of a majority of lawmakers to use parliamentary ruses to hamper Zelenskyy's plans.

Zelenskyy's victory reflected Ukrainians' exhaustion with widespread corruption and the country's political elite. Even before he disbanded parliament, which had been one of his campaign promises, the 41-year-old Zelenskyy upended other Ukrainian political traditions on inauguration day.

He ditched the idea of a traditional motorcade to his inauguration, walking to the parliament Kiev through a park packed with people. Flanked by four bodyguards, the beaming president-elect gave high-fives to some spectators, even stopping to take a selfie with one of them.

After he was sworn in but before he moved to dissolve parliament, Zelenskyy asked the Supreme Rada to adopt a bill against illegal enrichment and support his motions to fire the country's defense minister, the head of the Ukrainian Security Service and the Prosecutor General. All of them are allies of former President Petro Poroshenko, who lost the election to the comedian with no previous political experience but who played the Ukrainian president on a popular TV show for years.

In a feisty speech after his inauguration, Zelenskyy told the Rada that his main goal for the presidency is to bring peace to eastern Ukraine, where government troops have been fighting Russia-backed separatists for five years in a conflict that has left at least 13,000 dead.

"I'm ready to do everything so that our heroes don't die there," he said. "It wasn't us who started that war. But we need to be the one to finish it."

As ministers and lawmakers listened with dismay, Zelenskyy urged everyone in the cabinet to resign,

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asking them to "free the spot for people who will think about the future generations, not about the future elections."

Defense Ministry Stepan Poltorak promptly published his letter of resignation on Facebook.

Zelenskiy is hoping to ride the wave of his electoral success to get his supporters into parliament.

Many lawmakers viewed Zelenskiy's inauguration with apprehension. Political factions allied with Poroshenko and his party have been maneuvering for weeks, even collapsing the ruling coalition.

Volodymyr Fesenko, head of the Kiev-based think-tank Penta, said Zelenskiy's announcement shows "political will for radical change."

"The legally dubious decision to disband parliament will certainly be contested in court but Zelenskiy has shown that it is going to be him who will lay down the agenda and that he will dominate the political landscape."

A representative of the Ukrainian Election Commission told the Ukrainian media that if a snap election is called, no court ruling can cancel it.

In a bid to deprive Zelenskiy of the opportunity to call an early election, a faction in the Rada announced its departure from the ruling coalition last week, technically collapsing Poroshenko's government. The parliament's rules envisage that it cannot be disbanded within 30 days following the announcement of a collapse of the ruling coalition.

Zelenskiy's supporters argued, however, that the motion was legally void because the coalition had long ceased to exist and that the Constitution, unlike the Rada regulations, does not contain such a rule.

The new president wrapped up his speech at parliament by referring to his career as a comedian.

"Throughout all of my life, I tried to do everything to make Ukrainians laugh," he said with a smile. "In the next five years I will do everything, Ukrainians, so that you don't cry."

Vasilyeva reported from Moscow. Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow and Yuras Karmanau in Minsk, Belarus, contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. TRUMP WARNS IRAN NOT TO THREATEN AMERICA

The president tweets about Iran's "official end" hours after a rocket landed near the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

2. WHAT GOOGLE IS SAYING ABOUT HUAWEI

The tech giant is assuring users of the Chinese company's smartphones that Google's basic services will work on them following U.S. government restrictions.

3. WHERE EPA IS SHIFTING ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT

The agency is delegating a widening range of public health and environmental enforcement to states, something critics contend is a risky, dangerous retreat.

4. PORK LOVERS WINCE AS PRICES SPIKE

Prices have jumped by up to 40% as China's struggle to stamp out African swine fever in its vast pig herds, sending shockwaves through global meat markets.

5. THE NEXT FRONTIER IN #METOO

Lawmakers, educators and teens are re-examining whether sex education needs to evolve to better address some of the issues in society today, AP finds.

6. MANY STATES USE DRONES FOR RANGE OF WORK

In Utah, drones hover near avalanches. In North Carolina, they search for endangered birds. And in Kansas, they could soon be identifying sick cows, AP learns.

7. TECH-SAVVY ESTONIANS PIONEER ONLINE BALLOTING

Online voting in the European elections begins in Estonia, the only country in the world to allow internet

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voting for the entire electorate, in every election.

8. 'HIPPIE' ISLAND GETS ON VACCINE BANDWAGON

An island near Seattle known for its counterculture lifestyle and low immunization rates is seeing an increase in the number of kids vaccinated for measles and other diseases.

9. MOREHOUSE GRADS GET QUITE THE SURPRISE

Billionaire tech investor Robert F. Smith stuns the entire class when he tells them he will pay off their student loans ___ estimated at up to \$40 million.

10. KOEPKA SURVIVES AFTER BLACK BITES BACK

Brooks Koepka survives Bethpage Black's brutal back nine to hold off Dustin Johnson and win the PGA Championship, his fourth major title.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump cries 'treason' over campaign scrutiny

By HOPE YEN and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is using "treason" rather lightly as he assails unidentified U.S. officials for investigating operatives of his campaign in 2016. There's no allegation or even suggestion that they committed this punishable-by-death crime, if any crime at all.

Trump's hyperbolic characterization echoed at the end of a week of unsupported assertions by the president on trade, the economy, drug prices and more. Meantime, Russian President Vladimir Putin declared inaccurately that no traces of collusion between his country and Trump's 2016 campaign were found in the "exotic" special counsel investigation by Robert Mueller.

A recap:

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

TRUMP: "My Campaign for President was conclusively spied on. Nothing like this has ever happened in American Politics. A really bad situation. TREASON means long jail sentences, and this was TREASON!" — tweet Friday and retweet Saturday.

THE FACTS: It wasn't treason. Indeed, his officials have said they have no specific evidence that anything illegal was done when the Trump campaign came under FBI surveillance that was approved by a court.

Treason only occurs when a U.S. citizen, or a non-citizen on U.S. territory, wages war against the country or provides material support to a declared enemy of the United States. Nothing of that sort has been alleged, let alone anything illegal in the surveillance.

FBI Director Chris Wray told Congress this month that he did not consider the FBI surveillance to be "spying" and that he has no evidence the FBI illegally monitored Trump's campaign during the 2016 election. Wray said he would not describe the FBI's surveillance as "spying" if it's following "investigative policies and procedures." His comments irritated Trump.

Attorney General William Barr has said he believed "spying" did occur, but he also made clear at a Senate hearing last month that he had no specific evidence to cite that any surveillance was illegal or improper.

The FBI obtained a secret surveillance warrant in 2016 to monitor the communications of former Trump campaign aide Carter Page. The New York Times also reported that the FBI used a woman posing as a research assistant to approach ex-Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos, who had earlier been told by a Maltese professor that Russia had "dirt" on Democrat Hillary Clinton in the form of stolen emails.

PUTIN: "However exotic the work of special counsel Mueller was, I have to say that on the whole, he has had a very objective investigation, and he confirmed that there were no traces whatsoever of collusion between Russia and the incumbent administration, which we said was absolutely fake." — remarks Tuesday before a private meeting with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in Sochi, Russia.

THE FACTS: Putin is wrong about the Mueller report in regards to its findings of "collusion."

The Mueller report and other scrutiny revealed a multitude of meetings between Trump associates and Russians. Among them: Donald Trump Jr.'s meeting with a Russian lawyer who had promised dirt on Hillary Clinton.

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On collusion, Mueller said he did not assess whether that occurred because it is not a legal term.

He looked into a potential criminal conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign and said the investigation did not collect sufficient evidence to establish criminal charges on that front.

Mueller noted some Trump campaign officials had declined to testify under the Fifth Amendment or had provided false or incomplete testimony, making it difficult to get a complete picture of what happened during the 2016 campaign. The special counsel wrote that he "cannot rule out the possibility" that unavailable information could have cast a different light on the investigation's findings.

CALIFORNIA WILDFIRES

TRUMP, on California Gov. Gavin Newsom: "Talking about forests — clean up your forests; you won't have forest fires. Clean them up. He blames it on global warming. I said, 'No, try cleaning the floor of the forest a little bit so you don't have four feet of leaves and broken trees that have sit there for 25 years.' ... It's called 'forest management.'" — remarks to National Association of Realtors on Friday.

THE FACTS: Both nature and humans share responsibility for California's devastating wildfires, but fire scientists say forest management is not the main contributor. And most of California's forests are controlled by the federal government, not the state.

Nature provides the dangerous winds that have whipped the fires, and human-caused climate change over the long haul is killing and drying the shrubs and trees that provide the fuel. That's not to say California is blameless: Urban development encroaching on wildlands also is a factor. But about 19 million or 57 percent of California's 33 million acres of forests are managed or owned by the federal government, according to the University of California.

Last year's wildfire that incinerated the Northern California town of Paradise and surrounding areas was the single deadliest such blaze in California history.

Another recent major fire, in Southern California, burned through shrubland, not forest.

"It's not about forest management," said University of Utah fire scientist Philip Dennison at the time. "These aren't forests."

The dean of the University of Michigan's environmental school, Jonathan Overpeck, said Western fires are getting bigger and more severe. He said it "is much less due to bad management and is instead the result of our baking of our forests, woodlands and grasslands with ever-worsening climate change."

Wildfires have become more devastating because of the extreme weather swings from global warming, fire scientists said. The average number of U.S. acres burned by wildfires has doubled from 30 years ago.

DRUG PRICES

TRUMP: "Drug prices down for first time in 51 years (& soon will drop much further)." — tweet Sunday.

TRUMP: "Drug prices have gone down for the first time in 51 years — they've gone down. First time in 51 years." — remarks May 13 at White House dinner.

THE FACTS: He's making an outdated boast. Trump appeared to be referring to recent decreases in the Labor Department's Consumer Price Index for prescription drugs. But the index was updated this month, before Trump's latest claims, and it showed an increase of 0.3% in April for prescription drug prices when compared with the same month last year.

The index tracks a set of medications, both brand drugs and generics.

Other independent studies point to increasing prices for brand name drugs as well and more overall spending on medications.

An analysis of brand-name drug prices by The Associated Press showed 2,712 price increases in the first half of January, compared with 3,327 increases during the same period last year. However, the size of this year's increases was not as pronounced.

Both this year and last, the number of price cuts was minuscule. The information for the analysis was provided by the health data firm Elsevier.

An analysis by Altarum, a nonprofit research and consulting firm, found that in 2018, spending on pre-

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scription drugs was one of the main factors behind a 4.5% increase in U.S. health spending. Spending on prescription drugs grew much faster than in 2017, according to the study.

Economist Paul Hughes-Cromwick of Altarum, said he expects drug prices will continue to creep up.

"I would be quite surprised if by July the annual rate doesn't return to a more normal 2%-4% growth," said Hughes-Cromwick.

JOBS

TRUMP: "And after years of stagnation, wages are rising fast, with the quickest growth for blue-collar workers. The best statistic of all — and people don't know. ... The blue-collar worker has the biggest percentage increase of anybody ... These things didn't just happen by accident. They happened because we are taking out this power out of Washington." — remarks to real estate group Friday.

THE FACTS: He's claiming credit for a trend of rising wages for lower-income blue-collar workers that predates his presidency.

Some of the gains also reflect higher minimum wages passed at the state and local level; the Trump administration opposes an increase to the federal minimum wage.

With the unemployment rate at 3.6 %, the lowest since December 1969, employers are struggling to fill jobs. Despite all the talk of robots and automation, thousands of restaurants, warehouses, and retail stores still need workers.

They are offering higher wages and have pushed up pay for the lowest-paid one-quarter of workers more quickly than for everyone else since 2015. In March, the poorest 25% saw their paychecks increase 4.4% from a year earlier, compared with 3% for the richest one quarter.

TRUMP: "Our Economy is setting records, with more people employed today than at any time in U.S. history." — tweet Sunday.

TRUMP: "We have the most people working today than at any time in the history of our country." — remarks to real estate group Friday.

THE FACTS: Yes, but the record workforce is driven by population growth.

A more relevant measure is the proportion of Americans with jobs, and that is still far below record highs.

According to Labor Department data, 60.6 percent of people in the United States 16 years and older were working in April. That's below the all-time high of 64.7 percent in April 2000, though higher than the 59.9 percent when Trump was inaugurated in January 2017.

TRADE

TRUMP: "We've been losing, for many years, anywhere from \$300 billion to \$500 billion a year with China and trade with China. We can't let that happen." — remarks Tuesday at the White House.

TRUMP: "We lost \$180 billion with the European Union." — remarks to National Association of Realtors on Friday.

THE FACTS: This is not how almost any economist would describe what is happening.

The United States does have a huge trade deficit with China, totaling \$378.7 billion last year, as well as a \$109 billion trade deficit with the EU. That means China and the EU exported far more to the United States than vice versa. But in return, U.S. businesses and consumers received goods and services with that money. Economists compare Trump's take on trade deficits to a shopper going to a store and complaining they "lost" money with what they bought.

Most trade experts see trade deficits or surpluses between two specific countries as economically meaningless. China's deficit with the United States is large in part because many goods, particularly electronics, that used to be made in different countries, typically in Asia, are now sent to China for final assembly, even though many key parts are still manufactured in countries such as Japan, South Korea and Taiwan.

That has lowered the U.S. trade deficit with those countries over the years while increasing the gap with China.

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TRUMP: "Our economy is fantastic; (China's) is not so good. We've gone up trillions and trillions of dollars since the election; they've gone way down since my election." — remarks Tuesday.

THE FACTS: There's not much truth to this. The U.S. economy hasn't done as well, nor has China done as badly, as Trump says. The U.S. economy has grown at a healthy pace since Trump's inauguration in January 2017, but not by "trillions and trillions."

U.S. gross domestic product — the broadest measure of the country's growth — has increased by just over \$1 trillion, to \$18.9 trillion, in the past two years. Those figures are adjusted for inflation. China has seen its rate of economic growth tick down slightly, from 6.7% in 2016 to 6.6% last year, according to the International Monetary Fund. That is more than twice the U.S. growth rate in 2018 of 2.9%, although mature economies such as America's typically grow more slowly than developing countries such as China.

TRUMP: "We're taking in, right now, hundreds of billions of dollars. We're taking in billions of dollars of tariffs. And those tariffs are going to be tremendously — if you look at what we've done thus far with China, we've never taken in 10 cents until I got elected." — remarks May 13 with Hungary's prime minister.

THE FACTS: He's wrong. The notion that the U.S. suddenly has revenue coming in from tariffs, thanks to his trade dispute, defies history that goes back to the founding of the republic. President George Washington signed the Tariff Act into law in 1789 — the first major act of Congress — and duties from imports were a leading source of revenue for the government before the advent of the modern tax system early in the 20th century. Tariffs on goods specifically from China are not remotely new, either. They are simply higher in some cases than they were before.

Tariffs are a decidedly modest portion of revenue in modern times and Trump has not changed that with the escalation of his trade fight with China. Customs and duties generated \$41.3 billion in revenues last year, up from \$34.6 billion in 2017 (far more than 10 cents). That \$6.7 billion increase occurred in part because of the president's tariffs. But it amounted to just 0.16% of federal spending.

Moreover, tariffs are taxes paid largely by U.S. business and consumers, not foreign countries.

TAXES

TRUMP: "We have the biggest tax cut bill in the history of our country." — remarks to real estate group Friday.

THE FACTS: His tax cuts are nowhere close to the biggest in U.S. history.

It's a \$1.5 trillion tax cut over 10 years. As a share of the total economy, a tax cut of that size ranks 12th, according to the Committee for a Responsible Federal Budget. President Ronald Reagan's 1981 cut is the biggest followed by the 1945 rollback of taxes that financed World War II.

Post-Reagan tax cuts also stand among the historically significant: President George W. Bush's cuts in the early 2000s and President Barack Obama's renewal of them a decade later.

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker, Christopher Rugaber and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar contributed to this report.

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Is that Dad? 75 years on, D-Day history still being written

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

LUDRES, France (AP) — After decades of searching, Andre Gantois had lost hope.

The retired French postal worker figured he'd likely go to his grave without ever knowing who his father was, unable to identify the U.S. serviceman who had fought his way across France after the D-Day landings, taken a bullet to the skull and been nursed back to health in a military hospital by Gantois' mother.

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Into his seventies, Gantois still had no clues to pursue, no name to work with, no paper trail to follow. As a consequence, he also had no peace.

"Throughout my life, I lived with this open wound," he says. "I never accepted my situation, of not knowing my father and, most of all, knowing that he didn't know about me, didn't know of my existence."

Even as Europe, the United States and their allies mark 75 years since 160,000 Allied troops stormed a heavily-fortified 50-mile (80-kilometer) stretch of Nazi-occupied coastline in Normandy, the history of D-Day and its aftermath is still being written.

The big picture, of course, is well known, meticulously documented and precious to be told and retold for generations to come. The greatest-ever amphibious landing, a triumph of soldiering and seafaring, of industry, ingenuity and logistics, and upon which a new world order was built, will again be commemorated June 6 with respect for the ever-smaller group of surviving veterans and awe for their heroics on the landing beaches: Omaha, Utah, Juno, Sword and Gold.

Yet all these years later, there are enduring holes in the narrative, too.

Among the thick Normandy hedgerows where German troops dug in and the Allied advance bogged down, soldiers' bones are still regularly disinterred. So brutal and chaotic was the fighting in France that thousands went missing or couldn't be identified before they were buried in graves still marked, "A comrade in arms known but to God."

Soldiers on all sides also fathered tens of thousands of children, some of them unable to ever answer that most existential of questions: Where did I come from?

Until a few months ago, when what he calls an unexpected "miracle" changed his life and filled in one of these missing pieces of wartime history, Gantois was among them.

Growing up as a post-war kid in eastern France, he would simply draw a line on forms at school that asked pupils for their fathers' names and other family details.

His mother and grandmother told him his father was killed in France's war in Vietnam that broke out in 1946, the year Gantois was born. The grandmother said his father's name was Jack. A trusting child, Gantois couldn't know these were lies. He didn't pay much heed to elderly neighbors who called him "the young American" or "the American's kid."

Only at age 15, when Gantois was mourning the death of his mother, taken by tuberculosis at age 37, did he get the truth.

"Listen, Andre, I have to tell you," the 73-year-old Gantois recalls his grandmother confessing to him. "Your dad was an American, in the war."

At first, Gantois was lost.

Later, in his twenties, he became determined to find out more.

Having married and with plans to start a family of his own, Gantois felt compelled to put a name, a face, to the patchy story and to fill what his wife, Rosine, now says was "a huge hole" in his life.

"He had no name, nothing to go on," she says. "He told me, 'I'll die without ever knowing who he was.'"

Visits to U.S. offices in France produced only frustration. Gantois recalls that an embassy official told him: "A lot of people are looking for their fathers, because they want money, they want to be compensated by the U.S. government. But you have to have proof. I had no proof."

Other avenues also proved to be dead ends.

Until last June.

Urged on by his daughter-in-law, Gantois took a DNA test.

Weeks later, in the middle of the night, she called him with the earthshaking results.

"You have an American brother, a sister, a whole family," Gantois recalls her telling him. "I didn't know what to say."

His dad, the test helped reveal, had been Wilburn 'Bill' Henderson. From Essex, Missouri, the infantryman landed on Omaha beach seemingly just after D-Day, fought through Normandy, suffered a head wound in the closing months of the war and met Irene Gantois at a hospital in occupied Germany.

After Germany's surrender in May 1945, when the soldier came to visit her at home in eastern France,

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she apparently didn't tell him that she was carrying his child. He returned to the United States, started a family and never spoke to his children about her before his death in 1997.

The trail would have ended there for Andre Gantois had his American half brother not also taken a DNA test. By chance, they both picked the same testing company, enabling it to put them together. The two men and Gantois' half sister, Judy, met for the first time last September in France.

Allen Henderson took the test on a whim, because the company had a special offer on its prices and, he says, because "I thought, well, that would be interesting."

Both Gantois and Henderson acknowledge how lucky they are not only to have found each other but also that their father survived Normandy and its aftermath.

"When I was little, he was always telling me stories about being in France and he'd speak a little French and kind of talk about how it was like to lay in a foxhole and guns, bullets flying over your head and guys dying all around you," says the 65-year-old Henderson, who lives in Greenville, South Carolina. "Amazing that he survived."

Henderson says he knew straight away when he saw Gantois that they were brothers because the resemblance is so striking.

"You know, Andre actually looks more like my dad than I do," Henderson says. "Your mannerisms, your smile, your face, I feel almost like I'm talking to my dad."

Other wartime families' histories remain unresolved. They're only more likely to stay that way with each passing year.

Posting on a French electronic bulletin board in 2016, for example, Jeannine Clement appealed for information about her biological father, a German soldier who was stationed in France before being sent to the Russian front in 1942.

Her mother waved goodbye to him at a train station, "in tears and pregnant," Clement wrote. "She never heard from him again."

Now at 76 and in poor health, Clement is still waiting.

Andre Gantois says he feels sorry for those without answers.

"It is not easy to live like that," he says. "I've got closure. The whole issue of my father, that's it, it's done. I'm no longer in a fog."

Associated Press writer Sarah Blake Morgan contributed from Greenville, South Carolina.

Trump's EPA shifts more environmental enforcement to states

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

BOKOSHE, Okla. (AP) — Susan Holmes' home, corner store and roadside beef jerky stand are right off Oklahoma Highway 31, putting them in the path of trucks hauling ash and waste from a power plant that burns the high-sulfur coal mined near this small town.

For years, when Bokoshe residents were outside, the powdery ash blowing from the trucks and the ash dump on the edge of town would "kind of engulf you," Holmes said. "They drove by, and you just couldn't breathe."

Over three decades, the ash dump grew into a hill five stories high. Townspeople regard the Environmental Protection Agency as the only source of serious environmental enforcement. Whenever people took their worries about ash-contaminated air and water to state lawmakers and regulators, "none of them cared," Holmes said.

So the residents of this 500-person town have nothing but bitter warnings for similarly situated communities now that President Donald Trump's EPA has approved Oklahoma to be the first state to take over permitting and enforcement on coal-ash sites.

"They're going to do absolutely nothing," predicted Tim Tanksley, a rancher in Bokoshe, about 130 miles southeast of Tulsa in a Choctaw Nation coal patch that helped fuel the railroads.

Around the country, the EPA under Trump is delegating a widening range of public health and environ-

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mental enforcement to states, saying local officials know best how to deal with local problems. Critics contend federal regulators are making a dangerous retreat on enforcement that puts people and the environment at greater risk.

One administration initiative would give states more authority over emissions from coal-fired power plants. Another would remove federal protections for millions of miles of waterways and wetlands.

Some states and counties say the EPA is also failing to act against threats from industrial polluters, including growing water contamination from a widely used class of nonstick industrial compounds. Michigan, New Jersey and some other states say they are tackling EPA-size challenges — like setting limits for the contaminants in drinking water — while appealing to the real EPA to act.

In Houston's oil and gas hub, local officials and residents say a lax EPA response to toxic spills during Hurricane Harvey left the public in the dark about health threats and handicapped efforts to hold companies responsible for cleaning up.

Nationwide, EPA inspections, evaluations and enforcement actions have fallen sharply over the past two years, some to the lowest points in decades, or in history.

The agency says environmental enforcers remain on the job despite the plunging enforcement numbers.

"There has been no retreat from working with states, communities and regulated entities to ensure compliance with our environmental laws," said George Hull, the agency's enforcement spokesman.

"Through our deregulatory actions, the Trump administration has proven that burdensome federal regulations are not necessary to drive environmental progress," EPA Director Andrew Wheeler, a former coal lobbyist, told lawmakers earlier this year.

Past EPA officials accuse the Trump administration of pulling back on enforcement of polluters and turning back the clock to a dirtier, more dangerous time.

"The reason that the ultimate authority to enforce the law was put into federal hands was because the states weren't any good at it," William Ruckelshaus said.

Now 86, Ruckelshaus served as the first administrator of the EPA in 1970, when President Richard Nixon created the agency amid a wave of public anger over contaminated air and water. The previous year, fire raged for hours on the pollutant-slicked surface of Ohio's Cuyahoga River, sending black smoke billowing over downtown Cleveland.

Then and now, some states lack the resources and legal authority to police big polluters. And crucially, Ruckelshaus said, some states just don't want to. They see routine environmental enforcement as a threat to business and jobs.

"The idea that you're going to delegate it to the states ... is completely fraudulent," Ruckelshaus said in an interview.

Congressional Democrats allege Trump is selective in his passion for state sovereignty and has blocked states that want tighter environmental enforcement. They point to the president's call to revoke California's authority under the Clean Air Act to set tougher mileage standards than those Trump wants, among other examples.

Oklahoma acquired permitting and oversight authority over a half-dozen coal-ash dumps and ponds last year under then-EPA Administrator Scott Pruitt, a former Oklahoma attorney general. Pruitt left the agency amid ethics probes last year and now lobbies for coal.

Georgia has also applied to manage its coal-ash dumps and ponds. The EPA says it is talking with other interested states but declined to identify them.

Risks from coal-ash sites jumped to national attention in 2008, when a dike broke at a Tennessee coal ash pond, releasing 1 billion gallons of toxic sludge.

Coal ash — the gunk left after pollution equipment captures the worst of the toxic soot that once poured out of power plant smokestacks — contains heavy metals and carcinogens, including lead, mercury, arsenic and radium. The tiny particles can seep into the lungs and blood system.

U.S. coal plants generate about 100 million tons of ash annually. An Associated Press analysis of data released by utilities last year showed widespread evidence of groundwater contamination around coal plants nationwide.

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In Oklahoma, groundwater testing at some of the ash sites shows contaminants at levels above what the government deems safe, according to Earthjustice and other environmental groups that are suing to reverse EPA's transfer of permitting and oversight.

Patrick Riley, the state Department of Environmental Quality official in charge of Oklahoma's coal-ash program, said the half-dozen sites will be brought up to federal standards. That includes moving some, Riley said.

The boom-and-bust cycles of the oil and gas fields govern Oklahoma's economy. But state officials also try to support the state's flagging coal industry, including giving what a state task force said are the highest subsidies in the U.S. to the few companies that mine and burn Oklahoma's high-sulfur coal. The coal-fired power plant that produces the ash dumped at Bokoshe has been one of the main beneficiaries.

The Bokoshe coal-ash dump was opened at an unlined former coal mine pit by a local outfit that was initially called Making Money Having Fun LLC, until complaints from townspeople made the ash dump notorious.

Laws designed to encourage rehabilitation of old coal pits meant the Bokoshe site was classified as a reclamation project and not an ash dump. That's even though the coal ash long ago filled the pit and now stands more than 50 feet high over several acres.

Fearing what the ash was doing to their air and water, the ranchers, teachers and shopkeepers of Bokoshe appealed for years for government action.

During Barack Obama's first term as president, residents went to the state capital in Oklahoma City and to Washington, D.C. Holmes herself thrust a record of the town's complaints into the hands of the EPA's then-administrator. Television correspondent Diane Sawyer put the tiny eastern Oklahoma town on the network news. TV crews took photos of all the asthma inhalers stashed in the lockers of Bokoshe schoolkids.

Almost a decade later, the only time excitement enters Tanksley's voice is when the cattle rancher recalls the day the EPA acted. Tanksley stood next to an EPA staffer that day as the man gathered beakers of runoff from the site for testing.

In 2010, the EPA cited the dump for toxic discharges in violation of the federal Clean Water Act. That led the state to stop the dump from accepting hazardous wastewater from oilfield operations. The dumping of ash continued, but state regulators required the operators to do more to contain the billowing ash.

Townspeople say they have little hope left for more state or federal help for Bokoshe. They have none to offer communities in similar fights.

"I did a lot," Holmes said. "But it never did much good."

Amid #MeToo, states debate teaching consent to kids

By MARYCLAIRE DALE Associated Press

Inside a Catholic school in Portland, Oregon, high school sophomores break into groups to discuss some once-taboo topics: abusive relationships and consent.

At one desk, a girl with banana-colored fingernails begins jotting down some of the hallmarks of abuse: Physically hurting you, verbally abusive, can be one-sided. She pauses to seek input from her classmates, boys and girls alike, before continuing: "It messes up your mentality and your, like, confidence."

For the first time this year, Central Catholic High School, like public schools in the city, is using educators from a domestic violence shelter to teach kids about what it means to consent. The goal is to reduce sexual violence and harassment among teens and help them understand what behavior is acceptable — and what's not — before they reach adulthood.

"We're talking about dating violence, sexual assault, relationships, #MeToo — all of those things. I think you have to be intentional about bringing this program into our classrooms," says David Blue, the school's director of diversity and inclusion. "How do you look at all of these constant conversations in our society right now?"

What's happening at this Catholic school in liberal Portland represents a larger debate unfolding in blue states and red, as lawmakers, educators and teens themselves re-examine whether sex education should

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evolve to better address some of the issues raised by #MeToo. Central to the conversation is whether schools should expand curriculums to help kids understand consent — a concept often defined differently from state to state.

"#MeToo has brought the issue of consent into the national spotlight, but it's abundantly clear that people still struggle with the culture shift that's happening," said Jennifer Driver, state policy director of the Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States, which favors liberal sex ed policies. "When done right, sex education can serve as violence prevention. But first, we have to get these policies (enacted)."

Since January, dozens of new sex ed bills have been floated in statehouses, but only five have passed and just two of those require specific instruction about consent, according to the Guttmacher Institute, which tracks sexuality and reproductive health issues. In all, 10 states and the District of Columbia require that consent be part of sex ed curriculum. The states are: California, Connecticut, Maryland, New Jersey, Illinois, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont and Virginia.

Meantime, according to Driver's group, 32 states require that abstinence be stressed in schools that teach sex education. And most federal funding for sex ed in recent years has gone to abstinence programs, to the tune of \$2 billion since 1981.

The divide over how to teach sex ed has long split on the question of whether kids are "sexual beings," said Jonathan Zimmerman, an education professor at the University of Pennsylvania.

The pendulum has swung from the explicit information on sex, contraception and sexually transmitted diseases taught amid the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s and 1990s to the abstinence-focused agenda that followed the rise of conservative politics, especially in the Bible Belt.

With the #MeToo movement, the pendulum may be inching back, at least when it comes to efforts to curb sexual violence.

A few abstinence-focused states, such as Virginia and South Carolina, have added consent to the curriculum.

And Oklahoma lawmakers this year considered a bill that would have forced high schools to teach consent. Called "Lauren's Law," the measure was named for a teen who said she was raped at a high school party. The Legislature eventually passed a narrower measure requiring that schools with a sex ed curriculum incorporate teaching about consent. It leaves other districts of the hook, but state Sen. Carol Bush, the Republican sponsor, called it "baby steps."

Bush said she raised two daughters in a Christian home but that a background in public health taught her of the need for comprehensive sex ed programs.

"I hate that we call it sex ed. It's more that you're a valued person — boy or girl — and we need to help our children understand that," said Bush, adding the bill was palatable to conservative colleagues because it lets teens know they have the right to say "no" to sex. She believes an increase in the number of women and younger lawmakers this year helped build consensus.

As with most issues in education, local school districts play a big role in shaping sex education curriculum, and many state laws on sex ed are intentionally vague.

In Cadillac, Michigan, a reliably Republican town of about 10,500 people, school leaders proactively teach consent after the school board voted more than a decade ago to change its sex ed curriculum from "abstinence only" to "abstinence based." These days county prosecutor Jason Elmore regularly visits the town's high school to deliver a sometimes startling message about consent.

Speaking to a freshmen health class last month, he patted his chest, lower abdomen and inner thighs while explaining that anyone under 16 cannot engage in sexual contact there without committing a crime — "even if it's a boyfriend or a girlfriend."

Elmore let the concept of who can do what with whom sink in as the students sat silently. Then he explained what it means for sexual contact to be "freely and honestly given" and how alcohol and marijuana are often involved in cases he sees. In the past year alone, he told the class, he's prosecuted a half-dozen sex-related cases involving Cadillac students.

"In this school?!" one bewildered boy exclaimed.

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A 2017-18 survey found that 15 percent of Cadillac ninth-graders and 55 percent of 11th-graders said they'd had sexual intercourse. And 1 in 10 said they'd been hit by a dating partner.

Health teacher Cathy Booher believes more students today understand what it means to give consent and respect boundaries. But inevitably, not long after Elmore's class, she said: "A week or two later, we've had an incident."

In Tennessee, where the state mandates an abstinence-based curriculum, some teenagers are leading their own discussions about consent. The state's sex ed law, known as the 2012 "Gateway Law," not only prohibits the discussion of sexual activities that stop short of intercourse — so-called "gateway sexual behaviors" — it imposes \$500 fines on instructors who wade into the topic.

In Memphis, students who are part of the advocacy group Memphis Against Sexual Harassment and Assault have lobbied the school district to fill its Title IX director's job, conducted peer training on consent, organized "Survivor Power Coffee Hours," and taken part in a "Memphis Says No More" poster campaign designed to promote awareness about sexual harassment and violence. The school board has agreed to distribute the posters in all middle and high schools this fall, the teens said.

These issues are personal to youth leaders Devin Dearmore and Savannah Thompson. Dearmore, 18, said she was sexually harassed by a staff member before transferring high schools. Thompson, 15, said she was catcalled, groped, pinned against a locker by another student — and later blamed for it — in eighth grade.

"I think there's this thing in the South that you just don't talk about things — provocative things," Thompson said. "We're being taught all of these things preparing us for college . but they're not teaching you how to cope with things that can derail your life. ... That's where our school system — and school systems nationwide — have failed us. In middle and elementary school, I didn't know I could say no."

Some who oppose teaching consent believe it signals an approval of teen sexual activity.

Mary Anne Mosack, who runs an abstinence education group called Ascend, said her group has been talking about consent for years but in the context that "avoiding sex is your best option." Ascend has trained some 1,500 instructors to teach what it calls "sexual risk aversion" in public and private schools, clubs, foster homes and more.

Measures like Tennessee's "Gateway Law" are not meant to chill discussion on important issues, Mosack said, but to limit those that stray too far into supposed safe-sex topics such as "naked cuddling" and "showering together."

"In Tennessee and in other states, too, people were looking at those kinds of topics that were being presented, and felt they were inappropriate," she said.

Critics of abstinence-based programs say they shut down urgently needed conversations. And if they are meant to curtail sexual activity in places like Tennessee, the results appear questionable. A study last month in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that Memphis was first among 17 metro areas surveyed in the rate of boys engaged in preteen sex. The survey found 1 in 4 boys have sex before their 13th birthday.

As for teaching students to delay sex until marriage, Columbia University researcher John Santilli considers that unreasonable in a country where just 3 percent of people do so.

"Abstinence until marriage in America in 2019? It's an impossible goal," said Santilli, who studies pediatrics and population health and said that more than half of Americans have sex before leaving high school. "On the other hand, I think we ought to tell young people if they're not ready to have sex with people, if they've had too much to drink, if they somehow feel uncomfortable with somebody, they can say no. To me, that's feminism in action."

He led a recent study that found teaching "refusal skills" in high school can cut the chances someone is raped in college in half.

In Oregon, Central Catholic High Principal John Garrow hoped to balance students' need for information with the Roman Catholic creed on abstinence before marriage. He evaluated several programs before choosing Raphael House, whose mission includes work with sexual and domestic assault survivors.

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"We're trying to do our best to follow the teachings and at the same time be realistic, because as a school you lose your relevance real quickly if you're not real," Garrow said.

In the sophomore wellness class in April, two Raphael House instructors asked students to consider signs of healthy and unhealthy relationships. Does your partner make you feel valued? Stupid? Scared?

"It, like, opened my eyes," said Ramaya Wright, 15. "I didn't know those are a lot of the signs of an abusive relationship."

Julia Tycer, a Raphael House educator, said consent comes into play not just in dating relationships but in all of our interactions, every day.

"It's never really too early to be talking about consent," she said. "Practicing consent is really just asking, 'Are you OK?'"

Contributing were AP reporter Gillian Flaccus from Portland, Oregon, and AP National Writer Martha Irvine from Cadillac, Michigan. Dale, who reported from Philadelphia, writes about gender issues and #MeToo for The Associated Press. Follow her at <https://twitter.com/Maryclairedale>

China's pig disease outbreak pushes up global pork prices

By **JOE McDONALD** and **SAM McNEIL** Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Hong Kong retiree Lee Wai-man loves pork fresh from the market but eats a lot less now that the price has jumped as China struggles with a deadly swine disease that has sent shockwaves through global meat markets.

China produces and consumes two-thirds of the world's pork, but output is plunging as Beijing destroys herds and blocks shipments to stop African swine fever. Importers are filling the gap by buying pork as far away as Europe, boosting prices by up to 40% and causing shortages in other markets.

"I'm a fresh-pork lover, but it's too expensive," Lee, 87, said as she shopped at a Hong Kong market.

African swine fever doesn't harm humans but is fatal and spreads quickly among pigs. It was first reported in August in China's northeast. Since then, 1 million pigs have died and the disease has spread to 31 of China's 34 provinces, according to the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization.

The outbreak's scale is unprecedented, said Dirk Pfeiffer, a veterinary epidemiologist at the City University of Hong Kong.

"This is probably the most complex animal disease we have ever had to deal with," Pfeiffer said.

China's shortfall is likely to be so severe it will match Europe's annual pork output and exceed U.S. production by 30%, industry researchers say.

"Everyone wants to import as much pork as possible," said industry analyst Angela Zhang of IQC Insights. She said the trend is likely to accelerate as Chinese production falls.

That's a boost for farmers in Germany, Spain and other countries with healthy pigs but hard on families in Southeast Asia and other poor markets that rely on pork for protein.

This year's Chinese pork output might fall by up to 35%, according to Rabobank, a Dutch bank.

Global supplies will be "redirected to China," the bank's researchers said in an April report. It said the "unprecedented shift" in trade will likely cause shortages in other markets.

Grocery shoppers in Germany, Japan and other high-income markets grumble at paying more for kielbasa or tonkatsu, but short supplies are a serious concern in places such as Cambodia where pork is the only meat many families can afford.

Cambodia's live hog price jumped 37% in the past six months, according to Srun Pov, president of the Cambodia Livestock Raiser Association. He said the country is buying about 30% of its daily needs of 500-600 tons from Thailand.

"Pork is important to us," said Chhe Pich as a butcher weighed her purchase in the Cambodian capital, Phnom Penh. "Even though the current price is a bit high, I have to buy it to serve my family."

The U.S. Department of Agriculture expects China's pork imports to soar 41% this year over 2018 to 2.2 million tons. There's no immediate end in sight as "evidence mounts that China will be unable to eradicate

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ASF in the near-term," it said in a recent report.

The jolt to the global meat industry highlights China's voracious demand for food for its 1.4 billion people, the potential for wider disruptions if its own production falters and its growing ability to outbid other customers for supplies.

African swine fever was first reported in August in China's northeast. Since then, 1 million pigs have died and the disease has spread to 31 of China's 34 provinces, according to the FAO.

Outbreaks have been reported in Cambodia, Mongolia, South Africa and Vietnam.

It's been found among a small number of wild boars, which can spread the disease, in Russia and seven European countries.

Yang Wenguo, a farmer in Jiangjiaqiao, a village a two-hour drive northeast of Beijing, said he has lost 800 pigs. He now has a few dozen.

Most of Yang's pens are empty. White pus drips from blood-shot eyes of one surviving hog. Foam drips from another's mouth. Smaller pigs cough.

Yang dosed his animals with government-subsidized medications but they kept getting sick. The government hauls away dead animals and pays compensation of 1,000 yuan (\$145) for a sow and 20 yuan (\$3) for a piglet.

"You buy pigs, then they all die," he said, walking on ground covered in disinfectant that looks like dirty snow. Only about 60 to 70 pigs remain from total herds of about 3,000 in Jiangjiaqiao.

Four other families in the village that raised pigs have stopped, Yang said, "No one can bear losing all the pigs they raise." He'd like to sell his farm and find work in the city but no one wants to buy.

The USDA forecasts China's total hog herd will shrink by 18% this year to 350 million animals, the lowest level since the 1980s.

In Hong Kong, authorities destroyed 6,000 pigs at one slaughterhouse after an animal imported from the mainland was found to be infected.

"More and more customers are switching from roast pork to other roast meat like chicken and duck," said restaurant owner Siu Si-man.

Chinese authorities respond to outbreaks by temporarily banning shipments of pigs from any province where a case is reported.

That has caused retail prices to spike in big cities cut off from supplies. Prices paid to farmers have collapsed in areas with a surplus of pigs they can't export.

A half-hour drive from Yang's farm, Wang Lijun breeds his own piglets to avoid buying infected animals. His herd shrank from 160 to 170 animals to about 20 to 30 but none died this year.

"All farmers are cutting production," he said, walking past a row of cages holding pregnant sows.

The number of sows needed for breeding had fallen 19% from a year ago by the end of February, which suggests supply will plunge through next year, the USDA forecasts.

"China's herd-rebuilding will be slow and take years," said Rabobank.

In Vietnam, the government said in mid-May that 1.2 million pigs, or about 5% of its total herds, had died or been destroyed. Rabobank expects Vietnamese pork production to fall 10% this year from 2018.

China's biggest foreign pork supplier is Spain, which accounts for 20% of imports. Germany supplies 19.5% and Canada 16%.

Spanish exports of pork and other pig products to China jumped 32.8% in the first two months of 2019 from a year earlier to 117 million euros (\$131 million), according to Interporc, a Spanish industry group.

"My suppliers have told me that they are going to raise prices at the end of the month because of what is happening in China," said Jordi Nargares, a butcher in a working class neighborhood of Barcelona.

U.S. pork sales to China have been disrupted by Beijing's tariff war with the Trump administration over trade and technology.

Chinese buyers canceled orders for 3,300 tons of American pork the week of May 6, according to the USDA.

Chinese companies are investing in farms and food processors abroad to capitalize on strong demand. New Hope Group, one of China's biggest agribusiness groups, said it plans to invest 1.1 billion yuan (\$170

million) in three pig-breeding farms in Vietnam.

AP video journalist Alice Fung in Hong Kong and AP Writers Sopheng Cheang in Phnom Penh and Joseph Wilson in Madrid contributed.

China's technology tactics irk its trading partners

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — For four decades, Beijing has cajoled or pressured foreign companies to hand over technology. And its trading partners say if that didn't work, China stole what it wanted.

Communist leaders deflected demands for change until foreign frustration erupted into a showdown with President Donald Trump. He sent shockwaves through their export industries by slapping punitive tariffs of up to 25% on Chinese goods.

Europe, Japan and other trading partners object to Trump's tactics but echo American complaints. They say Beijing's tactics violate its market-opening commitments under the World Trade Organization.

American prosecutors go further. They say the Communist Party is the ringleader of a global industrial spying operation.

Chinese leaders have promised stronger patent protections and other legal changes. Foreign experts say that will make little difference if the party won't enforce them.

The share of companies in a survey by the European Union Chamber of Commerce that said they felt compelled to hand over technology doubled from two years ago to 20 percent.

"It is unacceptable that this practice continues," a chamber vice president, Charlotte Roule, said Monday. "Ending its persistence needs to be a priority."

Here are some tactics Beijing's trading partners complain it uses to improperly obtain foreign technology.

JOINT VENTURES: The strongest tool in Beijing's arsenal is the longstanding requirement for companies in most industries to work through state-owned local partners.

The goal is for the Chinese partner to learn and eventually displace its foreign competitor.

Some balked but thousands of companies cooperated as the price of admission to the most populous global market.

Many companies say Chinese partners abide by promises not to abuse their access to technology. But some say partners have copied chemical formulas, industrial processes and other secrets for their own operations, sometimes with local government support.

Beijing denies it forces foreign companies to hand over technology, but joint ventures won't work without foreign technology and manufacturing expertise.

In the auto industry, China has promised to lift requirements for joint ventures and allow full foreign ownership by 2023. Experts say that suggests they believe Chinese automakers no longer need foreign tutors.

LEGAL PRESSURE: Pressure to hand over technology pervades Chinese law and action by regulators.

Beijing promised when it joined the WTO in 2001 to treat Chinese and foreign companies equally. But 18 years later, business groups and governments say foreign companies still face special burdens, including sharing technology.

The European Union filed a WTO challenge last June to Chinese laws on technology licensing it says discriminate against foreign companies. It said China's own companies are free to negotiate licensing terms, but Beijing dictates terms for foreign companies.

A law approved in March bans using "administrative measures" to compel foreign companies to hand over technology. Business groups welcomed that but said Chinese officials can still use other pressure tactics.

Business groups say Chinese regulators misuse a 2008 Anti-Monopoly Law to pressure foreign companies in negotiations on technology licensing.

The law includes an unusual provision prohibiting "abuse of intellectual property right." Lawyers say that

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runs counter to the spirit of patents and copyrights, which are meant to encourage technology creation by giving the owner a temporary monopoly and the right to charge others for using it.

Lawyers said Chinese regulators sometimes intervene in contract negotiations and push foreign companies to accept lower fees by threatening to launch an anti-monopoly investigation.

REGULATORY PRESSURE

Authorities also use "window guidance," or verbal orders given in secret, to compel companies to support Chinese technology development in ways the government doesn't publicly acknowledge.

A decade ago, for example, global automakers agreed to help Chinese partners create new local brands.

That injected foreign expertise into fledgling brands the Communist Party hoped eventually will compete in global markets in a way joint venture vehicles made under foreign brand names cannot.

It made life harder for automakers by spreading their resources more thinly and adding to competition in a glutted market. Despite that, global automakers said they had commercial motivations and regulators denied they applied any pressure.

The real reason? Industry researchers say regulators told automakers in private they had to cooperate if they wanted permission to expand production of their own brands.

MORE REGULATORY PRESSURE

Regulators also pressure foreign companies to help potential Chinese rivals develop technology.

Global companies in engineering, software, pharmaceuticals and other fields have set up research centers with Chinese partners. Many say they are to take advantage of China's scientific talent pool, but such arrangements benefit potential Chinese competitors and are unusual abroad.

This month, Microsoft Corp. opened an artificial intelligence research lab in Shanghai with the state-owned Zhangjiang Group.

Other prominent examples include General Motors Co.'s Pan-Asia Technical Automotive Center with state-owned SAIC Motor. SAIC is the main Chinese manufacturing partner for GM and Volkswagen AG but also sells its own auto brands.

AND MORE REGULATORY PRESSURE

Companies complain regulators use patent, safety and other official examinations to learn about technology, often including employees of Chinese rivals in review panels.

Companies are required to provide what they say is an unusually large amount of information about products and industrial processes, including competitive secrets, to obtain patents or approval for operations.

The Wall Street Journal in September cited an employee of a foreign automaker as saying there was "clear evidence of collusion" between regulators and Chinese automakers.

The employee said regulators asked for blueprints of components the company was trying to prevent its Chinese partner from seeing but ignored other parts of the vehicle.

"LOCALIZING TECHNOLOGY"

For decades, the ruling party has rewarded businesspeople, academics and others who "localize technology" — a 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.

Other Chinese-born researchers in the United States have been charged with stealing chemical, seed, turbine and other technologies. Prosecutors say some had partners waiting in China to turn them into products.

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OUTRIGHT THEFT

American prosecutors say when all else fails, top-level state companies steal foreign secrets.

Pangang Group, a steelmaker owned by China's Cabinet, was indicted in 2014 on U.S. charges it paid industrial spies to steal a process from DuPont for making titanium dioxide, a white pigment widely used in toothpaste, Oreo cookies and other products.

Defendants including an industry consultant and a retired DuPont employee admitted working for Pangang. But the case stalled because prosecutors had no access to Pangang Group and Chinese authorities took no action.

MILITARY SPYING

U.S. prosecutors say the Communist Party uses its military wing's cyber warfare skills to steal commercial secrets.

The People's Liberation Army is regarded as, along with the U.S. and Russian militaries, a leader in research on breaking into or disabling an enemy's computer networks.

Security experts say hackers believed to be Chinese soldiers or military contractors have stolen secrets including product designs, chemical processes and details of commercial negotiations.

In 2014, five members of China's military cyber warfare unit were indicted on U.S. industrial spying charges.

The following year, President Xi Jinping agreed with President Barack Obama to avoid using military resources to steal commercial secrets. But the U.S. National Security Agency said in November that Beijing appeared to be violating its pledge.

In October, an employee of China's main spy agency was charged with trying to steal trade secrets from U.S. aviation and aerospace companies.

Hundreds protest Alabama abortion ban: 'My body, my choice!'

By KIM CHANDLER Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Hundreds of demonstrators marched to the Alabama Capitol on Sunday to protest the state's newly approved abortion ban, chanting "my body, my choice!" and "vote them out!"

The demonstration came days after Gov. Kay Ivey signed the most stringent abortion law in the nation—making performing an abortion a felony in nearly all cases unless necessary for the mother's health. The law provides no exception for rape and incest.

"Banning abortion does not stop abortion. It stops safe abortion," said Staci Fox, CEO and president of Planned Parenthood Southeast, addressing the cheering crowd outside the Alabama Capitol.

Alabama is part of a wave of conservative states seeking to mount new legal challenges to Roe v. Wade, the 1973 landmark Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion nationwide. Governors in Kentucky, Mississippi, Ohio and Georgia have approved bans on abortion once a fetal heartbeat is detected, which can happen as early as the sixth week of pregnancy.

None of the laws has actually taken effect, and all are expected to be blocked by the courts as the legal challenges play out with an ultimate eye on the Supreme Court.

Marchers on Sunday said the measures have energized supporters of legalized abortion, and they say they are digging in for a legal and political fight. Along the route they took, the protesters passed by scattered counterdemonstrators raising signs against abortion.

Two speakers at the rally on the Capitol steps shared their stories of having an abortion, including a woman who came out of the crowd to describe the abortion she had after being raped at a party at age 18.

Carrying an orange sign with a coat hanger and the caption "No Never Again," 69-year-old Deborah Hall of Montgomery said she remembers life before Roe and can't believe the push to return there.

"I had friends who had illegal abortions and barely survived," said Hall, who for a time ran a clinic in Montgomery that provided abortion, birth control and other services.

"I still cannot believe it. It's really a scary time for everybody," she said of the push to overturn Roe. Similar demonstrations were held in Birmingham and Huntsville on Sunday.

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Amanda Reyes, who runs Yellowhammer Fund, a nonprofit that provides funding to help low-income women obtain abortions, said donations have begun streaming in since passage of the Alabama bill.

Groups this week paid for a small plane carrying a banner "Abortion is Okay!" to circle the Capitol and the Governor's Mansion.

The Alabama law would make it a felony, punishable by up to 99 years or life in prison to perform an abortion. There would be no punishment for the woman receiving the abortion.

But the protest outside the Capitol Sunday comes in a state where a majority of voters recently agreed to put anti-abortion language in the Alabama Constitution. Fifty-nine % of state voters in November approved the constitutional amendment saying the state recognizes the rights of the "unborn."

"To the bill's many supporters, this legislation stands as a powerful testament to Alabamians' deeply held belief that every life is precious and that every life is a sacred gift from God," Ivey said in a statement after signing the ban into law.

The Alabama law has also come under criticism by some conservatives who have expressed discomfort by the lack of exceptions for rape and incest.

President Donald Trump, while not mentioning Alabama's law, wrote in a weekend tweet that he is strongly "pro-life" but favors exceptions.

"As most people know, and for those who would like to know, I am strongly Pro-Life, with the three exceptions - Rape, Incest and protecting the Life of the mother - the same position taken by Ronald Reagan," Trump wrote in a series of tweets.

Rep. Terri Collins, the sponsor of the Alabama law, said the purpose is to challenge Roe and added that Alabama lawmakers can come back and add exemptions if states regain control of abortion access.

Speaker stuns 2019 Morehouse grads, to pay off student debt

By ERRIN HAINES WHACK AP National Writer

A billionaire technology investor stunned the entire graduating class at Morehouse College when he announced at their commencement Sunday that he would pay off their student loans ___ estimated at up to \$40 million.

Robert F. Smith, this year's commencement speaker, made the announcement while addressing nearly 400 graduating seniors of the all-male historically black college in Atlanta. Smith, who is black, is the Founder and CEO of Vista Equity Partners, a private equity firm that invests in software, data, and technology-driven companies.

"On behalf of the eight generations of my family that have been in this country, we're gonna put a little fuel in your bus," the investor and philanthropist told graduates in his morning address. "This is my class, 2019. And my family is making a grant to eliminate their student loans."

The announcement immediately drew stunned looks from faculty and students alike. Then the graduates broke into the biggest cheers of the morning and stood up, applauding. Morehouse said it is the single largest gift to the college.

Though college officials could not provide an estimate of the exact amount owed by the current graduating class, students graduate with an average debt of \$30,000 to \$40,000, said Terrance L. Dixon, vice president of enrollment management.

Smith, who received an honorary doctorate from Morehouse during the ceremony, had already announced a \$1.5 million gift to the school.

Smith said he expected the recipients to "pay it forward" and said he hoped that "every class has the same opportunity going forward."

"Because we are enough to take care of our own community," Smith said. "We are enough to ensure that we have all the opportunities of the American dream. And we will show it to each other through our actions and through our words and through our deeds."

In the weeks before graduating from Morehouse on Sunday, 22-year-old finance major Aaron Mitchom drew up a spreadsheet to calculate how long it would take him to pay back his \$200,000 in student loans

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— 25 years at half his monthly salary, per his calculations.

In an instant, that number vanished. Mitchom, sitting in the crowd, wept.

"I can delete that spreadsheet," he said in an interview after the commencement. "I don't have to live off of peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. I was shocked. My heart dropped. We all cried. In the moment it was like a burden had been taken off."

His mother, Tina Mitchom, was also shocked. Eight family members, including Mitchom's 76-year-old grandmother, took turns over four years co-signing on the loans that got him across the finish line.

"It takes a village," she said. "It now means he can start paying it forward and start closing this gap a lot sooner, giving back to the college and thinking about a succession plan" for his younger siblings.

Morehouse College president David A. Thomas said the gift would have a profound effect on the students' futures.

"Many of my students are interested in going into teaching, for example, but leave with an amount of student debt that makes that untenable," Thomas said in an interview. "In some ways, it was a liberation gift for these young men that just opened up their choices."

Whack reported from Philadelphia. Associated Press writer Ben Nadler contributed to the report from Atlanta.

Temple memorial to Florida shooting victims is set ablaze

CORAL SPRINGS, Fla. (AP) — A wooden temple built as a memorial to the 17 victims of a Florida high school mass shooting was set ablaze Sunday in a symbolic gesture of healing.

The "Temple of Time" public art installation was set afire at a ceremony hosted by the cities of Parkland and Coral Springs, where Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School students live.

The families of several Parkland victims attended the ritual burning of the 35-foot (10-meter) tall temple. Described as "therapeutic" by some, the ceremonial fire was supposed to symbolize the release of pain still left inside.

Firefighters surrounded the structure as 17 people lit it up the center of the temple with torches. It took a few minutes for the fire to spread to the roof, suddenly engulfing the temple's needle with giant flames as black smoke billowed up into the sky.

The timing was impeccable. The lacelike designs allowed the flames to spread evenly across the wooden structure, making it glow orange for a few minutes as the sky darkened. The temple did not burn to the ground as predicted.

Friends and loved ones had been leaving notes, photos and mementos inside the temple to honor the victims of the mass shooting since it was built in February.

"It's kind of sad today because this temple has meant so much to so many," said Parkland Mayor Christine Hunschofsky. "The beauty of the temple is not the beautiful structure. It's the people who were brought together, the messages, the love, the hope that was shared, and the resilience that has been shown by this community."

San Francisco-area artist David Best created the 1,600-square-foot (150-square-meter) Asian design with a spire roof. Most construction materials and other expenses were paid by former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg's foundation.

A lone gunman's attack killed 17 students and staffers and injured 17 others on Feb. 14, 2018.

Best and his team of volunteers and community helpers built the structure as the communities commemorated the anniversary of the mass shooting last February.

On Sunday, Best said he worried about students and others suffering in silence. He urged the community to protect one another to prevent more suicides, an apparent reference to the cases of two student survivors who committed suicide earlier this year.

"Let's watch out for one another," Best said. "This is a community that went through hell."

Saudis say they will defend themselves, as Trump warns Iran

By AYA BATRAWY and FAY ABUELGASIM Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Saudi Arabia does not want war but will not hesitate to defend itself against Iran, a top Saudi diplomat said Sunday after the kingdom's energy sector was targeted this past week amid heightened tensions in the Persian Gulf.

U.S. President Donald Trump, meanwhile, warned Iran that it will face destruction if it seeks a fight, while Iranian officials said their country isn't looking for war. Trump spoke after a rocket hit near the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Adel al-Jubeir, the Saudi minister of state for foreign affairs, spoke a week after four oil tankers— two of them Saudi — were targeted in an alleged act of sabotage off the coast of the United Arab Emirates and days after Iran-allied Yemeni rebels claimed a drone attack on a Saudi oil pipeline.

"The kingdom of Saudi Arabia does not want war in the region and does not strive for that... but at the same time, if the other side chooses war, the kingdom will fight this with all force and determination and it will defend itself, its citizens and its interests," al-Jubeir told reporters.

On Sunday night, the U.S. military command that oversees the Mideast confirmed an explosion outside the U.S. Embassy compound in Baghdad and said there were no U.S. or coalition casualties.

A State Department spokesman, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said that "a low-grade rocket did land within the International Zone near the U.S. Embassy." The spokesman said that "attacks on U.S. personnel and facilities will not be tolerated and will be responded to in a decisive manner" and added that the U.S. will hold "Iran responsible if any such attacks are conducted by its proxy militia forces or elements of such forces."

Earlier, after initial reports of the attack, Trump tweeted a warning to Iranian leaders: "If Iran wants to fight, that will be the official end of Iran. Never threaten the United States again!" Trump tweeted.

A senior Iranian military commander was quoted as saying his country is not looking for war, in comments published in Iranian media on Sunday.

Fears of armed conflict were already running high after the White House ordered warships and bombers to the region earlier this month to counter an alleged, unexplained threat from Iran. The U.S. also has ordered nonessential staff out of its diplomatic posts in Iraq.

Trump had appeared to soften his tone in recent days, saying he expected Iran to seek negotiations with his administration. Asked on Thursday if the U.S. might be on a path to war with Iran, the president answered, "I hope not."

Sunday night's apparent rocket attack was the first such incident since September, when three mortar shells landed in an abandoned lot inside the Green Zone.

Iraqi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasoul told The Associated Press that a Katyusha rocket fell near the statue of the Unknown Soldier, less than a mile from the U.S. Embassy. He said that the military was investigating the cause but that the rocket was believed to have been fired from east Baghdad. The area is home to Iran-backed Shiite militias.

As tensions escalate between the U.S. and Iran, there have been concerns that Baghdad could once again get caught in the middle, just as it is on the path to recovery. The country hosts more than 5,000 U.S. troops, and is home to powerful Iranian-backed militias, some of whom want those U.S. forces to leave.

The U.S. Navy said Sunday it had conducted exercises in the Arabian Sea with the aircraft carrier strike group ordered to the region to counter the unspecified threat from Iran. The Navy said the exercises and training were conducted Friday and Saturday with the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group in coordination with the U.S. Marine Corps, highlighting U.S. "lethality and agility to respond to threat," as well as to deter conflict and preserve U.S. strategic interests.

The current tensions are rooted in Trump's decision last year to withdraw the U.S. from the 2015 nuclear accord between Iran and world powers and impose wide-reaching sanctions, including on Iranian oil exports that are crucial to its economy.

Iran has said it would resume enriching uranium at higher levels if a new nuclear deal is not reached by

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July 7. That would potentially bring it closer to being able to develop a nuclear weapon, something Iran insists it has never sought.

Energy ministers from OPEC and its allies, including major producers Saudi Arabia and Russia, are meeting in Saudi Arabia on Sunday to discuss energy prices and production cuts. Iran's oil exports are expected to shrink further in the coming months after the U.S. stopped renewing waivers that allowed it to continue selling to some countries.

OPEC and non-OPEC oil producers have production cuts in place, but the group of exporters is not expected to make its decision on output until late June, when they meet again in Vienna.

The United Arab Emirates' energy minister Suhail al-Mazrouei told reporters at the meeting he does not think relaxing the oil production cuts in place is the right measure. His comments suggest there's support within OPEC and other oil-producing nations, like Russia, to continue propping up oil prices after a sharp fall last year. Oil is now trading above \$70 a barrel and closer to what's needed to balance state budgets among Persian Gulf producers.

Saudi Arabia's King Salman, meanwhile, has called for a meeting of Arab heads of state on May 30 in Mecca to discuss the latest developments, including the oil pipeline attack.

The kingdom has blamed the pipeline attack on Iran, accusing Tehran of arming the rebel Houthis, which a Saudi-led coalition has been at war with in Yemen since 2015. Iran denies arming or training the rebels, who control much of northern Yemen, including the capital, Sanaa.

"We want peace and stability in the region, but we won't stand with our hands bound as the Iranians continuously attack. Iran has to understand that," al-Jubeir said. "The ball is in Iran's court."

Al-Jubeir also noted that an investigation, led by the UAE, into the tanker incident is underway.

The state-run Saudi news agency reported Sunday that U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman to discuss regional developments. There was no immediate statement by the State Department about the call.

An English-language Saudi newspaper close to the palace recently published an editorial calling for surgical U.S. airstrikes in retaliation for Iran's alleged involvement in targeting Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure.

The head of Iran's Revolutionary Guard, Gen. Hossein Salami, was quoted Sunday as saying Iran is not looking for war. But he said the U.S. is going to fail in the near future "because they are frustrated and hopeless" and are looking for a way out of the current escalation. His comments, given to other Guard commanders, were carried by Iran's semi-official Fars news agency.

The USS Abraham Lincoln has yet to reach the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a third of all oil traded at sea passes.

Associated Press writers Amir Vahdat in Tehran, Iran, and Qassim Abdul-Zahra and Bassem Mroue in Baghdad contributed to this report.

Koepka survives Bethpage Black to win PGA Championship

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

FARMINGDALE, N.Y. (AP) — His place in PGA Championship history finally secure, Brooks Koepka draped both arms around the top of the Wanamaker Trophy and let out a deep sigh.

The stress was more than he wanted. The satisfaction was more than he imagined.

Koepka lost all but one shot of his record seven-shot lead Sunday. Then he lost the brutal Long Island crowd, which began chants of "D.J.! D.J.!" as Koepka was on his way to a fourth straight bogey that allowed Dustin Johnson to pull within one shot.

"It's New York," Koepka said. "What do you expect when you're half-choking it away?"

He responded like a player capable of piling up major championships faster than anyone since Tiger Woods.

Motivated by the crowd turning on him, Koepka delivered the key shots over the closing stretch as Johnson faded with two straight bogeys. He closed with a 4-over 74 for a two-shot victory and joined Woods

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as the only back-to-back winners of the PGA Championship since it went to stroke play in 1958.

That gives him four of the last eight majors he played and makes him the first player to hold two back-to-back majors at the same time. He won his second straight U.S. Open last summer 60 miles down the road at Shinnecock Hills before a far less rowdy crowd.

When his 6-foot par putt fell on the last hole, Koepka thrust his muscular right arm in the air and hugged his caddie hard.

"Today was definitely the most satisfying out of all of them for how stressful that round was — how stressful D.J. made that," Koepka said. "I know for a fact that was the most excited I've ever been in my life there on 18."

Koepka said at the start of the week that majors are sometimes the easiest to win.

This one should have been.

It wasn't.

And it didn't help that a raging wind that gusted up to 25 mph turned Bethpage Black into a beast, with Johnson (69) the only player out of the last 12 groups to shoot par or better. Koepka's 74 was the highest final round by a PGA champion since Vijay Singh (4-over 76) won in a playoff at Whistling Straits in 2004.

"I'm just glad I don't have to play any more holes," Koepka said. "That was a stressful round of golf. I'm glad to have this thing back in my hands."

Koepka appeared to wrap it up with a gap wedge from 156 yards to 2 feet on the 10th hole for a birdie, as Johnson made his first bogey of the round up ahead on the 11th. That restored the lead to six shots, and the coronation was on.

And then it all changed in a New York minute.

Four holes later, Koepka walked off the 15th tee with a one-shot lead. He looked over to his left to see Johnson facing a 7-foot par putt on the 16th hole — the most difficult hole at Bethpage Black on Sunday because it was into the wind — to stay within one shot. The groan of the crowd told him Johnson had missed.

"I felt like as long as I had the lead, I was fine," Koepka said. "As long as I put it in the fairway, I was going to be all right."

Koepka, who finished at 8-under 272, returned to No. 1 in the world with a performance that defines his dominance in golf's biggest events.

He was the first wire-to-wire winner in the PGA Championship since Hal Sutton at Riviera in 1983. It was his third straight year winning a major, a feat achieved by only seven others since the Masters began in 1934 — Woods, Phil Mickelson, Tom Watson, Jack Nicklaus, Arnold Palmer, Peter Thomson and Ralph Guldahl.

Winning four of his last eight majors is a stretch not seen since Woods won seven out of 11 when he captured the 2002 U.S. Open at Bethpage Black.

Next up is the U.S. Open at Pebble Beach, where Koepka already is the betting favorite as he defends his title for the second time. No one has won the U.S. Open three straight years since Willie Anderson in 1905.

No one will doubt whether Koepka is capable the way he is playing.

Johnson knew he was a long shot going into the final round — no one had ever lost a seven-shot lead in a major — and he still managed to make Koepka work for it.

He came undone with a shot he thought would be perfect — a 5-iron from 194 yards, dead into the wind on the 16. It one-hopped over the green into thick rough.

"Hit the shot I wanted to right at the flag," Johnson said. "I don't know how it flew 200 yards into the wind like that."

Johnson now has runner-up finishes in all four of the majors, the wrong kind of career Grand Slam.

"I gave it a run," he said. "That's all you can ask for."

It was more than anyone expected, especially when Koepka was six shots ahead with eight holes to play.

The crowd sensed a collapse and began chanting Johnson's nickname on the par-3 14th as Koepka went long and was headed for a fourth straight bogey.

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Koepka is a 29-year-old Floridian with an imposing figure, power off the tee and out of the rough, no obvious weakness in his game and the kind of mental fortitude that majors require. He needed all of it to win this one.

"I wasn't nervous," he said. "I was in shock of what was going on."

Bethpage has a reputation for being over the top, and it irritated Harold Varner III, who shot 81 playing in the final group.

"I thought it was pretty weird how they were telling Brooks to choke," Varner said about the 14th hole. "That's not my cup of tea. I was pulling for him after that."

Koepka held it together at the most crucial moment. He piped his driver down the 15th fairway and two-putted for par. And he drilled another one into the 16th for another par. He kept it interesting to the end, three-putting the 17th as the lead went back to two shots, and pulling his driver on the 18th into fescue so thick it left him little choice but to lay up and scramble for par. Once his medium lob wedge settled 6 feet away, he could relax.

Finally.

Woods won the Wanamaker Trophy in consecutive years twice, in 1999 and 2000, and again in 2006 and 2007. Koepka was starting to draw comparisons with Woods for the way he obliterated the competition, much like Woods in his 12-shot victory in the 1997 Masters and 15-shot victory in the 2000 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach.

Koepka tied the PGA Championship record by opening with a 63. He broke the major championship record for 36 holes at 128. He set another PGA Championship record with his seven-shot lead.

In the end, just having his name on the heaviest championship trophy in golf was all that mattered.

For more AP golf coverage: <https://apnews.com/apf-Golf> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Blues move to brink of Cup final with 5-0 win over Sharks

By JOSH DUBOW AP Sports Writer

SAN JOSE, Calif. (AP) — From last in the league in early January all the way to the brink of their first Stanley Cup Final in nearly a half-century, it has been quite a ride for the St. Louis Blues.

A remarkable turnaround continued Sunday with perhaps their most convincing win of a charmed playoff run.

Jaden Schwartz started a dominant second period with the first of his three goals, Vladimir Tarasenko scored on a penalty shot and the Blues moved within one win of the Cup final with a 5-0 victory over the San Jose Sharks in Game 5 of the Western Conference final.

"It's probably tough to put into words," Schwartz said. "It's something that everyone's worked for and dreamed about. You don't want to look too far ahead. We all know how important and how hard that last win's going to be. It would be a dream come true."

St. Louis used a relentless forecheck to take control of the game and series in the second period, scoring twice and outshooting the beleaguered Sharks 20-6 during the frame. It also got 21 saves from Jordan Binnington in his first playoff shutout and a first-period goal from Oskar Sundqvist to overwhelm the Sharks.

Schwartz added two goals in the third for his second hat trick this postseason, becoming the first player with two in one playoff run since Johan Franzen for Detroit in 2008.

The victory gave the Blues a 3-2 series lead, the closest they've been to making the final since getting there in their first three seasons as the winner of the all-expansion Western Conference. St. Louis can earn its first trip back to the final since 1970 with a win at home in Game 6 on Tuesday night, an improbable journey for a team that was last in the standings on Jan. 2.

"We're close. We're very close right now," forward Patrick Maroon said. "I think the guys know that. It's in the back of their heads, but we know that that's a good hockey team over there too and they're not going to give up."

Martin Jones made 35 saves for the Sharks but got little help from his teammates, who have been held

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to one goal in losing the past two games. San Jose now faces elimination for the third straight series, having overcome a 3-1 series deficit to Vegas in the first round and winning a Game 7 at home in the second round against Colorado.

"We've been here before," coach Peter DeBoer said. "Had to go on the road and win in Vegas in order to get to a Game 7. You're never comfortable when your back's against the wall like that, but we have been here before and found a way and I'm confident we can do that again."

San Jose got off to a spirited start in the rare afternoon contest that led to a more subdued crowd than usual at the Shark Tank. Evander Kane hit the post just 12 seconds into the game and the Sharks had the better of the play in the opening 20 minutes despite falling behind 1-0 when Sundqvist converted a turnover from a hobbled Erik Karlsson into a goal less than six minutes into the contest.

Karlsson has been hampered by a groin injury that sidelined him for 27 of the final 33 games in the regular season and has been extremely limited since the third period of Game 4. He tried to make a quick outlet under pressure but his pass went through teammate Brenden Dillon's skates, off the boards and right to Sundqvist, who beat Jones to give the Blues their fourth goal of the series from the fourth line.

The Blues then took over in the second period, putting 11 shots on goal in less than five minutes. They added to the lead when Tarasenko's shot was partially blocked. Jones then swept it away but it went right to Schwartz, who knocked it into the open net.

Schwartz added the two goals in the third, giving him 12 in the playoffs after scoring just 11 in 69 regular-season games.

"It was an off-year obviously for him in the regular season," coach Craig Berube said. "But the guy keeps working hard. He's not going to change his attitude. He keeps with it, he keeps working and it's paying off now."

The Blues kept up the pressure, leading to a breakaway by Tarasenko. He was pulled down by Brent Burns for a penalty shot and converted it with a shot high to Jones' glove side.

The game got out of hand in the third as the Sharks took a parade to the penalty box, upset about a hit to the head of Tomas Hertl in the first period by Ivan Barbashev and a high hit to captain Joe Pavelski by Alex Pietrangelo early in the third.

"I thought we obviously took way too many penalties," forward Logan Couture said. "You can't come back when you're in the box the whole period, got away from us at the end. Would have really liked us to control our emotions and given ourselves a chance."

NOTES: Karlsson and Hertl didn't play in the third period and Pavelski didn't return after his hit. DeBoer gave no update on their conditions. ... Tarasenko's goal was the first converted penalty shot in the playoffs ever for the Blues. They missed their only other chance by Jimmy Roberts in 1968.

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Rocket attack hits near US Embassy in Baghdad's Green Zone

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and BASSEM MROUE Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — A rocket was fired into the Iraqi capital's heavily fortified Green Zone Sunday night, landing less than a mile from the sprawling U.S. Embassy, an Iraqi military spokesman said.

The apparent attack, which Iraq's state-run news agency said did not cause any casualties, came amid heightened tensions across the Persian Gulf, after the White House ordered warships and bombers to the region earlier this month to counter an alleged, unexplained threat from Iran. The U.S. also has ordered nonessential staff out of its diplomatic posts in Iraq.

It was the first such attack since September, when three mortar shells landed in an abandoned lot inside the Green Zone.

No one claimed responsibility for the attack that took place after sunset when many Baghdad residents were indoors breaking their fast during the Muslim holy month of Ramadan.

Associated Press reporters on the east side of the Tigris River, opposite the Green Zone, heard an explosion, after which alert sirens sounded briefly in Baghdad.

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Iraqi military spokesman Brig. Gen. Yahya Rasoul told The Associated Press that a Katyusha rocket fell near the statue of the Unknown Soldier, less than a mile from the U.S. Embassy. He said the military was investigating the cause but that the rocket was believed to have been fired from east Baghdad. The area is home to Iran-backed Shiite militias.

Shortly afterward the rocket launcher was discovered by security forces in the eastern neighborhood of Wihda, according to a security official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to the media. The official also said the roads leading to the Green Zone were closed briefly for security reasons before they were reopened as normal.

Iraq's state-run news agency said a Katyusha rocket crashed inside the Green Zone without causing any casualties. The U.S. military confirmed an explosion in the zone without saying what caused it, but said there were no American or coalition casualties.

As tensions escalate between the U.S. and Iran, there have been concerns that Baghdad could once again get caught in the middle, just as it is on the path to recovery. The country hosts more than 5,000 U.S. troops, and is home to powerful Iranian-backed militias, some of whom want those U.S. forces to leave.

American forces withdrew from Iraq in 2011 but returned in 2014 at the invitation of Iraq to help battle the Islamic State group after it seized vast areas in the north and west of the country, including Iraq's second-largest city, Mosul. A U.S.-led coalition provided crucial air support as Iraqi forces regrouped and drove IS out in a costly three-year campaign. Iranian-backed militias fought alongside U.S.-backed Iraqi troops against IS, gaining outsized influence and power.

Now, amid an escalating conflict between the U.S. and Iran, Iraq is once again vulnerable to becoming caught up in the power play. An attack targeting U.S. interests in Iraq would be detrimental to the country's recent efforts at recovering and reclaiming its status in the Arab world.

On May 8, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo made a previously unannounced trip to the Iraqi capital following the abrupt cancellation of a visit to Germany, and told Iraqi intelligence that the United States had been picking up intelligence that Iran is threatening American interests in the Middle East, although he offered no details according to two Iraqi officials.

A few days later, as U.S.-Iranian tensions continued to rise, the State Department ordered all non-essential, non-emergency government staff to leave the country.

Employees of energy giant ExxonMobil have also begun evacuating from an oil field in the southern Iraqi province of Basra.

On Sunday, Iraqi Oil Minister Thamer al-Ghadban said in a statement that he sent a letter to ExxonMobil asking for clarifications over the evacuation, saying the evacuation was because of "political tensions in the region" and not related to security.

He added that the evacuation of the oil giant's foreign employees was "unacceptable and unjustified." Al-Ghadban said he would be holding a meeting with ExxonMobil executives this week over the evacuation, adding that their departure was "temporary."

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, May 20, the 140th day of 2019. There are 225 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 20, 1927, Charles Lindbergh took off from Roosevelt Field on Long Island, New York, aboard the Spirit of St. Louis on his historic solo flight to France.

On this date:

In 1521, Ignatius of Loyola was wounded by a cannonball while defending Pamplona against the French; during his convalescence he turned to religion, becoming a leader of the Counter-Reformation and the founder of the Jesuits.

In 1873, Levi Strauss and tailor Jacob Davis received a U.S. patent for men's work pants made with

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copper rivets.

In 1899, taxi driver Jacob German was pulled over and arrested by a police officer riding a bicycle for speeding down Manhattan's Lexington Avenue in his electric car at 12 miles an hour at a time when the speed limit was 8 mph; it was the first recorded speeding arrest in U.S. history.

In 1915, Israeli soldier-statesman Moshe Dayan was born at Deganya Alef Kibbutz.

In 1932, Amelia Earhart took off from Newfoundland to become the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. (Because of weather and equipment problems, Earhart set down in Northern Ireland instead of her intended destination, France.)

In 1939, regular trans-Atlantic mail service began as a Pan American Airways plane, the Yankee Clipper, took off from Port Washington, New York, bound for Marseille, France.

In 1948, Chiang Kai-shek was inaugurated as the first president of the Republic of China (Taiwan).

In 1959, nearly 5,000 Japanese-Americans had their U.S. citizenships restored after choosing to renounce them during World War II.

In 1961, a white mob attacked a busload of Freedom Riders in Montgomery, Alabama, prompting the federal government to send in U.S. marshals to restore order.

In 1985, Radio Marti, operated by the U.S. government, began broadcasting; Cuba responded by attempting to jam its signal.

In 1993, an estimated 93 million people tuned in for the final first-run episode of the sitcom "Cheers" on NBC.

In 1998, the government unveiled the design for the new \$20 bill, featuring a larger and slightly off-center portrait of Andrew Jackson.

Ten years ago: In a rare, bipartisan defeat for President Barack Obama, the Senate voted overwhelmingly, 90-6, to keep the prison at Guantanamo Bay open for the foreseeable future and forbid the transfer of any detainees to facilities in the United States. A commission published a damning report on decades of rapes, humiliation and beatings at Catholic Church-run reform schools in Ireland. Suspended NFL star Michael Vick was released after 19 months in prison for running a dogfighting ring to begin two months' home confinement. An Indonesian C-130 Hercules military plane carrying troops and their families crashed in East Java province, killing 99 people. Kris Allen won the eighth season of "American Idol," defeating fellow finalist Adam Lambert.

Five years ago: In Kentucky's primary, Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell dispatched his tea party challenger, Matt Bevin, with ease; Democrats chose Alison Lundergan Grimes to oppose McConnell in the fall (McConnell went on to win). Pennsylvania's ban on gay marriage was overturned by a federal judge. A group of retired professional football players filed suit against the NFL, accusing the league of cynically supplying them with powerful painkillers and other drugs that kept them in the game but led to serious complications later in life. Two car bombs hit a busy bus terminal and a market in the central Nigerian city of Jos, killing at least 118 people.

One year ago: Venezuelan officials declared socialist leader Nicolas Maduro the easy winner of the country's presidential election; his leading challenger questioned the legitimacy of a vote marred by irregularities.

Today's Birthdays: Actor-author James McEachin is 89. Actor Anthony Zerbe is 83. Actor David Proval is 77. Singer-actress Cher is 73. Actor-comedian Dave Thomas is 71. Rock musician Warren Cann is 69. Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, is 68. Former New York Gov. David Paterson is 65. Delaware Gov. John Carney is 63. Actor Dean Butler is 63. TV-radio personality Ron Reagan is 61. Rock musician Jane Wiedlin (The Go-Go's) is 61. Actor Bronson Pinchot is 60. Singer Susan Cowsill is 60. Actor John Billingsley is 59. Actor Tony Goldwyn is 59. Singer Nick Heyward is 58. TV personality Ted Allen is 54. Actress Mindy Cohn is 53. Rock musician Tom Gorman (Belly) is 53. Actress Gina Raveria is 53. Actor Timothy Olyphant is 51. Former race car driver Tony Stewart is 48. Rapper Busta Rhymes is 47. Actress Daya Vaidya is 46. Rock musician Ryan Martinie is 44. Actor Matt Czuchy (zoo-KREE') is 42. Actress Angela Goethals is 42. Actress-singer Naturi Naughton is 35. Country singer Jon Pardi is 34.

Thought for Today: "If you want to make peace, you don't talk to your friends. You talk to your enemies."
— Moshe Dayan (1915-1981).