

Groton Daily Independent

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I have learned that there is more power in a good strong HUG than in a thousand meaningful words.

-Ann Hood

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Saturday, May 25, 2019

STATE TRACK MEET @ SIOUX FALLS



Groton Post #39 2019 Memorial Day Services



The Groton Post #39 Legion will perform Military Rites on Memorial Day, May 27th 2019 as follows:

Huffton	7:30 am	The speaker at the Groton ceremony
James	8:15 am	will be Retired Air Force LTC Arden
Verdon	8:45 am	Dohman.
Bates/Scotland	9:15 am	A meal will be provided at the Groton
Ferney	10:00 am	Legion Post #39 immediately following
Groton	11:00 am	the cemetery ceremony.

In the case of inclement weather the rites will be performed by the honor Guard at the cemetery and the speaker will be at the Post building.

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Lake Alvin Closed to Swimming Until Further Notice

PIERRE, S.D. – The swimming beach at Lake Alvin Recreation Area near Harrisburg is currently closed following routine testing that showed unhealthy levels of bacteria in the water.

According to District Park Supervisor Jason Baumann, "Following heavy rains, we see an increase in the amount of runoff into our lakes and streams. That runoff picks up contaminants along the way, and deposits them into the water," Baumann said. "Higher levels of contaminants are seen initially, but it usually dissipates pretty quickly thanks to the natural filtration provided by the lake."

Baumann adds that the lake is still safe for fishing; and that the concern is ingesting or submerging in the water.

Testing will continue, and the beach will reopen when the water again reaches appropriate levels.

For more information, please contact Jason Bauman, district park supervisor, at 605.987.2263.

-GFP-

Lake Mitchell Declared a No Wake Zone

MITCHELL, S.D. – The city of Mitchell, in cooperation with the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks Department, has declared Lake Mitchell a "No Wake Zone".

The "No Wake Zone" declaration means boaters will have to abide to a 5 mile per hour maximum speed limit.

Mitchell mayor, Bob Everson, contacted GFP officials requesting the declaration due to high water conditions on the lake. In accordance to GFP rule, the waters of Lake Mitchell become "no wake zone" during any time at which the water level in Lake Mitchell reaches the height of 12 inches or more over the level of the top of the spillway. City officials confirmed that lake height on Thursday., and the "no wake zone" shall remain in effect until such time as the water level of the lake drops to the level of six inches over the level of the top of the spillway.

The "No Wake Zone" will be lifted when water levels recede.

-GFP-

Rising Water on Lake Francis Case Impacts GFP Areas

PIERRE, S.D. – The Corps of Engineers' new predictions for the water level on Lake Francis Case will affect several Game, Fish and Parks facilities on the reservoir.

Buryanek Recreation Area

Boat ramps are expected to be useable through Monday, May 27.

All three group camping areas are closed.

Dude Ranch

Boat ramp is closed.

Elm Creek

Boat ramp is closed.

North Point Recreation Area

The campground will be closed beginning May 28 through at least June 9. Campers with reservations have been notified. Future reservations will be kept informed as more information becomes available.

Both beaches will be closed.

The North Point Bay and St. Francis boat ramps are out of service. The Prairie Dog Bay boat ramp will remain open.

Open day use facilities include the archery range, rifle range, dump station, fish cleaning station, sand volleyball court, and portions of the bike trail.

North Wheeler Recreation Area

Campsites 18 – 25 are unavailable.

Boat ramp will remain open.

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Pease Creek Recreation Area

Boat ramp is expected to be useable through Monday, May 27.

Platte Creek Recreation Area

Boat ramp should remain functional. Courtesy dock is closed.

Swimming beach and playground are closed.

Snake Creek Recreation Area

Main boat ramp is closed. The high water ramp is open.

Swimming beach is closed.

South Scalp Lakeside Use Area

Boat ramp will be usable through the Memorial Day weekend, but will likely close afterwards.

Camping area may be slightly affected.

South Shore Lakeside Use Area

Beach area is closed.

Boat ramp will remain open.

Spillway

Area should not be impacted

Whetstone Bay Lakeside Use Area

Main boat ramp is out of service.

High water ramp will be available.

Campsites will not be affected.

White Swan Lakeside Use Area

Boat ramp is out of service.

West Bridge

Boat ramp expected to be usable through Monday, May 27.

Officials will monitor the water levels over the next several weeks and change facility statuses as warranted.

Closures related to the flood conditions across South Dakota can be found at <https://gfp.sd.gov/pages/2019-flood-closures/>.

-GFP-

Caution Urged on Bush's Landing Road

PIERRE, S.D. – Game, Fish and Parks officials are urging caution for travelers using the access road to Bush's Landing Lakeside Use Area north of Pierre.

The access road is open but high moisture this spring has left the road in an unreliable condition, including ruts and minor slides. Travel is advised only at your own risk.

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The trees are finally starting to show their spring beauty as the month of May is quickly coming to a close.

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**AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION
COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD**

**TUESDAY
MAY 28, 2019**

8:45a.m. - 8:50a.m. – Hearing for Malt Beverage License for Stutsman Harley Davidson
8:50a.m. – 8:55a.m. – Salvation Army - Request to waive Landfill Fee
8:55a.m. – 9:00a.m. – Discussion on Jurisdiction for Fireworks Permits
9:00a.m. – 9:05a.m. – Erica Coughlin, Human Resources Director – Employee Assistance Program
9:05a.m. – 9:15a.m. – Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent – Easement for Northern Electric, Summer Help and Department Update
9:15a.m. – 9:30a.m. – Judy Dosch, Building Superintendent - 24/7, Welfare and Planning & Zoning Location Discussion

- Approve General Meeting Minutes from May 21, 2019
- Claims/Payroll
- HR Report
- Resolutions for School Districts Boundary Changes
- Fair Contract
- Lottery Permit
- Plats
- Set hearing date for Ord. 137 (Hanson Rezone)
- Leases
- Claim Assignments
- Fairboard Appointments

Any other matters to come before the Commission for discussion

Department Head Meeting, 11a.m. – May 28, 2019

Elm Lake Dam Management Discussion at 2pm on Wednesday, May 29, 2019 in the Community Room

Crop Insurance Options For Farmers Affected by Flooding or Excess Moisture

May 24, 2019 – USDA's Risk Management Agency (RMA) reminds producers who have federal crop insurance coverage and are unable to plant a crop because of flooding or excess moisture to contact their [crop insurance agent](#) to discuss available prevented planting options. Crop insurance agents can discuss available options on when and how to file a claim related to prevented planting.

Eric Bashore, Director of RMA's Billings Regional Office, urges producers who are unable to plant their crop by the Final Planting Date or who need to replant acreage to contact their crop insurance agent. Producers who are prevented from planting because of an insurable cause of loss must provide notice within 72 hours after the Final Planting Date if they do not intend or are unable to plant the insured crop within any applicable Late Planting Period.

Prevented planting is a failure to plant an insured crop by the Final Planting Date designated in the insurance policy's [actuarial documents](#) because of an insured cause of loss that is general to the surrounding area and that prevents other producers from planting acreage with similar characteristics.

To qualify for a prevented planting payment, the affected acreage must be at least 20 acres or 20 percent of the crop acreage in the insured unit. Prevented planting is not available on area insurance policies, such as Area Risk Protection Insurance (ARPI).

Prevented Planting Options

Several options are available for producers unable to plant a crop by the Final Planting Date because of an insurable cause of loss. A producer may:

1. Plant the insured crop during the Late Planting Period with a reduced guarantee;
2. Not plant a crop and receive a prevented planting payment;
3. Plant the acreage to another crop after the Late Planting Period ends and receive a reduced prevented planting payment; or
4. Plant a cover crop and receive a full prevented planting payment provided that the cover crop is not hayed or grazed before November 1, or otherwise harvested at any time.

[Replant payments](#) may also be available for land that was planted and does not have an adequate stand. Contact your insurance agent if you believe acreage should be replanted. Producers must receive written permission from the insurance company to replant, abandon or destroy a crop.

1400 Independence Ave. SW
Washington, DC 20250

Contact:

FPAC.BC.Press@usda.gov

Risk Management Agency

Farmers can reference RMA's [Planting Date Map Viewer](#) for Final Planting Dates by crop, state, county, policy type and farming practice. Additional resources, including a [Fact Sheet](#) and [Frequently Asked Questions](#), are highlighted on the [Prevented Planting website](#).

Crop insurance is sold and delivered solely through private crop insurance agents. A list of [crop insurance agents](#) is available at all USDA Service Centers and on the [RMA website](#).

#



Noem Orders Flags at Half-Staff on Memorial Day

PIERRE, S.D. – Governor Kristi Noem has ordered flags across the state to be flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon on Monday, May 27, 2019, in honor of Memorial Day.

“On this Memorial Day, we remember those who sacrificed everything to preserve our life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness,” said Noem. “May we never forget the men and women who gave their lives so we can be free.”

Noem also encourages all South Dakotans to observe the National Moment of Remembrance beginning at 3 p.m. local time on Memorial Day.

New Holland Eighth Grader Wins \$10,000 In Highway Safety’s “Lesson Learned SD” Program

PIERRE, S.D. – Angie Lockett just received her learner’s driving permit two weeks ago. Friday, she won \$10,000 for her promise to remain a safe driver.

The New Holland, S.D. student was announced Friday as the winner of this year’s “Lesson Learned SD” program during a ceremony at the Sioux Empire Mall in Sioux Falls. Governor Kristi Noem announced Angie’s name at the end of a Safe Summer Driving Program.

“Angie, who is now also taking driver’s education, is a fine example of how all of us can be safer and better drivers,” Noem says. “We want our young drivers to learn at an early age to be safe drivers. These are life-long good habits.”

The South Dakota Office of Highway Safety designed the program to encourage young people to be safe drivers. The cash prizes are sponsored by the South Dakota Broadcasters Association. This is the fourth year for the program.

Drivers between the ages of 14 and 19 are encouraged to go to the “Lesson Learned SD” website, which features safe driving videos on issues such as distracted driving, seatbelt use and driving under the influence. Participants who then answer the follow-up safety questions are entered in the contest to win the cash prizes. Alexa was one of 2,600 eligible entries.

“This was the fourth year for the program and we had even more students participating than last year,” says South Dakota Broadcasters Association president Steve Willard. “Those stories are real, powerful and compelling. I wish everyone would see them, because if they did, they’d wear seat belts from then on. Kudo’s to the kids for speaking the truth.”

Angie will be a freshman this fall at Platte-Geddes and her school also has benefited from her name being drawn. The Broadcasters Association has contributed another \$10,000 that Angie can designate to school programs or activities of her choice. Angie has decided to give \$5,000 each to the school’s band and theatre programs.

“Having the schools benefit from a student winning has been a major piece to this program,” says Lee Axdahl, director of the State Office of Highway Safety. “We are getting more teachers and schools all the time encouraging their students to take part in the program. It is a cooperative effort to help give young drivers the skills they need to be safe on the roads.”

South Dakota’s Office of Highway Safety is part of the state Department of Public Safety.

The Lesson Learned website can be found at: <http://www.lessonlearnedsd.com/student/>.

June 2019 Climate Outlook Not What Farmers Hoped For

BROOKINGS, S.D. – Spring weather is trying the patience of many South Dakota farmers as wet and cool conditions create planting delays across the state.

“For the last two weeks in May, there is high likelihood of some very wet systems moving across the state,” said Laura Edwards, SDSU Extension State Climatologist.

Edwards referenced the June 2019 Climate Outlook released May 17 by the National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Climate Prediction Center. “Potentially, east central and southeastern South Dakota could see as much as 3-inches of rainfall over the next two weeks,” Edwards said. “June’s climate outlook favors both wetter and colder conditions.”

Edwards explained several climate computer models have been pointing towards this pattern for the summer, and consensus is getting stronger.

“For the summer months of June, July and August, the continuation of this cooler and wetter pattern seems more likely across South Dakota,” Edwards said.

The area that is favored to be cooler than average stretches north to south through the Central U.S., from the Canadian border to Texas. “Odds are leaning towards wetter than average conditions across almost all of the lower 48 states,” Edwards said.

The exceptions are the Pacific Northwest, Southwest, upper Great Lakes and Northeast and Southeast.

It comes as no surprise that this amount of rainfall, in combination with cooler than average temperatures, are not favorable for spring planting and crop progress for area farmers. Edwards said that the current climate outlook, combined with wet soils from last fall, near record snowfall over the winter and rain and cool temperatures this spring have delayed field work and planting.

“As of May 13, only 4 percent of the state’s corn crop was planted,” Edwards said, explaining that data from the last five years indicates on average, by mid-May in South Dakota, a little over half of the corn is planted.

“Wet soils are partly to blame for delayed planting, but cool soils have also challenged farmers this year,” she said.

The ideal soil temperature for planting and germination of corn is 50 degrees Fahrenheit. Eastern South Dakota just reached that benchmark around May 13-15, about 10 days to two weeks later than usual. “The cold temperatures May 17-19 brought soil temperatures down again into the mid to upper 40s for most locations,” Edwards said.

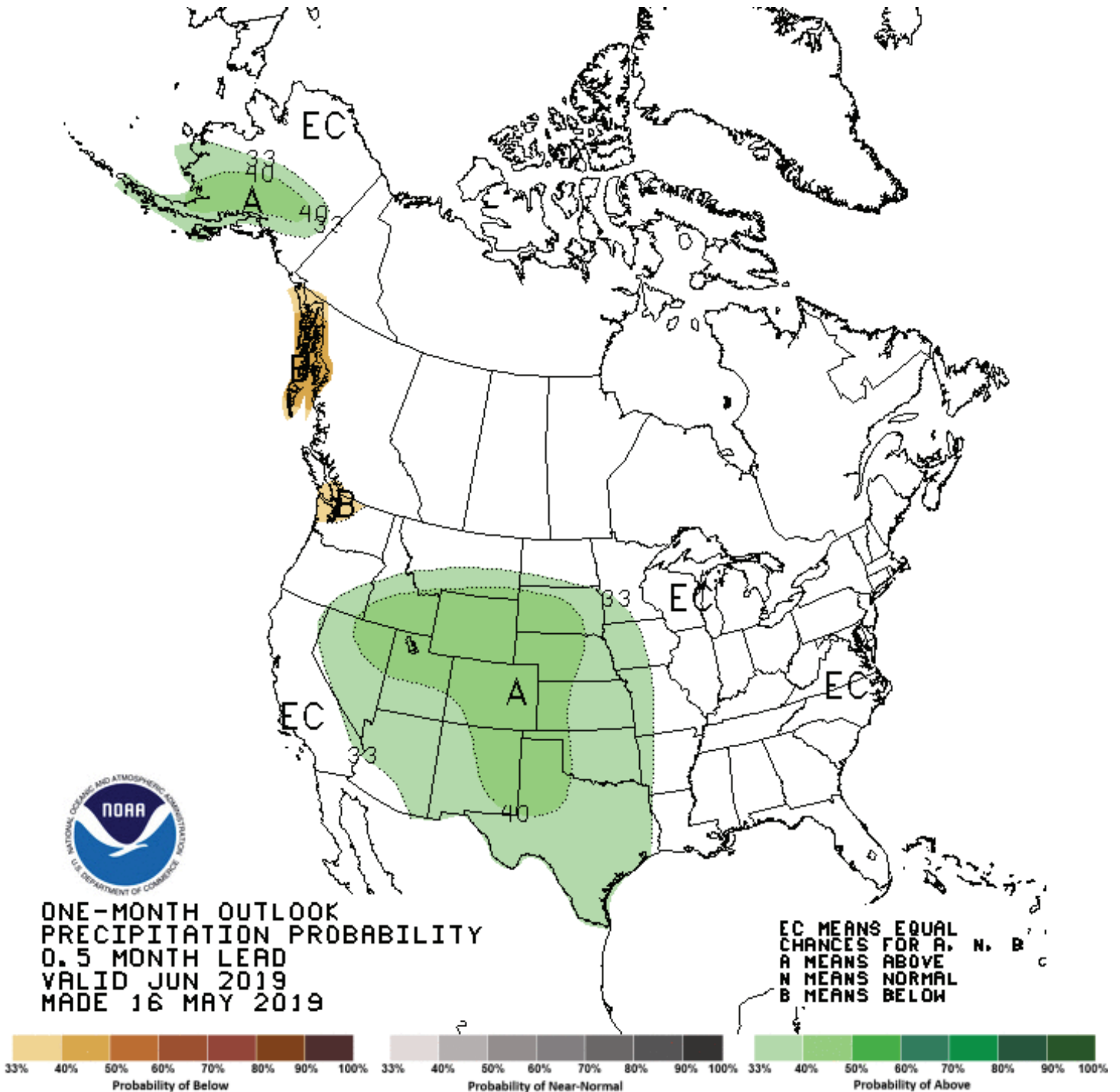
Planting progress is also behind five-year averages for other small grains, like spring wheat and oats. “Nearly 90 percent of these crops are typically planted by mid-May, but this year only 46 percent of spring wheat and 37 percent of oats were planted by mid-May,” Edwards said.

Winter wheat and forage production, however, have a more optimistic outlook.

“Most areas survived well over the winter, with good snow cover consistent through the season,” Ed-

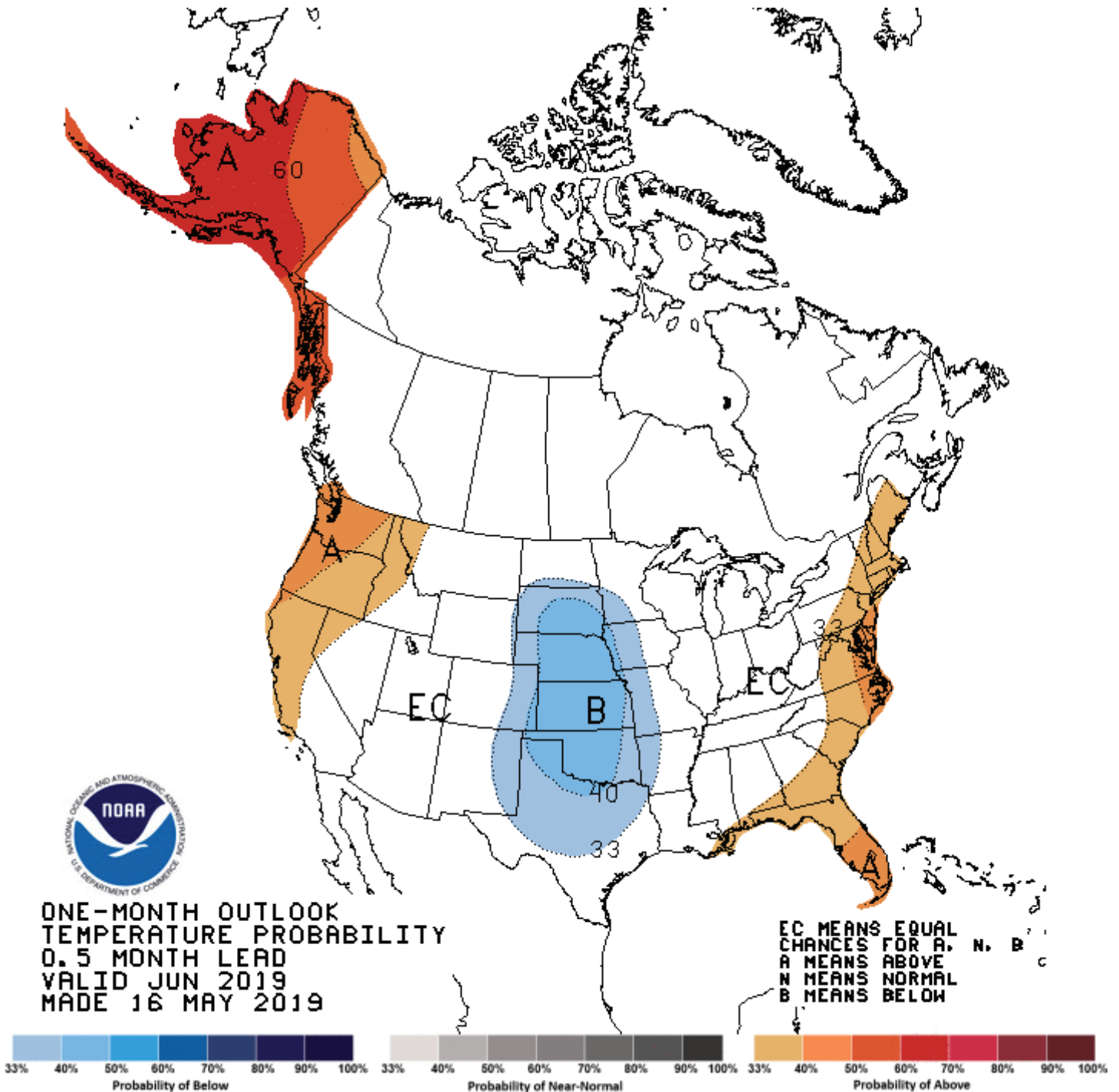
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EARTHTALK TM
Questions & Answers About Our Environment

EarthTalk®
From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine
Dear EarthTalk: What is so-called Forest Therapy?
—Larry Schwarzwald, Page, AZ

Forest therapy uses immersion in nature to help soothe frayed nerves and restore a sense of mental well-being — and has even been shown to boost our immune systems and help us recover faster from physical maladies. The modern forest therapy movement is rooted in the Shinrin-yoku “forest bathing” practice developed in Japan in the 1980s that has since become a central part of preventative health care and healing in Japanese medicine.

“There are an infinite number of healing activities that can be incorporated into a walk in a forest or any other natural area,” reports the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy Guides and Programs (ANFT), which trains students to become certified forest therapists. “An activity is likely to be healing when it makes room for listening, for quiet and accepting presence, and for inquiry through all eight of the sensory modes we possess.”

Practitioners insist that forest therapy is rooted in science, citing dozens of research papers documenting the healing powers of something as simple as a stroll in the woods. According to ANFT, forest bathing seems to significantly mitigate the root cause of a multitude of ailments: stress. Given the role of stress in everything from headaches, high blood pressure, heart problems, diabetes, skin conditions, asthma, arthritis and other health problems, forest therapy could be an important part of staying or getting healthy.

“Levels of the stress hormone cortisol decreased in test subjects after a walk in the forest, when compared with a control group of subjects who engaged in walks within a laboratory setting,” adds ANFT. “Forest bathing catalyzes increased parasympathetic nervous system activity which prompts rest, conserves energy, and slows down the heart rate while increasing intestinal and gland activity.”

The research bears out the theory: the average concentration of salivary cortisol — a stress hormone — in people who gazed out at forest scenery for 20 minutes was 13.4 percent lower than those in urban settings. Meanwhile, leisurely forest walks were measurably better than urban walks at reducing cortisol levels and sympathetic nerve activity and decreasing blood pressure and heart rate. Meanwhile, other research shows we are better at creative problem-solving after time spent in the wilderness. Additionally, nature immersion has been linked to an increase in immunity boosting “killer T” cells, which the body uses to stave off infections and even possibly to fight the growth of cancer cells.

While anyone can take a hike through the woods and indulge in their own form of forest bathing, going with a guide can make the experience that much more meaningful. And you no longer have to go to Japan to find someone experienced in Shinrin-yoku. ANFT has trained more than 600 forest therapy guides working in 40 countries across six continents to date. Check out its map and directory to find one near you, whether you’re in North America, Western Europe, Southeast Asia, Australia or South America.

CONTACTS: Shinrin-Yoku.org, shinrin-yoku.org; ANFT, natureandforesttherapy.org.

EarthTalk® is produced by Roddy Scheer & Doug Moss for the 501(c)3 nonprofit EarthTalk. To read more, check out <https://emagazine.com>. To donate, visit <https://earthtalk.org>. Send questions to: question@earthtalk.org



Research bears out the theory that a walk in the woods — otherwise known as “forest bathing” — can actually be good for your health and your mental outlook.

Credit: Roddy Scheer, roddyscheer.com.

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7 DAY RAINFALL TOTALS



National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

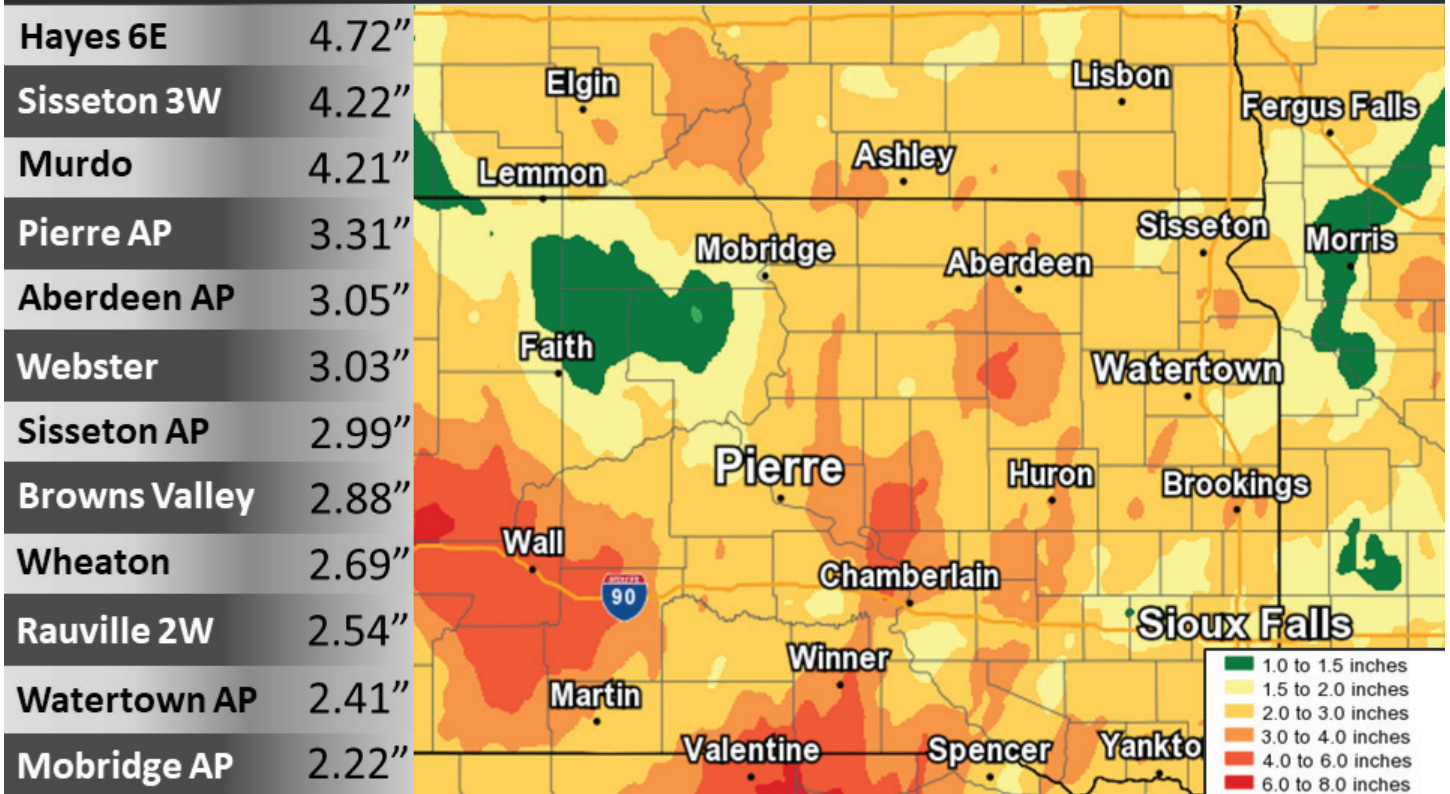
Around a quarter inch fell over the past 24 hours, adding to some impressive weekly totals. Nearly every day since May 17th has featured measureable rainfall.



Observations



Radar Estimations



Published on: 05/24/2019 at 3:43PM

7 Day precip totals as of noon, May 24th. It's been wet to say the least. Have a good, warm and dry (till Sunday evening), Memorial Day Weekend everyone.

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Today in Weather History

May 25, 1880: An estimated F2 tornado moved northeast through the town of Mitchell. Two men were killed when they ran out the back door of a saloon to reach the cellar entrance. The caulk stone saloon was destroyed along with two homes and several businesses. This tornado was one of the first significant tornadoes on record for the state of South Dakota.

May 25, 1985: During the afternoon hours, thunderstorms developed along the east side of the Black Hills. The storms produced quite a bit of lightning and over the course of 2 hours started 18 small fires in the Black Hills. Fortunately, most of the fires were small and quickly contained. One unfortunate firefighter was struck by lightning as he was helping to extinguish a blaze that burned some 50 acres of grassland and forest. Thankfully, the man lived, but he did suffer several broken bones, burns, and major damage to his ears. The strike was so powerful that a man standing over 150 feet away was dropped to his knees.

1896: An estimated F5 tornado hit Oakwood, Ortonville, and Thomas, Michigan. Forty-seven people were killed, and 100 were injured. Trees were debarked "even to the twigs, as though done by the careful hand of an experienced artisan." Parts of houses were found up to 12 miles away.

1917 - A tornado ripped through southeast Kansas, traveling 65 mph. The average speed was a record for any tornado. (The Weather Channel)

1955: An estimated F5 tornado moved north and NNW through the heart of Blackwell, Oklahoma. About 400 homes were destroyed, and many were leveled and swept away. About 500 other homes were damaged. The tornado dissipated just over the Kansas border, as the Udall, Kansas tornado was forming to the east. The Blackwell tornado was accompanied by unusual electrical activity, with up to 25 discharges per second recorded on sferics equipment. The funnel was said to glow and have "arcs" of glowing light. The Udall, Kansas tornado was estimated to be an F5 as well. Over half of the population of Udall was killed or injured as the tornado completely devastated a large portion of town. Seventy-five people were killed, and many of the 270 injuries were serious.

1975: On Raccoon Lake, Indiana, lightning struck the motor of a speedboat and traveled up the control wires, killing the driver. The 38-year-old man was knocked into the water by the bolt. His wife and two children, also in the boat, were not injured.

1987 - Thunderstorms spawned fifteen tornadoes in West Texas. One thunderstorm spawned a powerful tornado near Gruver, TX, along with golf ball size hail and 75 mph winds. A man on a boat on Lake Bistineau in northwest Louisiana was struck and killed by lightning, while the other three persons in the boat were unharmed. The man reportedly stood up in the boat and asked to be struck by lightning. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)




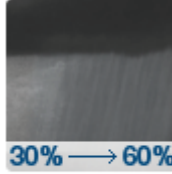

1988 - Unseasonably cool weather prevailed in the Upper Midwest. Marquette, MI, reported a record low of 26 degrees. Thunderstorms in the north central U.S. produced wind gusts to 62 mph at Idaho Falls, ID, and produced 4 inches of rain in less than four hours in northern Buffalo County. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

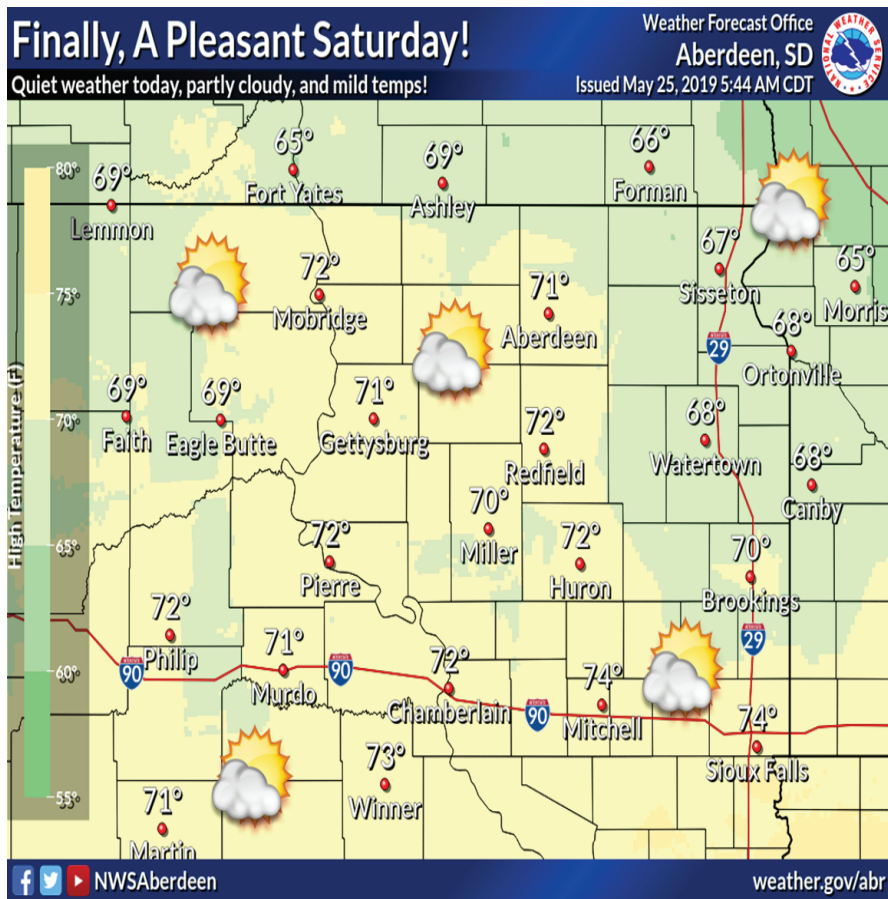
1989 - Thunderstorms developing ahead of a strong cold front produced severe weather from Oklahoma to Ohio through the day and night. Thunderstorms spawned nine tornadoes, and there were 155 reports of large hail and damaging winds. Hail three and a half inches in diameter was reported at Dittmer, MO, and thunderstorm winds gusting to 90 MPH caused twenty million dollars damage at Rockville IN. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Evening thunderstorms spawned four tornadoes in Kansas and Missouri, and there were three dozen reports of large hail or damaging winds. Thunderstorms produced hail two inches in diameter at Cole Camp, and wind gusts to 72 mph at Rosebud. Heavy thunderstorm rains produced flash flooding in central Missouri. Flood waters swept through Washington State Park southwest of Saint Louis, and nearly one hundred persons had to be rescued from water as much as twenty feet deep. The flood waters swept away a number of vehicles, some were carried as much as four miles away. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	Memorial Day
				
Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny	30% → 60% Chance Showers then Showers Likely	60% Showers Likely
High: 71 °F	Low: 44 °F	High: 75 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 64 °F



Published on: 05/25/2019 at 6:57AM

Surface high pressure moving across the region today will bring dry conditions and mild temperatures, something we're really not used to for a Saturday! Highs will range from the upper 60s to lower 70s with partly to mostly cloudy skies. Get out and enjoy it!

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 73 °F at 4:11 PM

Low Temp: 47 °F at 1:35 AM

Wind: 34 mph at 4:12 PM

Day Rain: 0.17 in

Today's Info

Record High: 94° in 2018

Record Low: 29° in 1924

Average High: 71°F

Average Low: 47°F

Average Precip in May.: 2.44

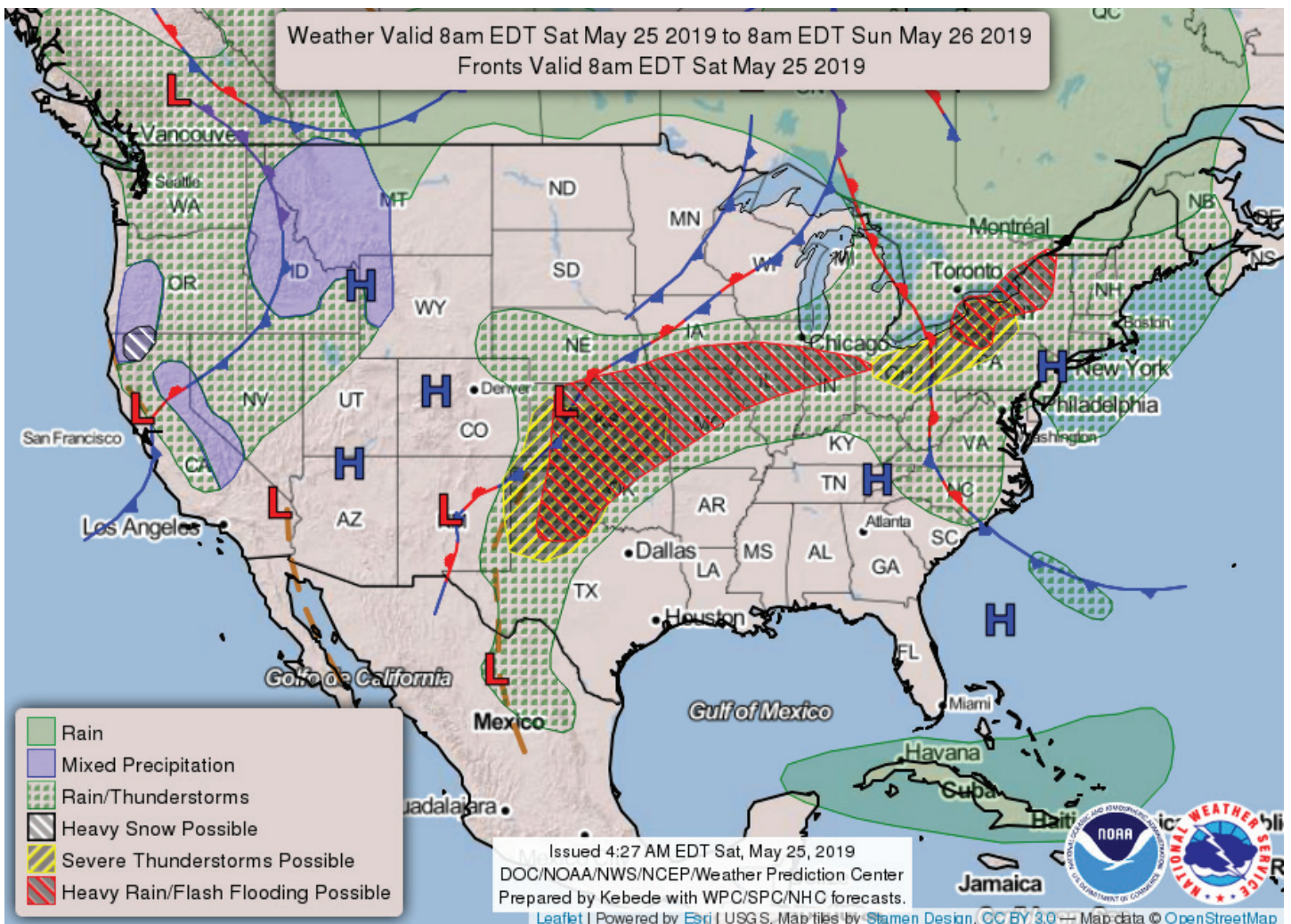
Precip to date in May.: 3.26

Average Precip to date: 6.47

Precip Year to Date: 7.97

Sunset Tonight: 9:08 p.m.

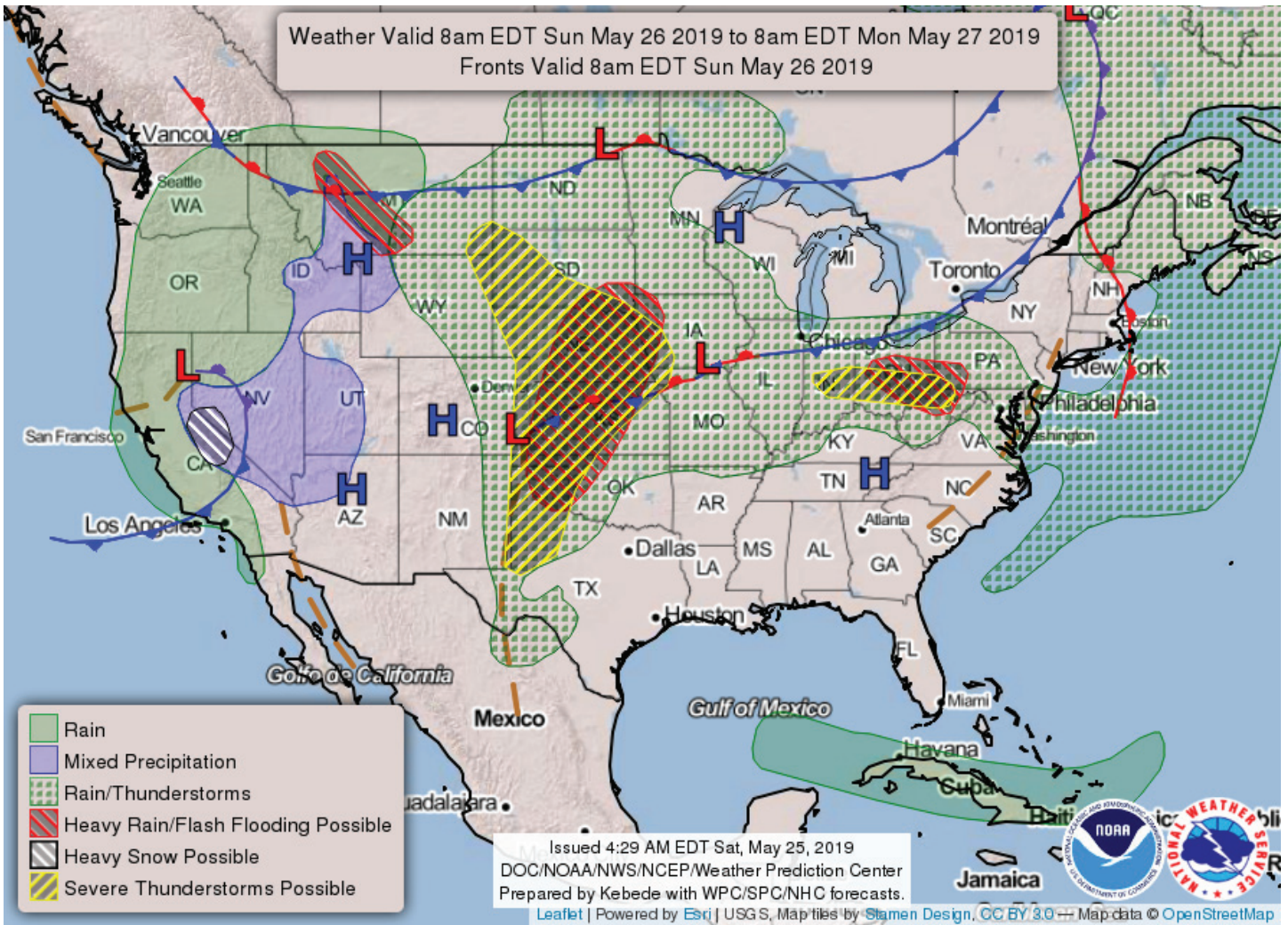
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:53 a.m.



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Tomorrow's Weather Map



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WORDS AND WRATH

Try it! I promise you it will work, said Mrs. Ron.

No, it wont. Theyll just yell louder and louder, I responded with certainty.

How do you know? Have you ever tried it? If you did try it, what happened? Did the shouting stop? she asked.

I dont know because Ive never had anyone tell me that before, I replied as I gave up. I knew that she had an advantage over me from her years of experience as a teacher.

Her theory was simple and seemed senseless. When children, either individually or in a group, raise their voices, if you speak in a hushed tone, they will quiet down. They want to hear what you are saying. Their curiosity will get the best of them, she explained.

After thinking about it, I decided to follow her recommendation since nothing I tried had worked. To my surprise, it worked. And it does make sense, when you think about it.

Solomon may not have known much about anger management, but he gave some great advice when he wrote, A soft gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger. We see that all too often when mobs gather to protest. Both sides believe they can gain the advantage with volume.

A harsh word does not suggest that a person is using words that are irrational or abrasive - though they may be part of the conversation. Rather, it refers to one who intends to use words to destroy another by design. We are once again reminded of the power of the tongue! Softness can represent power if we follow the Word and teachings of Scripture.

Prayer: Lord, how wonderful is Your Word that informs us of the power of our words. May we always speak gently and confidently as we follow Your teachings. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 15:1 A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.

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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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

14-41-44-56-62, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 2

(fourteen, forty-one, forty-four, fifty-six, sixty-two; Mega Ball: ten; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$393 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$308 million

1 dead, 2 hurt in Parks Highway collision

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (AP) — Alaska State Troopers say a 22-year-old South Dakota man died and two other people were injured in a collision on the Parks Highway.

Nicholas Bertram, who was driving an SUV, died at the scene of the Thursday afternoon crash.

Troopers say the crash occurred when the SUV collided with a semi tractor-trailer as the SUV was turning left onto the highway at the intersection of the Big Lake cutoff.

Troopers say the driver of the semi, 37-year-old Arnol Farmer, was unable to avoid the collision. Farmer was not injured.

Two passengers in the SUV — 43-year-old Frieda Gillespie and 28-year-old Shawn Phillips-Tomlinson — were taken to an area hospital. Troopers say one of those passengers was flown there.

South Dakota farmers struggle during poor planting season

GARRETSON, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota farmers are having a particularly poor planting season, with cold, wet weather adding to the struggles caused by low crop prices and President Donald Trump's tariffs.

Jim Solheim told the Argus Leader that the federal government's immigration policies are hurting the agricultural workforce, but that the main problem for his family farm near Garretson is the weather.

Solheim said the soil has already absorbed so much water that even a little rain will delay planting.

About 19% of the state's corn has been planted, which is well under the three-quarters that are typically planted by this point in the season, according to U.S. Department of Agriculture data. Only 4% of soybeans have been planted, compared to the five-year average of 39% by this point.

The Solheims plan to dip into their retirement savings to cover the costs. Solheim's wife, Virginia, said they are grateful for their savings, but not all farmers have such a luxury.

Many are being forced to sell land or to leave the industry for other careers.

Gov. Kristi Noem asked for a presidential disaster declaration this week to help with repairs for damage caused by a snowstorm and flooding this spring, including damage to farmland and livestock.

South Dakota lawmakers have also requested an improved relief program for farmers affected by Trump's trade disputes.

Trump imposed higher tariffs on Chinese goods this month, making them more expensive for American consumers, and China retaliated with new tariffs on \$60 billion worth of American goods, making those goods more expensive to buy in China.

Noem has said that trade wars with countries like China have "devastated" her state and has asked the White House to resolve the disputes.

Trump announced a deal with Canada and Mexico this month that would scrap tariffs imposed on imported steel and aluminum, which could provide some relief to farmers.

Chester farmer Keith Alverson said he's seen the ongoing trade disputes and low crop prices hurt farm-

ers' profits and chip away at families' bank accounts.

"We're probably going to see some of the farmers that were at or near retirement maybe jump out a little bit sooner," he said.

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

The highest-paid CEOs by state By The Associated Press undefined

Here are the top paid CEOs by state for 2018, as calculated by The Associated Press and Equilar, an executive data firm.

The survey considered only publicly traded companies with more than \$1 billion in revenue that filed their proxy statements with federal regulators between Jan. 1 and April 30. Not every state has such a company headquartered there. The survey includes only CEOs who have been in place for at least two years, but it does not limit the survey to companies in the S&P 500, as the AP's general compensation study does. That's why it includes such CEOs as Tesla's Elon Musk.

To calculate CEO pay, Equilar adds salary, bonus, stock awards, stock option awards, deferred compensation and other components that include benefits and perks. For some companies, big raises can occur when CEOs get a stock grant in one year as part of a multi-year grant.

Median pay for S&P 500 CEOs was \$12 million last year. Median means half made more, and half made less.

Alabama: J. Thomas Hill, Vulcan Materials, \$7.8 million
Arizona: Richard Adkerson, Freeport-McMoRan, \$14 million
Arkansas: C. Douglas McMillon, Walmart, \$23.6 million
California: Elon Musk, Tesla, \$2.28 Billion
Colorado: Gregory Maffei, Liberty Media, \$20.2 million
Connecticut: Glenn Fogel, Booking Holdings, \$20.5 million
Delaware: Hervé Hoppenot, Incyte, \$9.3 million
Washington, D.C.: Thomas Joyce, Jr., Danaher, \$15.4 million
Florida: Frank Del Rio, Norwegian Cruise Line Holdings, \$22.6 million
Georgia: Martin Richenhagen, AGCO, \$18.6 million
Hawaii: Constance Lau, Hawaiian Electric Industries, \$5.7 million
Idaho: Darrel Anderson, IDACORP, \$4.5 million
Illinois: Miles White, Abbott Laboratories, \$24.3 million
Indiana: David Ricks, Eli Lilly, \$15.7 million
Iowa: Daniel Houston, Principal Financial Group, \$10.5 million
Kansas: Thomas Gentile III, Spirit AeroSystems, \$9.9 million
Kentucky: William Carstanjen, Churchill Downs, \$21.1 million
Louisiana: Leo Denault, Entergy, \$9.3 million
Maine: Jonathan Ayers, IDEXX Laboratories, \$6.8 million
Maryland: David Zaslav, Discovery, \$129.5 million
Massachusetts: James Heppelmann, PTC, \$50 million
Michigan: Mary Barra, General Motors, \$21.9 million
Minnesota: James Cracchiolo, Ameriprise Financial, \$24.8 million
Mississippi: Joe Sanderson, Jr., Sanderson Farms, \$4.2 million
Missouri: Michael Neidorff, Centene, \$26.1 million
Nebraska: Lance Fritz, Union Pacific, \$12.8 million
Nevada: Sheldon Adelson, Las Vegas Sands, \$24 million
New Hampshire: Timothy McGrath, PC Connection, \$4.5 million

New Jersey: Kenneth Frazier, Merck, \$20.9 million
New Mexico: Patricia Collawn, PNM Resources, \$4.8 million
New York: James Dimon, JPMorgan Chase, \$30 million
North Carolina: Brian Moynihan, Bank of America, \$22.5 million
North Dakota: David Goodin, MDU Resources Group, \$4.1 million
Ohio: Gary Heminger, Marathon Petroleum, \$18.9 million
Oklahoma: Harold Hamm, Continental Resources, \$13.3 million
Oregon: Bryan DeBoer, Lithia Motors, \$5.5 million
Pennsylvania: Brian Roberts, Comcast, \$35 million
Rhode Island: Larry Merlo, CVS Health, \$21.9 million
South Carolina: John Williams, Domtar, \$8 million
South Dakota: David Emery, Black Hills, \$4.1 million (left company on Dec. 31, 2018)
Tennessee: R. Milton Johnson, HCA Healthcare, \$20.1 million (left company on Dec. 31, 2018)
Texas: Lewis Bird III, At Home Group, \$43.1 million
Utah: Joseph Margolis, Extra Space Storage, \$4.4 million
Virginia: Paul Saville, NVR, \$39.1 million
Washington: John Legere, T-Mobile US, \$66.5 million
Wisconsin: Jeffery Yabuki, Fiserv, \$12.4 million

Man accused of bringing airsoft gun to Jamestown High School

JAMESTOWN, N.D. (AP) — Jamestown police have detained a man after getting a report of an armed suspect outside the high school.

Jamestown High School, Two Rivers Activity Center and all other schools were locked down Thursday afternoon after police received a call that a man with a gun on a bike approached the high school, but was turned away at the front doors. Police Chief Scott Edinger tells KQDJ officers went to the man's house after a witness identified him.

The 18-year-old was detained and brought to the Stutsman County Law Enforcement Center for questioning. Edinger says a black airsoft handgun was recovered from the residence. An airsoft gun shoots plastic or rubber bullets.

The Stutsman County Sheriff's Office, the North Dakota Highway Patrol and the North Dakota Bureau of Criminal Investigation assisted Jamestown police.

DeVaney sworn in to South Dakota Supreme Court

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Patricia DeVaney has been sworn in as South Dakota's newest Supreme Court justice. DeVaney took her oath of office in the state's Capitol Rotunda in Pierre Thursday, steps away from the Attorney General's Office where she spent much of her career.

Republican Gov. Kristi Noem highlighted DeVaney's work as an assistant attorney general prosecuting one of South Dakota's serial killers, Robert Leroy Anderson. The Rapid City Journal says Noem also highlighted DeVaney's work defending the constitutionality of South Dakota's laws requiring "informed consent" prior to an abortion.

DeVaney remained with the Attorney General's Office until 2012, when former-Gov. Dennis Daugaard appointed her to South Dakota's 6th Judicial Circuit. She fills the seat vacated by Justice Steven Zinter, who died unexpectedly last October.

Trump opens state visit, needles Japan over trade issues

By JILL COLVIN and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — President Donald Trump opened a state visit to Japan on Saturday by needling the country over its trade imbalance with the United States. “Maybe that’s why you like me so much,” he joshed.

Trump also promoted the U.S. under his leadership, saying “there’s never been a better time” to invest or do business in America, and he urged corporate leaders to come.

The president’s first event after arriving in Tokyo was a reception with several dozen Japanese and American business leaders at the U.S. ambassador’s residence. He said the two countries “are hard at work” negotiating a trade agreement .

“I would say that Japan has had a substantial edge for many, many years, but that’s OK,” Trump said, joking that “maybe that’s why you like me so much.”

His comments underscored the competing dynamics of a state visit designed to show off the long U.S.-Japan alliance and the close friendship between Trump and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe even as trade tensions run high.

Trump landed from his overnight flight shortly after a magnitude 5.1 earthquake struck just south of Tokyo and rattled the city.

Abe has planned a largely ceremonial, four-day visit to suit Trump’s whims and ego. It’s part of Abe’s charm strategy that some analysts say has spared Japan from the full weight of Trump’s trade wrath.

Abe and Trump planned to play golf Sunday before Abe gives Trump the chance to present his “President’s Cup” trophy to the winner of a sumo wrestling championship match. The White House said the trophy is nearly 5 feet (1.5 meters) tall and weighs between 60 pounds and 70 pounds (27 kilograms and 32 kilograms).

On Monday, Trump will become the first head of state to meet Emperor Naruhito since he ascended to the throne this month.

“With all the countries of the world, I’m the guest of honor at the biggest event that they’ve had in over 200 years,” Trump said before the trip.

The president is threatening Japan with potentially devastating U.S. tariffs on foreign autos and auto parts. He has suggested he will go ahead with the trade penalties if U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer fails to win concessions from Japan and the European Union.

Trump had predicted that a U.S.-Japan trade deal could be finalized during his trip. But that’s unlikely given that the two sides are still figuring out the parameters of what they will negotiate.

He nonetheless portrayed the negotiations in a positive light in his remarks to the business group.

“With this deal we hope to address the trade imbalance, remove barriers to United States exports and ensure fairness and reciprocity in our relationship. And we’re getting closer,” Trump said. He also urged the business leaders to invest more in the U.S.

He praised the “very special” U.S.-Japan alliance that he said “has never been stronger, it’s never been more powerful, never been closer.”

Abe made a strategic decision before Trump was elected in November 2016 to focus on Japan’s relationship with the U.S.

Abe rushed to New York two weeks after that election to meet the president-elect at Trump Tower. Last month, Abe and his wife, Akie, celebrated first lady Melania Trump’s birthday during a White House dinner.

Abe and Trump are likely to meet for the third time in three months when Trump returns to Japan in late June for a summit of leading rich and developing nations.

Behind the smiles and personal friendship, however, there is deep uneasiness over Trump’s threat to impose tariffs on Japanese autos and auto parts on national security grounds. Such a move would be more devastating to the Japanese economy than earlier tariffs on steel and aluminum.

Trump recently agreed to a six-month delay, enough time to carry Abe past July’s Japanese parliamentary elections.

Also at issue is the lingering threat of North Korea, which has resumed missile testing and recently fired

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a series of short-range missiles that U.S. officials, including Trump, have tried to play down despite an agreement by the North to hold off on further testing.

Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, told reporters Saturday before Trump arrived that the short-range missile tests were a violation of U.N. Security Council resolutions and that sanctions must stay in place.

Bolton said Trump and Abe would "talk about making sure the integrity of the Security Council resolutions are maintained."

It marked a change in tone from the view expressed by U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo in a recent television interview. He said "the moratorium was focused, very focused, on intercontinental missile systems, the ones that threaten the United States." That raised alarm bells in Japan, where short-range missiles pose a serious threat.

Bolton commented a day after North Korea's official media said nuclear negotiations with Washington would not resume unless the U.S. abandoned what the North described as demands for unilateral disarmament.

Associated Press writer Mari Yamaguchi contributed to this report.

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Young homebuyers scramble as prices rise faster than incomes

By **JOSH BOAK** and **LARRY FENN** Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — For millennials looking to buy their first home, the hunt feels like a race against the clock.

In the seven years since the housing crash ended, home values in more than three-quarters of U.S. metro areas have climbed faster than incomes, according to an Associated Press analysis of real estate industry data provided by CoreLogic.

That gap is driving some first-timers out of the most expensive cities as well as pressuring them to buy something before they are completely priced out of the market.

The high cost of home ownership is also putting extreme pressure on 20- and 30-somethings as they try to balance mortgage payments, student loans, child care and their careers.

"They do want all the same things that previous generations want," said Daryl Fairweather, chief economist for the brokerage Redfin. "They just have more roadblocks, and they're going to have to come up with more creative solutions to get the homes that they want."

A Redfin analysis found these buyers are leaving too-hot-to-touch big-city markets — among them, San Francisco and Seattle, where the tech boom has sent housing prices into the stratosphere. The brokerage found that many millennials are instead buying in more reasonably priced neighborhoods around places like Salt Lake City, Oklahoma City and Raleigh, North Carolina. That, in turn, is driving up housing prices in those communities.

Jake and Heather Rice, both 35, moved to Utah last year from Mountain View, California, where the biggest employers are tech giants such as Google, Symantec and Intuit and the median home price is a dizzying \$1.4 million or so.

The couple and their three children settled into a 4,500-square-foot house in fast-growing Farmington, just far enough away from Salt Lake City to feel rural but minutes from a major shopping center and Heather's sister. They did not disclose the purchase price for the sake of privacy, but they said their monthly mortgage payments will be \$3,000, roughly the same as the rent for their former two-bedroom, 1,000 square-foot apartment in Mountain View.

"We didn't expect to stay in California because of how ludicrous the prices had become," said Jake, a mechanical engineer who works in the medical device sector.

Nationally, home prices since 2000 have climbed at an annual average rate of 3.8%, according to the data

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firm CoreLogic, while average incomes have grown at an annual rate of 2.7%. And in the metro areas with the strongest income growth — for example, parts of Silicon Valley — home prices have risen even faster.

The Salt Lake City area is among the hottest spots for first-time buyers in part because of a staggering burst of home construction and a surge of high-tech jobs. The suburb of Lehi, which served as a film location for the 1984 Kevin Bacon movie "Footloose," about a rural town that banned dancing, is in what is now known as "Silicon Slopes" because Adobe, eBay and Microsoft have opened offices there.

Of course, the influx of people from unaffordable cities is contributing to the very problem they were trying to escape: Home prices in the greater Salt Lake City area surged 10.8% in the past year, while average incomes rose only 3.9%, according to figures from CoreLogic and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Scott Robbins, president of the Salt Lake Board of Realtors, sees the price growth as having changed the habits of first-time buyers. They are putting less money down and carrying more debt. And some first-time buyers are looking at condos and duplexes instead of houses.

There is also more pressure on families to earn two incomes, rather than letting one choose to be the stay-at-home parent. This could be a particular challenge in the Salt Lake City area, where families are generally larger, mostly because of the influence of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and about 28% of the population is under 18, compared with nearly 24% nationwide.

"The one thing that really would make it even more sustainable is if wages would increase," Robbins said. "Whereas before you could have a young couple buy a place and only one of them would work. Now, you need both of them to work."

Andy and Stacie Proctor made a bid on a house in the Salt Lake City suburbs, only to rescind it upon learning there were 13 rival offers. At one point, they almost decided not to buy a house just yet, figuring the bubble was going to burst eventually, said Andy, a 35-year-old who hosts the podcast "More Happy Life."

But there was also the opposite risk: "There is the question about whether it's going to keep going up," his 31-year-old wife said.

The couple ultimately made a successful offer on a three-bedroom house for \$438,000 in Vineyard, Utah. It includes an apartment that could be rented out to defray their mortgage payments. That will make it easier for them to afford starting a family.

Roughly 1 in 6 homes sold in the Salt Lake Valley since 2004 have been in a 4,100-acre development called Daybreak, being built on land once owned by mining giant Rio Tinto. About 5,500 homes have been constructed, with an additional 14,500 units planned — enough in total to house roughly 65,000 people.

The homes range from \$180,000 to \$1 million. One of the guiding principles is that homeowners can upgrade or downsize without having to move out of the neighborhood.

But that cycle of upgrading might not continue as it did for past generations. Home values need to rise for people to build equity that they can use to buy a new house. Yet if they rise too fast, it will become too expensive for many people to move up.

Parry Harrison, a 26-year-old divorced father of two small children, bought a townhouse in Daybreak for \$309,000 in March. His down payment came in large part from selling his previous home, which appreciated a robust 25% in the two years he owned it. He hopes to upgrade again in five years, when his children might need more space.

"It's definitely not a forever home," he said. "It's a lot more convenient if I have move-up opportunities that are right next door."

Follow Josh Boak on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/joshboak>

2020 Dem primary calendar may boost Hispanic voter clout

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

DES MOINES, Iowa (AP) — How to pronounce Beto O'Rourke's first name — "Is it BET-oh or BAY-toe?" — is debated nearly everywhere the 2020 Democratic presidential hopeful goes in Iowa. But Rich Salas doesn't hesitate.

"BET-oh," the chief diversity officer at Des Moines University says correctly while introducing O'Rourke at a recent gathering of an Asian and Latino political action committee. "What a really great name."

Salas notes that O'Rourke "speaks really good Spanish, better than I do," before leading chants of "Viva Beto!"

It's a rallying cry that may not resonate in Iowa, home to the nation's first presidential nominating contest, but could pay dividends faster than in previous years thanks to a primary calendar that will see the two states with the largest Hispanic populations go to the polls earlier than usual.

Hispanics make up just 6% of the population in Iowa, which holds caucuses Feb. 3, and barely half that percentage in New Hampshire, which goes next. But then comes Nevada, where almost 30% of people are Hispanic. And, just 10 days later this cycle, California and Texas — home to 13-plus million eligible Hispanic voters, nearly half of all such voters nationwide, according to the Pew Research Center — vote on "Super Tuesday."

That means candidates who can win consistent Hispanic support could potentially secure a viable — if narrow — path of survival through the primary's frantic opening weeks, as the 23-candidate field winnows. A total of 4,051 Democratic delegates are up for grabs. Nearly 500 of those will be in California and 260-plus in Texas. Both allocate delegates proportionately, though, meaning even the winners likely have to share their hauls — and potentially providing more lifelines for any candidate who can mobilize Hispanics even if they don't finish first.

"I think it's smart for the candidates to be thinking about how they can become a household name in the Latino community," said Matt Barreto, co-founder of the Hispanic polling firm Latino Decisions. "It will keep them alive, and it will make them a national contender, even if they don't do well in Iowa or New Hampshire."

It's a risky strategy since that means betting on an electorate that's disproportionately young and plagued by low voter turnout — and may still mostly be going to the polls late enough that campaigns working hard to woo it may not last that long. New Mexico Gov. Bill Richardson, who was the lone Hispanic in the 2008 presidential race, made a strong showing in Nevada essential to his bid, only to drop out before he got there — following fourth-place finishes in Iowa and New Hampshire.

U.S. Census survey data shows that general election Hispanic turnout in 2018 climbed 13-plus percentage points from the last midterms in 2014, to 40.4%, but still trailed whites, who reported voting at 55% rates, and blacks, who reported voting at 51.1%. Still, Barreto noted that the overall number of Hispanics who reported voting has risen in recent cycles and that the turnout percentage has been hurt because so many Hispanics are turning 18 and young people of all backgrounds are less likely to vote.

Hispanics, meanwhile, will outpace African Americans to become the electorate's largest nationwide racial minority group for the first time on Election Day 2020 — accounting for more than 13% of eligible voters, according to Pew projections. Not all Hispanics are Democrats, but about two-thirds reported voting for the party during last fall's midterms, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of the 2018 national electorate.

"Over the years, there haven't been that many Latino presidential candidates," Julian Castro, former San Antonio mayor and Obama administration housing chief and 2020's only Hispanic presidential candidate, said in a phone interview. "So, there's still this sense of barriers being broken."

Castro has been to Nevada more than any Democratic presidential rival and has announced sweeping plans on issues he says Hispanics most care about, including calls for decriminalizing crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally and universal prekindergarten. O'Rourke, a former congressman, is of Irish decent but speaks fluent Spanish and hails from El Paso, Texas, where more than a quarter of the population are immigrants, most from just across the border in Mexico.

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Sen. Kamala Harris has a home-state advantage in California and, during a recent town hall in neighboring Nevada, handed out headsets to attendees who wanted to listen to a Spanish translation — along with signs reading “Kamala Harris for the People” in English and Spanish. She’s also named Emmy Ruiz, Hillary Clinton’s 2016 state director in Nevada, as a senior adviser, and Julie Chávez Rodríguez, granddaughter of legendary activist Cesar Chávez, is her campaign’s co-national political director.

Cristóbal Alex, who headed the Latino Victory PAC, is an adviser to former Vice President Joe Biden, while Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders’ campaign points to polling showing his rising popularity with Hispanics. It’s also enlisted Carmen Yulín Cruz, mayor of the Puerto Rican capital of San Juan — known for sparring verbally with President Donald Trump in the wake of Hurricane Maria’s 2017 devastation of the island. Then there’s New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, who invited Yulín Cruz to Trump’s State of the Union speech.

Castro went to Puerto Rico immediately after launching his presidential campaign, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren also visited, while O’Rourke and Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, have talked about going. The island’s 64-delegate Democratic primary is March 8, the Sunday after Super Tuesday.

Cristina Tzintzún, executive director of Jolt, a Texas-based group that organizes Hispanics, said candidates won’t be able to rely solely on their backgrounds or advisers, saying “I don’t believe in honorary Latinos.”

“People want diversity,” said Tzintzún, a Sanders supporter in the 2016 Democratic primary. “What matters more is who’s offering the bold solutions.”

Castro has traveled to Nevada six times since December. He has gone to citizenship classes and attended house parties in historically Hispanic communities like east Las Vegas — including one hosted by an immigrant rights activist who is in the country illegally.

“It’s likely that my story, the way I grew up, is going to resonate a lot with a lot of Latinos,” said Castro, whose grandmother was born in Mexico and whose mother was a noted Latino rights activist. “Because they can see their own story in mine.”

O’Rourke is hopeful his background can help him with Hispanics, too.

“I’ve got to think that, the fact that I live on the U.S.-Mexico border, that a quarter of those with whom I live and represented in Congress were born in another country, that I can tell a pretty powerful, positive story,” O’Rourke told reporters after the event in Des Moines.

Of his Spanish, he added, “I’m going to try and reach people in every place and in every language that I possibly can.”

Castro speaks some Spanish while campaigning but admits he isn’t fluent — and says that’s not the key factor.

“There’s often this sense that, the only way to measure whether you’re connecting with Latinos is if you’re fluent in Spanish or not, which is just completely wrong,” he said. “It becomes very one-dimensional. And what we’ve done is we’re going after that vote in a much more holistic way.”

‘Revolution’ in Poland as nation confronts priestly abuse

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — One victim spoke out, and then another, and another. A statue of a pedophile priest was toppled in Gdansk, put back by his supporters, and finally dismantled for good. A feature film about clerical abuse was a box office hit.

Poland thought it had started confronting the problem of clerical abuse and its cover-up by church authorities. Then a bombshell came: A documentary with victim testimony so harrowing it has forced an unprecedented reckoning with pedophile priests in one of Europe’s most deeply Catholic societies.

Poland’s bishops acknowledged this week they face a crisis and made a rare admission that they have failed to protect the young. It’s also a crisis for the country’s conservative government, which is closely aligned with the Catholic Church, putting the ruling Law and Justice party on the defensive before Sunday’s European Parliament vote in Poland.

The documentary “Tell No One” was directed by journalist Tomasz Sekielski. Before its release on May 11, ruling party leader Jaroslaw Kaczynski had described discussion about clerical abuse as a “brutal at-

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tack” on the church and portrayed the LGBT rights movement as the key threat to children in the country. But the revelations in the documentary have pushed the party to face up to the cleric abuse crisis. It has vowed stiffer penalties for pedophilia, although its leaders have avoided pointing a finger at the church specifically.

Across the country, the film has triggered soul searching and raised questions, including whether the same bishops who moved perpetrators from parish to parish for years will be capable of cleansing the church. Some wonder if Poland, which is already being reshaped by economic growth and secularization, could eventually follow Ireland, where the abuse crisis broke the Catholic Church’s hold on society.

Crowdfunded and free on YouTube, “Tell No One” has gotten more than 21 million views so far and has prompted a new wave of survivors to come forward. About 150 people have contacted a foundation helping victims of clerical abuse, “Have No Fear.” One was an 86-year-old man who was molested when he was 6 and had never told anyone until now.

“He finally understood that he is not alone,” said Anna Frankowska, a lawyer for the organization who took his call.

“A huge tsunami has come, and there is no way this issue can be swept under the rug now,” she said. “It has to be addressed.”

Michal Wojciechowicz, a 54-year-old abused in his youth by a prominent Solidarity-era priest, the late Rev. Henryk Jankowski, sees a “revolution” whose time has come thanks to clerical sexual abuse revelations elsewhere as well as reforms by Pope Francis.

“The Catholic Church had power over people for centuries. We needed to wait for the right time, and this is the right time,” said Wojciechowicz, a writer. “The most important thing is that people are now willing to listen.”

The church has played an inspirational role in Poland, keeping its language and culture alive during a long era of occupation and foreign rule and supporting the anti-communist Solidarity movement in the 1980s. To generations, the church has been an advocate for freedom and a source of solace under hardship, and to many, Catholic faith and traditions are synonymous with Polishness itself.

A Polish pope who is now a saint, John Paul II, was a moral authority and a political hero for opposing communism, but even his legacy is now in question due to his failure to tackle clerical abuse.

Recognition of the problem came slowly at first. A book published six years ago by a Dutch journalist had the accounts of Polish victims and five years ago “Have No Fear” was founded to offer victims counseling and legal help. But the last eight months have brought the most dramatic milestones. A feature film about corrupt, abusive priests, “Clergy,” was a blockbuster after its September release.

Then in December, Barbara Borowiecka, 62, told Polish media about being abused when she was 11 by Jankowski, a prominent prelate in Lech Walesa’s anti-communist Solidarity movement in Gdansk, where a monument of him stood.

Borowiecka was encouraged to tell her story by another priest who brought her back to the church after a nearly five-decade break. Before his death in 2016, he made her promise to publicly name her aggressor when she was strong enough.

Shaken by Borowiecka’s story, three activists from Warsaw — Konrad Korzeniowski, Rafal Suszek i Michal Wojcieszczuk — traveled to Gdansk in February and in the middle of the night put a rope around the Jankowski monument and pulled it down.

“There was something in Borowiecka’s story that chilled me to the bone. It was shocking. The length of her isolation, the embarrassment she had to feel, that her own mother didn’t believe her,” said Korzeniowski, a computer programmer. “Even though I was aware of what is happening in the church with pedophilia, it put a face to it, and I was crying.”

They placed children’s underwear, shoes and white lace church vestments on the toppled statue to symbolize his victims’ suffering, then called police to turn themselves in. They also accused Jankowski, the church and society at large for remaining indifferent to his crimes and the venomous anti-Semitism he spread in his sermons.

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Poles awoke to news of the toppled statue as the Vatican began hosting a landmark meeting on clerical sex abuse.

Two days later, the priest's supporters, shipyard workers in Gdansk, re-erected the statue. During a Mass in his former church, the parish priest recalled the good done by Jankowski, who died in 2010. Pressured to act, the city dismantled the statue.

Borowiecka was touched and incredulous that three strangers risked prison — they have been charged with "insulting a monument" though no trial date has been set — to give her the relief she that feels now that the statue is gone. She met them in Warsaw this month, a warm encounter that sealed new friendships.

Days later, "Tell No One" came out, showing victims psychologically destroyed even in adulthood by their childhood abuse, priests caught by hidden cameras confessing to wrongdoing and convicted offenders still working with children.

Sekielski, the director, has been taken aback by the response, which has included new investigations and at least one priest asking to be laicized.

"A mental revolution is happening in front of our eyes. Victims are being called victims and perpetrators called perpetrators," he told the weekly magazine Polityka.

Suszek welcomed Poland's new awareness of clerical abuse but disagreed a revolution is underway, saying there is no mass of rebels and fearing instead a wave of emotion that could easily die down.

"If you are about to start a revolution, then you'd better have a plan for the aftermath," Suszek said. "And nobody has a clear-cut idea about how to deal with the void that would inevitably come about when you remove the institutional church from the public sphere."

US moves to strengthen forces in Middle East to counter Iran

By SUSANNAH GEORGE and LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The U.S. will send hundreds of additional troops and a dozen fighter jets to the Middle East in the coming weeks to counter what the Pentagon said is an escalating campaign by Iran to plan attacks against the U.S. and its interests in the region. And for the first time, Pentagon officials on Friday publicly blamed Iran and its proxies for recent tanker bombings near United Arab Emirates and a rocket attack in Iraq.

President Donald Trump told reporters Friday that the 1,500 troops would have a "mostly protective" role as part of a build-up that began this month in response to what the U.S. said was a threat from Iran.

The announcement caps three weeks of elevated tensions with Iran, as the administration hurled accusations of an imminent attack and abruptly deployed Navy warships to the region. The moves alarmed members of Congress, who demanded proof and details, amid fears the U.S. was lurching toward open conflict with Iran.

Adding to the uncertainty, Trump alternated between tough talk toward Iran and a more conciliatory message, insisting he is open to negotiations with the Islamic Republic.

On Friday he seemed to downplay the prospect of conflict when he spoke at the White House.

"Right now, I don't think Iran wants to fight and I certainly don't think they want to fight with us," he said.

In a related move, the Trump administration on Friday used an emergency legal loophole to move ahead with the sale of \$7 billion in precision-guided munitions and other military support to Saudi Arabia, citing threats the kingdom faces from Iran.

Vice Admiral Michael Gilday told Pentagon reporters that the U.S. has "very high confidence" that Iran's Revolutionary Guard was responsible for the explosions on four tankers, and that Iranian proxies in Iraq fired rockets into Baghdad. He said Iran also tried to deploy modified small boats that were capable of launching cruise missiles.

The deployments announced Friday include a squadron of 12 fighter jets, manned and unmanned surveillance aircraft, and a number of military engineers to beef up protection for forces. In addition a battalion of four Patriot missile batteries that was scheduled to leave the Middle East has been ordered to stay. The total number of troops involved is about 1,500, with roughly 600 included in the Patriot battalion. None

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of those troops will go to either Iraq or Syria.

"We are going to be sending a relatively small number of troops, mostly protective," the president said at the White House before setting off on a trip to Japan. "Some very talented people are going to the Middle East right now and we'll see what happens."

Briefing reporters at the Pentagon, Gilday, the Joint Staff director, did not provide direct evidence to back up claims tying Iran to the attacks. He told reporters the conclusions were based on intelligence and evidence gathered in the region, and officials said they are trying to declassify some of the information so that it could be made public.

"This is truly operations driven by intelligence," Gilday said, adding that the U.S. continues to see intelligence suggesting that Iran is actively planning attacks against the U.S. and partners in the region by the Revolutionary Guard and Iranian proxies in Yemen and Iraq.

When pressed for proof of Iran's involvement, he said the mines used in the tanker attacks were attributed directly to the Revolutionary Guard and he said threats could be traced back to senior leaders in Iran.

"I'm not reverse engineering this," he said. "The Iranians have said publicly they were going to do things. We learn more through intelligence reporting. They have acted upon those threats and they've actually attacked."

The announcement of additional forces was met with mixed reviews.

The chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Democrat Adam Smith of Washington, called the build-up "unsettling."

"Leaders from both sides of the aisle have called for de-escalation. At first blush, this move does not fit the bill," Smith said in a statement Friday. "Without a clearly articulated strategy, adding more personnel and mission systems seems unwise, and appears to be a blatant and heavy-handed move to further escalate tensions with Iran."

The senior Republican on the committee, Mac Thornberry of Texas, called it "a prudent step to protect our forces and deter Iran," and said requests from commanders should "never be subject to a partisan debate."

The administration notified Congress earlier in the day about the troop plans.

Gilday and Katie Wheelbarger, the acting assistant defense secretary for international affairs, said the mission is strictly defensive, and is not designed to provoke Iran into carrying out additional attacks. They said the Pentagon will continue to evaluate the number of troops in the region in case more are needed later.

Earlier this week, officials said military planners had outlined options that could have sent up to 10,000 military reinforcements to the region. Acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan later said planners hadn't settled on a figure.

The U.S. has about 70,000 troops across the Middle East, including at a major Navy base in Bahrain and an Air Force base and operations center in Qatar. There are about 5,200 troops in Iraq and 2,000 in Syria.

Earlier this month, the U.S. sent thousands more into the region around Iran, including an aircraft carrier strike group, four bomber aircraft, a Patriot missile battery and fighter jets.

Tension had been rising with Iran for more than a year. The Trump administration withdrew last year from the 2015 nuclear deal between the Islamic Republic and world powers and reinstated American sanctions that have badly damaged the Iranian economy.

The president has argued that the nuclear deal failed to sufficiently curb Iran's ability to develop nuclear weapons or halt its support for militias throughout the Middle East that the U.S. argues destabilize the region.

Judge blocks Trump from building sections of border wall

By DAISY NGUYEN and ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — A federal judge on Friday blocked President Donald Trump from building key sections of his border wall with money secured under his declaration of a national emergency, delivering what may prove a temporary setback on one of his highest priorities.

U.S. District Judge Haywood Gilliam Jr.'s order prevents work from beginning on two of the highest-priority, Pentagon-funded wall projects — one spanning 46 miles (74 kilometers) in New Mexico and another covering 5 miles (8 kilometers) in Yuma, Arizona.

While the order applied only to those first-in-line projects, the judge made clear that he felt the challengers were likely to prevail at trial on their argument that the president was wrongly ignoring Congress' wishes by diverting Defense Department money.

"Congress's 'absolute' control over federal expenditures—even when that control may frustrate the desires of the Executive Branch regarding initiatives it views as important—is not a bug in our constitutional system. It is a feature of that system, and an essential one," he wrote in his 56-page opinion.

It wasn't a total defeat for the administration. Gilliam, an Oakland-based appointee of President Barack Obama, rejected a request by California and 19 other states to prevent the diversion of hundreds of millions of dollars in Treasury asset forfeiture funds to wall construction, in part because he felt they were unlikely to prevail on arguments that the administration skirted environmental impact reviews.

The delay may be temporary. The question for Gilliam was whether to allow construction with Defense and Treasury funds while the lawsuits brought by the American Civil Liberties Union and the state attorneys general were being considered. The cases still must be heard on their merits.

"This order is a win for our system of checks and balances, the rule of law, and border communities," said Dror Ladin, an attorney for the ACLU, which represented the Sierra Club and the Southern Border Communities Coalition.

The Justice Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment late Friday.

The administration faces several lawsuits over the emergency declaration but only one other seeks to block construction during the legal challenge. A judge in Washington, D.C., on Thursday heard arguments on a challenge brought by the U.S. House of Representatives that says the money shifting violates the constitution. The judge was weighing whether the lawmakers even had the ability to sue the president instead of working through political routes to resolve the bitter dispute.

At stake is billions of dollars that would allow Trump to make progress in a signature campaign promise heading into his campaign for a second term.

Trump declared a national emergency in February after losing a fight with the Democratic-led House that led to a 35-day government shutdown. As a compromise on border and immigration enforcement, Congress set aside \$1.375 billion to extend or replace existing barriers in Texas' Rio Grande Valley, the busiest corridor for illegal crossings.

Trump grudgingly accepted the money, but then declared the national emergency to siphon money from other government accounts, identifying up to \$8.1 billion for wall construction. The funds include \$3.6 billion from military construction funds, \$2.5 billion from Defense Department counterdrug activities and \$600 million from the Treasury Department's asset forfeiture fund.

The Defense Department has already transferred the counterdrug money. Patrick Shanahan, the acting defense secretary, is expected to decide any day whether to transfer the military construction funds.

The president's adversaries say the emergency declaration was an illegal attempt to ignore Congress, which authorized far less wall spending than Trump wanted. The administration said Trump was protecting national security as unprecedented numbers of Central American asylum-seeking families arrive at the U.S. border.

The administration has awarded 11 wall contracts for a combined \$2.76 billion — including three in the last two months that draw on Defense Department counterdrug money — and is preparing for a flurry of construction that the president is already celebrating at campaign-style rallies.

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The Army Corps of Engineers recently announced several large contracts with Pentagon funding. Last month, SLSCO Ltd. of Galveston, Texas, won a \$789 million award to replace 46 miles (74 kilometers) of barrier in New Mexico — the one that Gilliam blocked on Friday.

Last week, Southwest Valley Constructors of Albuquerque, New Mexico, won a \$646 million award to replace 63 miles (101 kilometers) in the Border Patrol's Tucson, Arizona, sector, which Gilliam did not stop. Barnard Construction Co. of Bozeman, Montana, won a \$141.8 million contract to replace 5 miles (8 kilometers) in Yuma that Gilliam blocked and 15 miles (24 kilometers) in El Centro, California, which he did not address.

Gilliam's ruling gives a green light — at least for now — for the administration to tap the Treasury funds, which it has said it plans to use to extend barriers in Rio Grande Valley.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, a Democrat and frequent Trump adversary, didn't comment directly on his defeat but congratulated the ACLU and its clients "in securing this critical victory for our states and communities."

Trump inherited barriers covering 654 miles (1,046 kilometers), or about one-third of the border with Mexico. Of the 244 miles (390 kilometers) in awarded contracts, more than half is with Pentagon money. All but 14 miles (22 kilometers) awarded so far are to replace existing barriers, not extend coverage.

Spagat reported from San Diego.

Trump's orders to AG on Russia probe worry critics

By DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Intelligence professionals warned Friday that President Donald Trump's decision to give his loyal attorney general carte blanche to disclose still-secret material from the Russia investigation will let William Barr cherry-pick intelligence to paint a misleading picture about what started the probe.

The president claims his campaign was spied upon, though Trump administration officials have said they have no specific evidence that anything illegal was done when the campaign came under FBI surveillance that was approved by a court.

On Thursday, Trump gave Barr full authority to publicly disclose information about the origins of the investigation the president has repeatedly dismissed as a "hoax."

"You have to get down to what happened because what happened is a tremendous blight on our country," Trump said, adding that Barr is highly respected and will be impartial in reviewing documents.

But Trump's critics are wary of leaving the decision of what intelligence to release — and what should remain hidden — in Barr's hands. Barr is a staunch Trump defender who Democrats say spun special counsel Robert Mueller's report in Trump's favor, playing down aspects suggesting possible criminal conduct. Mueller has also complained to Barr about his handling of the release of the report.

That has prompted concern that Barr will take a similar approach to his review of the origins of Mueller's probe, releasing intelligence backing Trump's claims that it was politically motivated, while keeping classified evidence demonstrating the need for the probe.

Barr has already said he believes "spying did occur" on the Trump campaign, but he also made clear at a Senate hearing that any surveillance wasn't necessarily illegal or improper.

Barr has asked the U.S. attorney in Connecticut to examine the origins of the Russia investigation to find out if intelligence and surveillance methods used during the probe were lawful and appropriate.

Intelligence experts claim Trump is trying to do an end-run around U.S. spy agencies. They say having someone outside the intelligence community deciding what can be released jeopardizes sources and undercuts America's partnership with spy agencies in friendly nations, including some that shared information with the U.S. regarding the Russia probe.

Traditionally, when Congress, for instance, asks for material to be declassified, the request is forwarded to the intelligence agencies where the information originated or resides. Those agencies recommend what part, if any, can be declassified without jeopardizing intelligence sources or spy craft. Then, the Office of

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the Director of National Intelligence coordinates the feedback from all the agencies and makes a decision.

National Intelligence Director Dan Coats said in a statement Friday that 17 intelligence agencies he represents will provide the Justice Department all appropriate information needed for its review of intelligence activities related to Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election.

Coats also said he's confident Barr will work in accordance with "long-established standards to protect highly-sensitive classified information that, if publicly released, would put our national security at risk."

But while Trump's memorandum instructs Barr to consult with appropriate intelligence agencies "to the extent he deems it practicable" before he releases anything, it doesn't require him to do so.

This has alarmed Trump critics, who have served in high-level U.S. intelligence posts.

"It is potentially dangerous if the attorney general were to declassify something the director of national intelligence thought should be kept classified, as the director is in the best position to judge the damage to intelligence sources and methods," said Michael Morell, a former U.S. intelligence official and host of the Intelligence Matters podcast.

Morell said Trump should never have given Barr the declassification authority. "It is yet another step that will raise questions among our allies and partners about whether to share sensitive intelligence with us," he said.

David Kris, former head of the Justice Department's national security division, said it's "very unusual — unprecedented in my experience — for a non-intelligence officer to be given absolute declassification authority over the intelligence."

Kris, now a consultant at Culper Partners, said people expect the nation's top law enforcement officer to be nonpartisan and there is now fear the apolitical nature of intelligence could be threatened.

John McLaughlin, a former deputy director of the CIA who served as acting director in 2004, tweeted, "Giving Barr declassification authority for this investigation is a really bad idea." He said congressional intelligence committees "need to stand in the door on this one."

California Rep. Adam Schiff, chairman of the House intelligence committee, vowed to conduct oversight of any effort to selectively reveal and distort classified information or manipulate the declassification system.

"The clear intent of this abuse of power is to override longstanding rules governing classified information to serve the president's political interests, advance his 'deep state' narrative, and target his political rivals," Schiff said.

Virginia Sen. Mark Warner, the ranking Democrat on the Senate intelligence committee, accused Trump and Barr of politicizing the intelligence that people risked their lives to gather. That "will make it harder for the intelligence community to do their jobs protecting this country from those who wish to do us harm."

But Rep. Mark Meadows, one of Trump's congressional allies, said Trump's directive reflected the president's pledge for an open and transparent investigation.

Meadows tweeted: "Outstanding — President Trump authorizing the Attorney General to declassify documents related to surveillance during the 2016 election. Americans are going to learn the truth about what occurred at their Justice Department."

Associated Press writer Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

Wisconsin man who kidnapped Jayme Closs gets life in prison

By **AMY FORLITI** and **TODD RICHMOND** Associated Press

BARRON, Wis. (AP) — A Wisconsin man was sentenced Friday to life in prison for kidnapping 13-year-old Jayme Closs and killing her parents after the girl told the judge she that wanted him "locked up forever" for trying to steal her.

Jake Patterson, 21, pleaded guilty in March to two counts of intentional homicide and one count of kidnapping. He admitted he broke into Jayme's home in October, gunned down her parents, James and Denise Closs, made off with her and held her under a bed in his remote cabin for 88 days before she made a daring escape.

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Jayne didn't appear at Patterson's sentencing hearing Friday, but a family attorney read her first public statements about her ordeal to Judge James Babler.

"He thought that he could own me but he was wrong. I was smarter," the statement said. "I was brave and he was not. ... He thought he could make me like him, but he was wrong. ... For 88 days he tried to steal me and he didn't care who he hurt or who he killed to do that. He should be locked up forever."

The judge called Patterson the "embodiment of evil" before sentencing him to consecutive life sentences without the possibility of release on the homicide charges. He also ordered Patterson to serve 25 years in prison and 15 years of extended supervision on the kidnapping count.

"There's no doubt in my mind you're one of the most dangerous men to ever walk on this planet," Babler said.

Patterson sat shaking his head during most of the hearing. Offered a chance to speak, he said he would do anything to take back what he did.

"I would die," he said. "I would do absolutely anything ... to bring them back. I don't care about me. I'm just so sorry. That's all."

The judge read statements that Patterson wrote in jail in which he said he had succumbed to fantasies about keeping a young girl and torturing and controlling her. He started looking for an opportunity to kidnap someone, even deciding he might want to take multiple girls and kill multiple families, according to the statements. Jayme was the first girl he saw after these thoughts entered his mind, he said.

Patterson's attorneys, Richard Jones and Charles Glynn, told the judge that Patterson was isolated and that he overreacted to loneliness. They asked for leniency for Patterson, noting that he had pleaded guilty to spare Jayme and her family from a trial.

According to a criminal complaint, Patterson was driving to work in October when he spotted Jayme getting on a school bus near her rural home outside Barron, about 90 miles (145 kilometers) northeast of Minneapolis. He decided then that "she was the girl he was going to take."

District Attorney Brian Wright told the judge that Patterson traveled to the Closs home on two separate occasions to kidnap her but turned back because of activity at her house.

He finally drove to the house during the early morning hours of Oct. 15 dressed in black and carrying his father's shotgun. He shot James Closs through a window in the front door, blasted the lock and moved inside.

He found the bathroom door locked. He broke the door down and discovered Jayme and her mother clinging to each other in the bathtub. He tied Jayme up with tape, then shot Denise Closs in the head as she sat next to her daughter.

He dragged Jayme through her father's blood and out to his car. He threw her in the trunk and drove her to his cabin in Gordon in Douglas County, about 60 miles (97 kilometers) northeast of Barron.

He kept her trapped under a bed using totes filled with weights and hit her with a curtain rod, Wright said. "He kept her in constant fear, threatening her, telling her things would get worse," Wright said.

Jayne finally escaped on Jan. 10 while Patterson was away. She flagged down a neighbor, who found someone to call police. Patterson was arrested minutes later as he returned to the cabin.

Patterson was also ordered to register as a sex offender, which under Wisconsin law may be required both for an actual sex offense or an attempted sexual offense. Details of Jayme's time in captivity have not been released, and no charges were brought by prosecutors in the county where she was held.

Richmond reported from Madison.

Check out AP's complete coverage of Jayme Closs' abduction and her parents' deaths.

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

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Japan's charm campaign ready to roll: Golf, sumo await Trump

By JILL COLVIN and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Under the threat of potentially devastating U.S. tariffs on autos, Japan is ready to roll out the newest phase of its charm offensive targeting President Donald Trump as it welcomes him on a state visit tailor-made to his whims and ego.

Offering high honors, golf and the chance to present a "Trump Cup" at a sumo wrestling championship, Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, arguably Trump's closest friend on the world stage, will continue a years-long campaign that so far appears to have spared Japan from far more debilitating U.S. actions.

The stakes are high. U.S. tariffs could cripple Japan's auto industry, while North Korea remains a destabilizing threat in the region. But this trip, the first of two Trump is expected to make to Japan in the next six weeks, is more of a social call meant to highlight the alliance between the countries and the friendship between their leaders.

"In the world of Donald Trump, terrible things can happen if you're an ally, but no major blows have landed on Japan," said Michael Green, senior vice president for Asia and Japan chair at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

Trump, who departed Washington for Tokyo on Friday, has the honor of being the first head of state invited to meet Emperor Naruhito since he assumed power May 1 after his father stepped down, the first abdication in about two centuries. Naruhito will welcome Trump to the Imperial Palace on Monday for a meeting and banquet in his honor.

"With all the countries of the world, I'm the guest of honor at the biggest event that they've had in over 200 years," Trump said Thursday.

Abe will host Trump on Sunday for a round of golf and take the president to a sumo wrestling match, a sport Trump said he finds "fascinating." Trump is eager to present the winner with a U.S.-made trophy.

It's all part of a kindness campaign aimed at encouraging Trump to alleviate trade pressures, said Riley Walters, a policy analyst at the Heritage Foundation's Asian Studies Center, who said the personal relationship between Trump and Abe is probably the best of any two world leaders.

Abe made a strategic decision before Trump was elected to focus on Japan's relationship with the U.S. The courtship began when Abe rushed to New York two weeks after the November 2016 election to meet the president-elect at Trump Tower. Last month, Abe and his wife, Akie, celebrated first lady Melania Trump's birthday over a couples' dinner at the White House.

Trump plans to return to Japan for a summit of leading rich and developing nations in Osaka in late June.

Behind the smiles and personal friendship, however, lurks deep uneasiness over Trump's threat to impose tariffs on Japanese autos and auto parts on national security grounds, a move that would be far more devastating to the Japanese economy than earlier tariffs on steel and aluminum.

Trump recently agreed to a six-month delay, enough time to carry Abe past July's Japanese parliamentary elections.

"On the surface, it's all going to be a display of warmth, friendship, hospitality," said Mireya Solis, a senior fellow at the Brookings Center for East Asia Policy Studies. But, she said, "there's an undercurrent of awkwardness and concern about what the future might hold. ... We're coming to a decisive moment. This is, I think, the moment of truth."

Also at issue is the lingering threat of North Korea, which has resumed missile testing and recently fired a series of short-range projectiles that U.S. officials, including Trump, have tried to downplay despite an agreement by North Korea to hold off on further testing.

"The moratorium was focused, very focused, on intercontinental missile systems, the ones that threaten the United States," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said in a recent television interview. That raised alarm bells in Japan, where short-range missiles pose a serious threat.

"That is not an acceptable American position for Japan," said Green.

Japan, which relies on the U.S. for its defense, has also been largely cut out of negotiations with North Korea, even as Kim Jong Un has met with other leaders in the region, including China's Xi Jinping. That

leaves Abe to rely on the U.S. as an intermediary, said Sheila Smith, an expert on Japanese politics and foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations.

"Abe has to rely on Trump to advocate," she said. Abe recently offered to meet Kim without preconditions in an effort to restore diplomatic ties.

With Trump's relations with the leaders of the U.K., Germany, Canada and other allies strained, Abe has worked more than any other leader to try to keep Trump engaged with international institutions, Green said, adding that it is critical for Japan's survival.

And while leaders across Europe and elsewhere might take heat for cozying up to Trump, analysts say Japanese voters see Trump more as a curiosity and understand the pragmatic importance of good relations, which they say has paid off for Abe.

Indeed, while Trump has rejected Abe's invitations to re-join a sweeping trans-Pacific trade deal and keeps the threat of tariffs in place, Trump walked away from his last meeting with Kim without a deal, which some had feared would include a declaration to end the Korean war and a vow to pull U.S. troops from the peninsula.

"I would argue that Abe has been so good at maintaining the relationship that maybe things could be worse," Walters said.

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'Here we go again': Judge blocks Mississippi abortion ban

By EMILY WAGSTER PETTUS Associated Press

JACKSON, Miss. (AP) — A federal judge on Friday temporarily blocked a Mississippi law that would ban most abortions once a fetal heartbeat is detected, at about six weeks of pregnancy.

"Here we go again," U.S. District Judge Carlton Reeves wrote in his order. "Mississippi has passed another law banning abortions prior to viability."

His new order stops the law from taking effect July 1. Reeves is the same judge who struck down a 2018 Mississippi law to ban abortion at 15 weeks.

Mississippi is one of several states that have pushed this year to enact bans on early abortions. Opponents of abortion are emboldened by new conservative Supreme Court justices and are looking for ways to challenge the court's 1973 ruling that legalized abortion nationwide.

Reeves heard arguments Tuesday from attorneys for the state's only abortion clinic, who said the law would effectively eliminate all abortions in Mississippi because cardiac activity is often first detectable when many women may not know they are pregnant. Lawyers with the state attorney general's office said the law should be allowed to take effect because it's not a complete ban on abortion but is, rather, a limit on when the procedure could be done.

Alabama's Republican governor recently signed a law to ban most abortions. Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Ohio have enacted or neared approval of measures barring abortion once there's a detectable fetal heartbeat. Missouri lawmakers approved an eight-week ban. All of those laws are expected to face legal challenges, and the Kentucky one was temporarily blocked by a federal judge in March.

Reeves ruled last year that Mississippi's 15-week ban is unconstitutional because it would prohibit access to abortion before a fetus could survive outside the pregnant woman's body. Viability is generally considered to be about 23 or 24 weeks.

In an indication of which way he is leaning on the request to block the new law with the earlier ban, Reeves asked attorneys Tuesday: "Doesn't it boil down to: Six is less than 15?"

Also during the hearing, Reeves criticized Mississippi lawmakers for passing an earlier ban after he struck down the one at 15 weeks.

"It sure smacks of defiance to this court," he said.

Reeves will hear arguments later about the question of whether the six-week ban is constitutional. He wrote Friday that the new law "prevents a woman's free choice, which is central to personal dignity and

autonomy. This injury outweighs any interest the State might have in banning abortions after the detection of a fetal heartbeat.”

The state is appealing Reeves’ ruling on the 15-week ban, and Republican Gov. Phil Bryant signed the new law in March. The state’s only abortion clinic, Jackson Women’s Health Organization, quickly sued the state.

Bryant said in a statement Friday that he is disappointed in Reeves’ ruling.

“As governor, I’ve pledged to do all I can to protect life,” Bryant said. “Time and time again the Legislature and I have done just that.”

Nancy Northup is president and CEO of the Center for Reproductive Rights, one of the groups representing the Mississippi abortion clinic.

“The sponsors of Mississippi’s six-week ban, like those of other extreme bans across the country, are shamelessly seeking to overturn Roe v. Wade,” Northup said after Friday’s ruling. “We will block them at every turn. The Constitution protects a woman’s right to make decisions over her body and her life.”

The Mississippi law says physicians who perform abortions after a fetal heartbeat is detected could face revocation of their state medical licenses. It also says abortions could be allowed after a fetal heartbeat is found if a pregnancy endangers a woman’s life or one of her major bodily functions. Senators rejected an amendment that would have allowed exceptions for pregnancies caused by rape or incest.

Follow Emily Wagster Pettus on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/EWagsterPettus> .

Tensions flare in Texas Capitol over new Sandra Bland video

By PAUL J. WEBER Associated Press

AUSTIN, Texas (AP) — Texas authorities on Friday denied withholding a cellphone video of Sandra Bland’s confrontational traffic stop, responding to a Democratic legislator’s heated questions about why the 39-second clip never publicly surfaced until now.

Bland, a 28-year-old black woman from outside Chicago, had used her phone in 2015 to briefly film a white state trooper as he drew a stun gun and yelled “I will light you up!” while ordering her out of the car. She was dead three days later, hanging in her jail cell outside Houston. Her death was ruled a suicide.

“The Department of Public Safety has not illegally withheld evidence from Sandra Bland’s family or her legal team,” said Phillip Adkins, general counsel of the department.

The video had not been publicly seen until it was aired this month by a Dallas television station, and both lawmakers and Bland’s family say they had also never seen the clip . They say the video proves that Trooper Brian Encinia had no reason to fear for his life and questioned whether he should have faced charges beyond perjury.

Democratic presidential contenders in the crowded 2020 field have also reacted to the video with calls for accountability and criminal justice reforms .

Explanations by state officials were challenged, often sharply, by Democratic state Rep. Garnet Coleman, who said he never received the video despite asking for all evidence as chairman of the House Committee on County Affairs. He told Adkins he was handed a jumbled “data dump” of four discs and said the description of Bland’s cellphone video in the state’s investigative report wasn’t an honest account.

“I disagree with you. I think it’s a fair and accurate description of the video,” Adkins said.

Coleman interrupted, talking over him.

“You can disagree all day long, because I don’t have lying eyes, sir,” he said. “I’ve looked into this more than anyone.”

Bland’s mother, Geneva Reed-Veal of Chicago, attended the hearing at the Texas Capitol but did not testify. She told reporters afterward she heard “a lot of discrepancies” at the hearing but declined further comment.

Encinia, the trooper, was fired after being indicted for perjury and said he came to fear for his safety after stopping Bland for failing to signal a lane change. The perjury charge was later dropped in exchange

for Encinia agreeing to never work in law enforcement again.

Coleman said Encinia “got off light” and accused state officials of not being ethically forthcoming with their handling of the video. Hours after the hearing, Texas DPS released a copy of a letter sent in October 2015 to the Bland’s family attorney, Cannon Lambert, notifying him that a “cell phone download” of Bland’s phone was enclosed on a thumb drive. Lambert said he never saw the video in the evidence that was turned over to him.

The hearing had been quickly arranged before the Texas Legislature adjourns Monday until 2021. One proposal that could still reach Gov. Greg Abbott’s desk would make it more difficult to jail people for low-level misdemeanors, which some lawmakers have sought in the wake of Bland’s death. Law enforcement groups, however, are fighting the measure.

In 2017, Coleman passed a “Sandra Bland Act” that included de-escalation training, independent investigations of county jail deaths and more racial profiling data. Advocates for criminal justice reforms have praised the changes, but the end product disappointed Bland’s family, who felt it didn’t address the circumstances leading up to her death.

Follow Paul J. Weber on Twitter: www.twitter.com/pauljweber

Administration moves to revoke transgender health protection

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration moved Friday to revoke newly won health care discrimination protections for transgender people, the latest in a series of actions that aim to reverse gains by LGBTQ Americans in areas ranging from the military to housing and education.

The Health and Human Services Department released a proposed regulation that in effect says “gender identity” is not protected under federal laws that prohibit sex discrimination in health care. It would reverse an Obama-era policy that the Trump administration already is not enforcing.

“The actions today are part and parcel of this administration’s efforts to erase LGBTQ people from federal regulations and to undermine nondiscrimination protections across the board,” said Omar Gonzalez-Pagan, a senior attorney on health care at Lambda Legal, a civil rights organization representing LGBT people.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif, said the action shows “utter contempt for the health, safety and humanity of women and transgender Americans.”

The administration also has moved to restrict military service by transgender men and women, proposed allowing certain homeless shelters to take gender identity into account in offering someone a bed for the night and concluded in a 2017 Justice Department memo that federal civil rights law does not protect transgender people from discrimination at work. As one of her first policy moves, Education Secretary Betsy DeVos withdrew guidance that allowed students to use bathrooms matching their gender identity.

More than 1.5 million Americans identify as transgender, according to the Williams Institute, a think tank focusing on LGBT policy at the UCLA School of Law. A bigger number — 4.5% of the population — identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT), according to Gallup.

Pushing back against critics, the HHS official overseeing the new regulation said transgender patients would continue to be protected by other federal laws that bar discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age and disability.

“Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect,” said Roger Severino, who heads the HHS Office for Civil Rights. “We intend to fully enforce federal laws that prohibit discrimination.”

Asked about the charge that the administration has opened the door to discrimination against transgender people seeking needed medical care of any type, Severino responded, “I don’t want to see that happen.”

In some places LGBT people are protected by state laws, said Lambda Legal attorney Gonzalez-Pagan, “but what do you say to people living in a state that doesn’t have state-explicit protections? Do they move their home?”

Behind the dispute over legal rights is a medically recognized condition called “gender dysphoria” — dis-

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comfort or distress caused by a discrepancy between the gender that a person identifies as and the gender at birth. Consequences can include severe depression. Treatment can range from sex-reassignment surgery and hormones to people changing their outward appearance by adopting a different hairstyle or clothing.

Many social conservatives disagree with the concept.

"Sex is not subjective, it is an objective biological reality," Tony Perkins, president of the Family Research Council, said in a statement supporting the Trump administration's move. The proposed rule will ensure that federal law "isn't used as a vehicle to advance transgender or abortion politics," he said.

Under the Obama-era federal rule, a hospital could be required to perform gender-transition procedures such as hysterectomies if the facility provided that kind of treatment for other medical conditions. The rule was meant to carry out the anti-discrimination section of the Affordable Care Act, which bars sex discrimination in health care but does not use the term "gender identity."

The proposed new rule would also affect the notices that millions of patients get in multiple languages about their rights to translation services. Such notices often come with insurer "explanation of benefits" forms. The Trump administration says the notice requirement has become a needless burden on health care providers, requiring billions of paper notices to be mailed annually at an estimated five-year cost of \$3.2 billion.

The American Civil Liberties Union served notice it expects to challenge the rule in court when it is final. Louise Melling, ACLU deputy legal director said the potential impact could go beyond LGBT people and also subject women to discrimination for having had an abortion.

That's because the proposal would remove "termination of pregnancy" as grounds for making a legal claim of sex discrimination in health care, one of the protections created in the Obama years. Abortion opponents had argued that the Obama regulation could be construed to make a legal argument for federal funding of abortions.

UCLA legal scholar Jocelyn Samuels, who oversaw the drafting of the HHS transgender anti-discrimination rule under Obama, said that rule reflected established legal precedent that transgender people are protected by federal anti-discrimination laws.

"This administration has manifested its intent to roll back that well-considered understanding in every context," she said.

Samuels questioned the timing of the Trump action, since the U.S. Supreme Court has agreed to hear three cases this year looking at whether federal civil rights law bans job discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.

The proposed rule change is unlikely to have immediate consequences beyond the realm of political and legal debate. It faces a 60-day comment period and another layer of review before it can be finalized.

HHS official Severino said the Trump administration is going back to the literal text of the ACA's anti-discrimination law to correct an overly broad interpretation.

The Obama rule dates to a time when LGBT people were gaining political and social recognition. But a federal judge in Texas has said the rule went too far by concluding that discrimination on the basis of gender identity is a form of sex discrimination.

Severino said the proposed rule does not come with a new definition of a person's sex. Earlier, a leaked internal document suggested the administration was debating whether to issue an immutable definition of sex, as based on a person's genital organs at birth.

AP writer David Crary in New York contributed to this report.

Jury finds man guilty of murder in Tennessee church shooting

By JONATHAN MATTISE Associated Press

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (AP) — A jury on Friday found a man guilty of first-degree murder in a shooting at a Nashville church two years ago that left a woman dead and seven wounded.

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Jurors deliberated less than five hours before delivering the verdict against Emanuel Kidega Samson. He was found guilty on all 43 counts in the indictment.

Samson, 27, is black; the victims are white. Samson left a note about a 2015 shooting massacre at a South Carolina black church and aimed to kill at least 10 white churchgoers in revenge, Deputy District Attorney Amy Hunter said. Jurors are next considering a life sentence without parole, a decision that could be made as early as Tuesday.

Congregants of the multicultural Burnette Chapel Church of Christ testified during the four-day trial about the hail of bullets and the bloody scene that unfolded in front of them just after their Sunday worship service concluded. Some had the gunshot wounds to show for it.

After the verdict was read, they poured into the hallway, cried and hugged each other.

Burnette's minister, Joey Spann, remembered Samson as a different man years ago when he once was a member of Spann's church, well before the shooting. The preacher, who lost a finger in the shooting spree, said his congregants haven't even heard "I'm sorry" from Samson.

"I hope that that other Emanuel Samson comes back," Spann said following the verdict. "I also hope he comes back to him in jail for the rest of his life."

The September 2017 shooting rampage killed 38-year-old Melanie L. Crow of Smyrna, Tennessee. She was shot in the church parking lot while she walked out to her car to get a cough drop, dropping her Bible and notes, Hunter said.

"Melanie touched and left an impression on everyone she met," Crow's sister, Bridget Polson, testified. "She had a big heart, a beautiful smile, and an uplifting soul."

Samson testified that he didn't remember committing the crime. He said his mental health disorders have caused lapses in memory and constant shifts from feelings of ecstasy to the thoughts of suicide he said he experienced the morning of the shooting. He said he's on medication now in jail and his thoughts have "slowed down drastically." He said his memory kicks in at the tail end of the church shooting, when he was shot in the chest during a tussle with a congregant who authorities say saved lives.

To undermine Samson's testimony, prosecutors replayed jail calls from the month after the shooting in which he and his ex-girlfriend laugh about the victims and brag about how good he looked in media coverage. They called his spotty-at-best memory a convenient way to avoid answering hard questions on the witness stand.

Samson also said he couldn't remember writing the note that cited white supremacist Dylann Roof's massacre at a black church in Charleston, South Carolina, in 2015. The note, found in his car outside the church, included a reference to the red, black, and green Pan-African flag, sometimes called RBG. Additionally, prosecutors said Samson swung his gun by two African American churchgoers during the shooting, skipping over them.

"Dylann Roof is less than nothing," the note read, according to Hunter. "The blood that 10 of your kind will shed is that of the color upon the RBG flag in terms of vengeance." The note included an expletive and ended with a smiley face, Hunter said.

Samson said he did remember writing what the defense described as a suicide note to his then-girlfriend that day.

The judge had limited what could be said in front of jurors about Samson's mental illnesses. Defense attorney Jennifer Lynn Thompson said the case was deemed not to meet the criteria for an insanity defense.

Before the trial, the judge largely shielded details about the case from public view. At an open hearing in April, it was revealed that a psychiatrist diagnosed Samson with "schizoaffective disorder bipolar type" and post-traumatic stress disorder after an abusive, violent upbringing.

With the jury out of the room, Samson's father at one point testified that he unsuccessfully tried to persuade authorities to take away Samson's guns after he sent a suicidal text in the summer of 2017.

Prosecutors also said the shooting revealed a true-life hero.

Churchgoer Robert Caleb Engle, 24, testified that during the rampage, he twice confronted the gunman, who was wearing a tactical vest and a motorcycle-style mask with a clown smile on it. Engle said he was pistol-whipped three times in the head. At one point, he pushed the gun back on the shooter and a shot

fired, striking the gunman and sending him to the ground.

Engle said his father kicked the gun away, stood on the shooter's hand and told Engle to go get his gun out of his truck.

Engle came back with his weapon, put his foot on the shooter's back and stood guard until first responders arrived.

Navy: Sailor contacted Russians, pleads guilty to espionage

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A U.S. sailor has pleaded guilty to two counts of espionage and was sentenced to three years after admitting he took classified information about the Navy's nuclear-powered warships and planned to give it to a journalist and then defect to Russia, officials said Friday.

U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Stephen Kellogg III wished to publish an expose on waste within the military and admitted he wanted to share the information with Russians, said Jeff Houston of the Naval Criminal Investigative Service in an email to The Associated Press.

According to Navy court documents, Kellogg, 26, was in contact with Sevmash, Russia's largest ship-building enterprise and only nuclear submarine producer. He admitted he knew releasing the information could degrade the ability of nuclear-powered warships, and therefore cause injury to the United States.

Neither Kellogg nor his lawyers could be immediately reached for comment.

Authorities learned of his plans after arresting Kellogg, on Aug. 27 for drunken disorderly conduct at the San Diego airport where he was stopped by a Delta Air Lines employee from boarding a flight to New York City because he was being belligerent, according to court documents.

He had bought a one-way ticket and planned to meet a friend from high school who is a journalist who lives in New York City and told the person he had a big story, according to investigators and court documents.

Kellogg knew if the information became public, potential adversaries would likely know the capabilities and limitations of the United States' nuclear-powered warships, according to his pre-trial agreement.

Kellogg, who joined the Navy in 2014, was a nuclear electrician's mate with access to classified information relating to the capabilities, operations and maintenance of the Navy's nuclear propulsion systems. He served aboard the USS Carl Vinson from 2016 to 2018 and said he could draw and explain the majority of the ship's critical nuclear propulsion plant systems from memory, according to court documents.

"This sailor's attempts to disclose classified Navy nuclear propulsion information posed a significant threat to national security and endangered the lives of American service members," FBI Special Agent in Charge Garrett Waugh said in a statement.

Kellogg admitted to telling his roommate that he planned to defect to Russia and had searched the Internet for information relating to flights to Moscow, contact information for the Russian Consulate in San Diego, and wrote to an email address associated with Sevmash and called the company six times. It is unclear if the shipbuilder wrote back.

Around the same time, he told a childhood friend that he wanted to get out of the Navy and that I "might go Ed Snowden," referring to the former National Security Agency contractor who exposed U.S. government surveillance programs by disclosing classified material.

Though Kellogg pleaded guilty to two counts of violating the Espionage Act, his military defense attorneys told the judge at Naval Base San Diego before his sentencing that he was not a spy but rather had a drinking problem and may have been suffering from depression.

People who know Kellogg, they said, described him as harmless and someone just trying to get attention. The defense also pointed out that Kellogg had left his passport at his San Diego apartment, undermining claims he was headed to Russia.

Authorities said Kellogg also admitted to photographing areas containing sensitive information about the Navy's nuclear propulsion program on the ship, and then sending the photos to his father and ex-girlfriend.

He told authorities he stored classified information in his berth, violating protocol, according to the FBI.

He will receive a dishonorable discharge and a reduction in rank.

"This type of behavior has no place in our military," said Cmdr. Nate Christensen, deputy spokesman of the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

CEOs get \$800,000 pay raise, leaving workers further behind

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Did you get a 7% raise last year? Congratulations, yours was in line with what CEOs at the biggest companies got. But for chief executives, that 7% was roughly \$800,000.

Pay for CEOs at S&P 500 companies rose to a median of \$12 million last year, including salary, stock and other compensation, according to data analyzed by Equilar for The Associated Press. The eight-figure packages continue to rise as companies tie more of their CEOs' pay to their stock prices, which are still near record levels, and as profits hit an all-time high last year due to lower tax bills and a still-growing economy.

Pay for typical workers at these companies isn't rising nearly as quickly. The median increase was 3% last year, less than half the growth for the top bosses. Median means half were larger, and half were smaller.

The survey showed that it would take 158 years for the typical worker at most big companies to make what their CEO did in 2018, seven years longer than if both were still at 2017 pay levels. And when top executives are already making so much more than their employees, the bigger percentage raises compound the widening financial gap.

Anger about widening income inequality is rising around the world, from Capitol Hill to protests in streets. But it's only slowly seeping into the conference rooms where boards of directors set the pay for CEOs. Boards are often more concerned with what a competitor may pay to poach their CEO than how much more that person makes versus the rest of the workforce.

"It's a natural thing for a CEO and a board to say, 'How are others who are doing similar work paid?' And there's a natural sense that if the board believes and supports their CEO, they don't expect their CEO to be paid less than the others in the industry," said Eric Hosken, a partner at Compensation Advisory Partners, a consulting firm that works with boards.

Investors — the ultimate corporate bosses who have the power to vote directors off the board — also continue to vote overwhelmingly in favor of executive pay packages at the biggest companies, though the margins have been decreasing.

"There's a belief that if we underpay our CEO, they can go work in private equity. They can go work for a competitor. They will find places to go," Hosken said.

The AP's CEO compensation study included pay data for 340 executives at S&P 500 companies who have served at least two full consecutive fiscal years at their companies, which filed proxy statements between Jan. 1 and April 30.

Some companies with highly paid CEOs did not fit these criteria and were excluded, such as Safra Catz and Mark Hurd, co-CEOs of Oracle. Each had compensation valued at \$108.3 million last fiscal year, but Oracle usually files its proxy statement in September due to its fiscal year ending in May. Tesla's Elon Musk had compensation valued at \$2.28 billion, but his company is not in the S&P 500.

WHO'S ON TOP

Last year's top paid executive in the survey was David Zaslav of Discovery, the media giant behind HGTV and the Food Network. His total compensation was valued at \$129.5 million, up 207% from a year earlier. Like other executives at the top of the rankings, most of Zaslav's pay is not from cash but from stock awards or option grants that he will fully benefit from only if Discovery's share price rises in the future.

Nearly 80% of Zaslav's compensation last year came from stock options valued at \$102.1 million, most of which he received as part of a new employment contract that runs through 2023. Companies often grant big options packages when top executives renew their contracts. Discovery's stock returned 11% last year, beating the S&P 500's loss of 4%, including dividends, and it has also beat the market since its initial public offering in 2008.

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Media CEOs tend to dominate the top of the rankings for compensation, corralling as much or more in compensation as the stars who work for them. But one commonly recurring name did not make this year's list: Leslie Moonves, whose ouster from CBS last year was one of the highest profile results of the #MeToo movement.

DISPARITY DEEPENS

This is the second year that the government has required companies to show how pay for top bosses compares with the pay for their typical worker. The measure is far from perfect, mostly because companies have a lot of flexibility in how to calculate the numbers.

Comparisons between companies can also be meaningless when one has mostly part-time workers in developing countries while the other has office parks full of Ph.D.s in Silicon Valley. But now that companies have submitted two years of data, investors can see how the gap in pay is trending at individual companies.

At more than 40% of the companies in this year's survey, the CEO's pay rose by at least double the percentage of the median worker's pay gain.

Across the economy, pay is climbing at a faster rate for workers, but the gains are still below where they usually are when the economy is this healthy. Average hourly pay rose 3.4% in February from a year earlier, the largest annual gain in a decade. Companies find that they have to pay more to hold on to staff after the unemployment rate dropped to a nearly 50-year low.

But the last time the jobless rate was almost this low, in the late 1990s, hourly pay rose at a 4% to 4.5% rate. Economists say several trends are holding back wage gains, including businesses facing intense pressure from online and overseas competitors. And with larger, multinational companies dominating more industries, workers have fewer alternatives to jump to in search of a raise.

"For the kind of numbers we're seeing on the unemployment rate, or the length of the recovery, all those numbers would tell us that we're in an incredibly good economy. But it's not as rosy as those statistics suggest," said Julia Coronado, an economist and president of MacroPolicy Perspectives.

A FEW OUTLIERS

In some industries, worker pay is closer to the CEO's. Some tech CEOs have famously low salaries, such as Lawrence Page of Google's parent, Alphabet, and Jack Dorsey of Twitter. Both took home a \$1 salary last year, but both also own huge stakes of their companies as co-founders.

Tech companies also often pay high salaries to lure in programmers and data scientists. At Alphabet, for example, the median employee had compensation of \$246,804 last year, up 25% from the year before.

High salaries of more than \$100,000 are most typically found in a more staid area of the market: utilities. Most of the big utilities paid their median worker above \$110,000 last year, but that may not last for long. Compensation fell for the median worker at most utilities last year.

Women, meanwhile, still remain relatively rare in the corner offices for S&P 500 companies, even though they enter U.S. companies at roughly the same rate as men. Of the 340 CEOs in this year's survey, just 19 were women. Their median pay was \$12.7 million last year, versus \$11.2 million for men.

MOST SHAREHOLDERS SIGN OFF ON RAISES

For the most part, investors are OK with these big pay packages.

Last year, the median company in the survey received a 94% approval rate on its "Say on Pay" vote, where shareholders give a nonbinding up-or-down vote on executive compensation. That was down only slightly from 95% a year earlier.

But those high approval numbers belie increasing scrutiny of executive compensation by shareholders.

"It's accelerating a lot," said Rosanna Landis Weaver, researcher at As You Sow, a shareholder advocacy group. "You have scholarship showing how widening income inequality is bad for everyone, shareholders and democracy. And the myth of 'pay for performance' has taken a couple of blows, so people are re-examining pay."

In many cases, the dissenting voices are coming from shareholders outside the United States.

"I have the impression that here in the U.S., the culture is still — maybe rightly so — that if your CEO is successful, you are entitled to make basically as much money as you want," said Luca Paolini, chief strategist at Pictet Asset Management, which is based in Switzerland. "In Europe, we think slightly differently. And in Japan as well. They say, 'Ok, your company is great, you should give back something.'"

Associated Press Economics Writer Chris Rugaber in Washington contributed to this report.

May's relationship with EU was often rocky

By RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — As British Prime Minister Theresa May announced her departure with a Brexit plan nowhere near success, European Union leaders offered kind words. But it was quite another matter during the years of negotiations with the bloc that often produced exasperation, miscommunication and even some ridicule of her.

EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker, whose office led the Brexit negotiations, on Friday called May "a woman of courage for whom he has great respect," saying he watched her resignation speech "without personal joy."

And Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier said: "I just want to express my full respect for Theresa May and for her determination."

But they expressed plenty of frustration during the rocky ride that May engineered over nearly three years that saw good relations go sour.

After the U.K.'s 2016 referendum in which voters decided to leave the EU, officials in Europe complained that May waited almost a year to begin the negotiations and that her team was ill-prepared for the task and later turned on her after failing to make progress. They were dismayed after she called a general election in June 2017 to bolster her Conservative Party's numbers to help the negotiations, only to lose its majority and weaken her government. That made her beholden to special Northern Ireland interests that complicated the talks.

Perhaps the lowest point came in September 2018 at Salzburg Castle when EU president Donald Tusk publicly mocked her for being too greedy in the negotiations.

"A piece of cake, perhaps? Sorry, no cherries," Tusk wrote in an Instagram photo of him offering May a dessert tray. It was a withering, undiplomatic jibe that accused her of cherry-picking the best parts of EU legislation while discarding what she disliked.

Two months after Salzburg, May somehow agreed to a withdrawal agreement that included enough guarantees for Ireland that all 27 member states could live with it.

In December, May apparently misinterpreted a comment by Juncker at an EU summit in Brussels and tempers frayed. She confronted him, seething, "What did you call me? You called me 'nebulous?'"

Juncker was seen shaking his head, apparently replying: "No I didn't."

But then came the shock for Europe that May could not sell the deal to her own Conservative Party, failing three times to get it through Parliament.

Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte, while saying he respected May but not British politics, compared her to the hapless Black Knight in a Monty Python sketch. The knight has both arms and legs cut off, but still refuses to surrender and tells his opponent to call it a draw.

On Friday, May announced that she will step down as Conservative Party leader June 7, which will trigger a contest to choose a successor who will try to complete Brexit as the next British prime minister.

After her speech, Rutte didn't mention the Black Knight but instead expressed his "thanks and respect for Theresa May."

He did add however that "the deal between the EU and the United Kingdom for an orderly Brexit remains on the table."

EU leaders could soon look back longingly at the May era.

One possible successor, former Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson, in 2016 compared the EU's aims to

those of Adolf Hitler, arguing the bloc was trying to create a superstate that mirrors the attempt of the Nazi leader to dominate the European continent. At the time, Tusk called the comment "absurd."

Barnier, the EU negotiator, refused to contemplate what the future would hold if Johnson or any other pro-Brexit politician became the next prime minister.

"What could happen now? Let me just clearly say here in Brussels that it is for the U.K. to decide. Nobody else," he said.

If a new prime minister withdraws Britain from the EU without an orderly transition plan, there could be high economic costs for all involved.

"It now means we enter a new phase when it comes to Brexit and a phase that may be a very dangerous one," said Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar.

"Whatever happens, we are going to hold our nerve," Varadkar said.

Associated Press writer Lorne Cook contributed.

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

Botswana hires Hollywood firm to fight elephant hunting PR

By **BRIAN SLODYSKO** and **MICHAEL BIESECKER** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Botswanan government has enlisted a public relations firm with deep ties to Hollywood to push back against the bad publicity generated by the southern African nation's decision to lift its ban on elephant hunting.

42 West, a firm mostly known for its work with celebrities and the film industry, notified the U.S. Justice Department last week that it will be working with Botswana's tourism ministry, according to a filing made under the Foreign Agents Registration Act.

The firm will be paid \$125,000 over the next two months — with the possibility of more work to come — for developing talking points and a communications plan that "articulates Botswana's policy on elephant hunting" that will be delivered to "key U.S. and other Western audiences," according to its filing.

That puts 42 West in an awkward spot. Big-game hunting is a deeply divisive issue, particularly in Hollywood, and numerous celebrity activists have spoken out against killing the world's largest land mammal for sport, including some calls for a tourism boycott of Botswana.

Among the firm's clients is actress Meryl Streep, who has been a vocal opponent of the sale and importation of ivory, which in 2014 she called a "product of horrific cruelty to elephants, who could very well become extinct within decades if we don't act now."

Allan Mayer, a principal with 42 West who is leading the effort, declined to comment on Friday. Streep publicist Leslee Dart, a 42 West co-CEO who is named in the filing, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Botswana has been a relatively safe refuge for elephants on a continent where illegal poaching and habitat loss has sent their numbers into sharp decline. The country is home to an estimated 130,000 African elephants — about a third of all that remain.

After its initial announcement on Thursday was met with social media blowback, the Botswanan government clarified on Friday that it plans to issue no more than 400 elephant hunting permits per year.

Elephant hunting is already legal in Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia and South Africa. With a population of just over 2 million people, Botswana has more space than some of its more densely populated neighbors for elephant herds to roam. Still, the government said there have been a growing number of conflicts between elephants and humans — especially farmers.

Groups lobbying in favor of trophy hunting, such as U.S.-based Safari Club International, have long argued that the fees paid by well-heeled American and European hunters provide essential revenue for cash-strapped African governments to fund anti-poaching and conservation programs. A licensed two-week elephant hunting safari can cost more than \$50,000 per person, not including airfare, according to

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advertised rates.

The African elephant has been classified as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act since 1978. Though President Donald Trump has decried big-game hunting on Twitter as a "horror show," his administration has reversed Obama-era restrictions on the importation of elephant trophies from Zimbabwe and Zambia. Elephants have long been hunted for their hides and tusks, either for taxidermy trophies or ivory used for carving and jewelry making.

Botswana's hunting ban was put in place under a previous president, Ian Khama, an outspoken conservationist. But the current president, Mokgweeti Masisi, has advocated for reopening the nation to hunting, and the decision to lift the ban comes ahead of general elections in October.

Masisi raised eyebrows earlier this month when he gave stools made of elephant feet to regional leaders while hosting a meeting on the animals' fate.

The American talk show host Ellen DeGeneres tweeted Tuesday: "President Masisi, for every person who wants to kill elephants, there are millions who want them protected. We're watching. #BeKindToElephants."

Associated Press writer Cara Anna contributed to this report from Johannesburg, South Africa.

Follow Slodysko at <http://twitter.com/brianslodysko> and Biesecker at <http://twitter.com/mbieseck>

Tesla's bad news accelerates as Wall Street loses faith

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

Late last year, Tesla Inc. was fully charged and cruising down the highway on Autopilot.

Shares were trading above \$370 each, sales of the Model 3 small electric car were strong and the company had appointed a new board chair to rein in the antics of sometimes impulsive CEO Elon Musk.

But around the middle of December, investors started having doubts about the former Wall Street darling's prospects for continued growth, and the stock started a gyrating fall that was among the worst in company history.

For the year, the share price is down around 40%, largely on concerns Tesla is running out of buyers for its vehicles, which range in price from a base \$35,400 Model 3 to a larger Model X SUV that can run well over \$130,000.

Morgan Stanley analyst Adam Jonas, on a private call with investors this week, raised the possibility that Tesla would have to be restructured due to rising debt and falling sales. A leaked memo to employees from Musk that said sales were up stanching the stock's bleeding, and no one is really certain about what's next.

Here's a look at what has happened and what might be in the future for the electric car and solar panel company:

WHEN DID TESLA'S STOCK START FALLING AND WHY?

A downhill snowball of bad news eclipsed anything good Tesla did, and raised investor doubt about whether there are enough buyers left who want and can afford Tesla vehicles. Throw in a little bit of erratic behavior from Musk as well.

Just before Tesla stock hit a late-year peak on Dec. 13, Musk did a weekend interview with CBS' 60 Minutes that escalated a spat with securities regulators over his tweeting out company information. This time, he said it was unrealistic to think Tesla's new chairwoman could control his behavior because he's the largest shareholder. It came after Musk and Tesla each paid \$20 million in fines in an October settlement with the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission over ill-advised tweets.

WHAT ELSE HAPPENED?

Just after the new year began, Tesla announced record fourth quarter sales that fell short of Wall Street expectations. The company also cut prices by \$2,000 per vehicle to offset the phase-out of a \$7,500 federal tax credit for Tesla. That increased doubts about future sales. Then Tesla eked out a small fourth-quarter

profit that also disappointed investors.

The snowball picked up momentum in February when Musk announced he would close most company stores and fill orders online. He also walked back his prediction of sustained quarterly profits, predicting a first quarter loss. When January-through-March sales figures came out, investors were disappointed again. The company had only 63,000 deliveries, down 31% from the fourth quarter.

Musk later introduced the Model Y midsize SUV, but gave few details. Investors were nonplussed. Then came a conference call to announce fully self-driving cars by sometime next year, an announcement widely criticized by experts as unrealistic. The stock slump continued. With sales down, Tesla posted a larger-than-expected \$702 million first-quarter loss in April, and Musk warned it wouldn't be profitable in the second quarter either.

In May, Tesla sold stock and notes that yielded \$2.3 billion, increasing debt. Along the way, the SEC asked a judge to find Musk in contempt for tweets about vehicle production, a spat that was later settled. Also throw in reports of a leaked email last week from Musk to employees saying at the current cash burn rate, Tesla would go broke in 10 months.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

It all depends on whether Tesla can produce enough cars at its Fremont, California, factory and whether people keep buying them. Musk's memo from Wednesday said the company has 50,000 net new orders this quarter and it could pass record deliveries of more than 90,000 in the fourth quarter of last year. That could generate enough cash to reverse the company's fortunes. But many analysts are skeptical. Morgan Stanley's Jonas didn't think sales would be that strong.

"We see shares continuing to trade lower on a lack of near-term catalysts and likely cut to vehicle sales guidance," CFRA analyst Garrett Nelson wrote in a note to investors Thursday. He cut his one-year stock price target \$50 to \$150.

Senior Analyst Jessica Caldwell of Edmunds, which provides content to The Associated Press, said Tesla has an uphill climb.

"There doesn't appear to be anything in the (product) pipeline that is going to save them," she said. "Now Tesla seems to be losing the confidence of its biggest cheerleader, Wall Street."

Follow Tom Krisher on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/tkrisher>

'Move along': Stormtroopers ready for Star Wars land crowds

By JONATHAN LANDRUM Jr. AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Disneyland's new Galaxy's Edge attraction promises to transport visitors to a new locale in the Star Wars universe, but any who overstay their visit might not catch their ride on the Millennium Falcon.

The theme park is expecting massive crowds when Galaxy's Edge opens May 31, and has detailed plans on how to accommodate guests or help them "move along" with the aid of Stormtroopers.

For the first three weeks, guests must have a reservation to enter and will be limited to four hours inside the immersive new land, the largest single-theme land inside a Disney park. It is spread out over 14 acres of rides and experiences, including shops selling personal droids, lightsabers, and Star Wars-appropriate food and drink.

A special wristband will identify a visitor's time window, and once it expires, Disney said it will shut off access to key attractions and merchandise locations. Park employees dressed as Star Wars characters will ultimately ask visitors to make their way toward one of the three exits so a new group can enter.

"There might be some First Order officers out there helping us or maybe some Stormtroopers asking people to move along," said Kris Theiler, vice president of Disneyland park. "We'll employ the First Order maybe later in the reservation period if we need to."

It's just one example of the lengths to which Disney has gone to make Galaxy's Edge look and feel like

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part of the Star Wars universe. It's designed as a grungy outpost on a distant planet.

The marquee attraction is a massive replica of the Millennium Falcon, where guests can roam the ship's halls and engage in a dogfight with TIE Fighters.

The park has plenty of other, more subtle ways to manage crowd flow. Theiler said walkways were widened from 3 to about 6 feet in different areas, and stroller parking is available. Around 7,500 new parking spaces along with new parking lot entrances and toll booths were added. A new pedestrian bridge was also built to help avoid logjams.

Disneyland declined to share the capacity limit for Galaxy's Edge.

The park will implement a virtual queue system after June 23, when the pre-reservation requirement and four-hour time limit are set to expire.

The virtual queue will be offered inside Disneyland only for visitors to reserve a spot to enter the Star Wars attraction, and is intended to alleviate long lines. Updates will be available through the Disneyland app or a kiosk in the park.

"We believe that we can get a lot of folks through the land, and the wait won't be unmanageable," Theiler said.

Theiler said Disneyland has learned from its other attractions, such as It's a Small World, Dumbo and Matterhorn Bobsled, how to manage crowds.

"Many of these attractions were built in the '50s," she said. "We didn't have the volume back then that we do today. We've gotten into the practice of utilizing walkway space. We really want to make sure from a guest perspective that we're ready to go. We've been doing a lot of infrastructure work the last couple years."

Even before Galaxy's Edge opens, Disneyland was the second most popular theme park in the world last year with 18.6 million visitors. It is second only to Disney World in Florida, where a version of Galaxy's Edge is scheduled to open Aug. 29.

Theiler said Disneyland also wants to create a fun and safe environment for visitors who might want to partake in a lightsaber battle or let their personal droid roam. Activities like that will be monitored on a case-by-case basis, she said.

"If everyone's having fun and no safety issues, we're going to let people do that," she said. "But if we start feeling like that's interfering with other guest experiences or other safety issues, then we'll have a gentle conversation with that group."

Follow AP Entertainment Writer Jonathan Landrum Jr. on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/MrLandrum31>

China ramps up war of rhetoric in trade standoff with US

By **CHRISTOPHER BODEEN** Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — Stepping up Beijing's propaganda offensive in the tariffs standoff with Washington, Chinese state media on Friday accused the U.S. of seeking to "colonize global business" with moves against Huawei and other Chinese technology companies.

There was no word from either side on progress toward resuming talks between the world's two largest economies, though President Donald Trump said he expected to meet with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, next month at a G-20 meeting in Japan.

Negotiations over how to cut the huge, longstanding U.S. trade deficit with China and resolve complaints over Beijing's methods for acquiring advanced foreign technologies foundered earlier this month after Trump raised tariffs on billions of dollars of imports from China.

At a daily briefing Friday, foreign ministry spokesman Lu Kang accused American politicians he didn't name of "fabricating various lies based on subjective presumptions and trying to mislead the American people."

The China Daily, an English-language newspaper, said U.S. expressions of concerns about Chinese surveillance equipment maker Hikvision were for the self-serving aim of claiming the "moral high ground" to promote Washington's political agenda.

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"In this way, it is hoping to achieve the colonization of the global business world," the newspaper said. Hikvision said in a statement Friday that it takes U.S. concerns about its business seriously and is working to ensure it complies with human rights standards.

Activists have been urging the U.S. and other countries to sanction China over repression of members of Muslim minority ethnic groups in the northwestern Xinjiang region, where an estimated 1 million people are being detained in re-education camps.

The New York Times reported the U.S. Commerce Department might put Hikvision on its "entity list," restricting its business with U.S. companies for its alleged role in facilitating surveillance in Xinjiang.

In its statement, the company said it had "engaged with the U.S. government regarding all of this since last October."

Hikvision said it had retained former U.S. Ambassador-at-large Pierre-Richard Prosper of the firm Arent Fox to advise the company regarding human rights compliance.

"Over the past year, there have been numerous reports about ways that video surveillance products have been involved in human rights violations," the statement said. "We read every report seriously and are listening to voices from outside the company."

In South Korea, officials said they were discussing security issues related to its 5G, or fifth generation, cellphone networks with the U.S.

Officials in South Korea's Foreign Ministry and presidential office did not, however, confirm the report by the Chosun Ilbo newspaper that U.S. officials want Seoul to block a local wireless carrier that uses Huawei equipment for its 5G services from unspecified "sensitive areas."

Washington considers Huawei, the world's leading supplier of telecom gear and No. 2 smartphone maker, a security threat. Huawei has sought to alleviate those concerns and has rejected assertions that it would facilitate spying by Beijing.

It's unclear whether Seoul would accept potential U.S. demands to block imports of Huawei products at risk of triggering retaliation from China, its biggest trade partner.

A U.S. business group reported Friday that its members' operations in China are facing growing pressure from trade friction after the Trump administration imposed 25% tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese imports, with plans to extend those duties to another \$300 billion — virtually all the goods America buys from China.

"The negative impact of tariffs is clear and hurting the competitiveness of American companies in China," the American Chamber of Commerce in China and AmCham Shanghai said in announcing the results of a survey of nearly 250 companies conducted May 16-20.

China has raised tariffs on \$110 billion of U.S. products and has said it's prepared to do more to defend its national interest.

The report said about 40 of the companies surveyed were being subjected to more inspections or slower customs clearance. Just over half have yet to experience any impact from such non-tariff retaliatory measures.

To cope, companies are focusing more on the China market, it said, rather than exporting to the U.S., and delaying or canceling investment decisions.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, May 25, the 145th day of 2019. There are 220 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On May 25, 1935, Babe Ruth hit his last three career home runs — Nos. 712, 713 and 714 — for the Boston Braves in a game against the Pittsburgh Pirates. (The Pirates won, 11-7.)

On this date:

In 1787, the Constitutional Convention began at the Pennsylvania State House (Independence Hall) in Philadelphia after enough delegates had shown up for a quorum.

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In 1810, Argentina began its revolt against Spanish rule with the forming of the Primera Junta in Buenos Aires.

In 1895, playwright Oscar Wilde was convicted of a morals charge in London; he was sentenced to two years in prison.

In 1959, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *State Athletic Commission v. Dorsey*, struck down a Louisiana law prohibiting interracial boxing matches. (The case had been brought by Joseph Dorsey Jr., a black professional boxer.)

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy told Congress: "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth."

In 1964, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Griffin v. County School Board of Prince Edward County*, ordered the Virginia county to reopen its public schools, which officials had closed in an attempt to circumvent the Supreme Court's 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka* desegregation ruling.

In 1965, Muhammad Ali knocked out Sonny Liston in the first round of their world heavyweight title rematch in Lewiston, Maine. (Ali's victory generated controversy over whether he'd truly connected when he sent Liston crashing to the canvas with a right to the head, or whether it was a "phantom punch," implying that the fight had been fixed.)

In 1979, 273 people died when an American Airlines DC-10 crashed just after takeoff from Chicago's O'Hare Airport. Six-year-old Etan Patz (AY'-tahn payts) disappeared while on his way to a school bus stop in lower Manhattan. (In April 2017, former store clerk Pedro Hernandez, convicted of killing Etan, was sentenced to at least 25 years in prison.)

In 1986, an estimated 7 million Americans participated in "Hands Across America" to raise money for the nation's hungry and homeless.

In 1992, Jay Leno made his debut as host of NBC's "Tonight Show," succeeding Johnny Carson.

In 2008, NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander arrived on the Red Planet to begin searching for evidence of water; the spacecraft confirmed the presence of water ice at its landing site.

In 2017, surrounded by stone-faced allies, President Donald Trump rebuked fellow NATO members for failing to meet the military alliance's financial benchmarks. Republican Greg Gianforte won a special election for Montana's sole U.S. House seat a day after being charged with assaulting a reporter.

Ten years ago: North Korea claimed to have carried out a powerful underground nuclear test; President Barack Obama called on the world to "stand up to" Pyongyang and demand it honor a promise to abandon its nuclear ambitions. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, long a fierce critic of Beijing, toured China's financial capital of Shanghai but stayed clear of human rights issues.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama slipped into Afghanistan for a surprise visit, making clear the U.S. would likely maintain a limited role there even after its combat mission ended later in the year. Pope Francis arrived in Bethlehem where, in a symbolic nod to Palestinians' aspirations for their own state, he called the stalemate in peace talks "unacceptable" and stopped briefly to pray at the Israeli separation barrier surrounding the biblical West Bank town. Josh Beckett pitched the first no-hitter of his career and the first of the season, leading the Los Angeles Dodgers over the Philadelphia Phillies 6-0. Ryan Hunter-Reay became the first American to win the Indianapolis 500 since 2006, making a dramatic pass of Helio Castroneves on the final lap.

One year ago: Harvey Weinstein was charged in New York with rape and another sex felony in the first prosecution to result from the wave of allegations against him; the once-powerful movie producer turned himself in to face the charges and was released on \$1 million bail after a court appearance. A student opened fire in a classroom at a suburban Indianapolis middle school; the student was tackled and disarmed by a teacher, Jason Seaman, who was shot three times as he ended the shooting, which also seriously wounded a 13-year-old girl. President Donald Trump signed a trio of executive orders to overhaul the federal bureaucracy by making it easier to fire federal workers for poor performance and misconduct. By a two-to-one margin, voters in Ireland chose to repeal a constitutional ban on abortion.

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Today's Birthdays: Actress Ann Robinson is 90. Former White House news secretary Ron Nessen is 85. Country singer-songwriter Tom T. Hall is 83. Actor Sir Ian McKellen is 80. Country singer Jessi Colter is 76. Actress-singer Leslie Uggams is 76. Movie director and Muppeteer Frank Oz is 75. Actress Karen Valentine is 72. Actress Jacki Weaver is 72. Rock singer Klaus Meine (The Scorpions) is 71. Actress Patti D'Arbanville is 68. Playwright Eve Ensler is 66. Musician Cindy Cashdollar is 64. Actress Connie Sellecca is 64. Rock singer-musician Paul Weller is 61. Sen. Amy Klobuchar, D-Minn., is 59. Actor-comedian Mike Myers is 56. Actor Matt Borlenghi is 52. Actor Joseph Reitman is 51. Rock musician Glen Drover is 50. Actress Anne Heche (haych) is 50. Actresses Lindsay and Sidney Greenbush (TV: "Little House on the Prairie") are 49. Actor-comedian Jamie Kennedy is 49. Actress Octavia Spencer is 49. Actor Justin Henry is 48. Rapper Daz Dillinger is 46. Actress Molly Sims is 46. Actress Erinn Hayes is 43. Actor Cillian Murphy is 43. Actor Ethan Suplee (soo-PLLEE') is 43. Rock musician Todd Whitener is 41. Actor Corbin Allred is 40. Actress-singer Lauren Frost is 34. Actress Ebonee (cq) Noel is 29. Musician Guy Lawrence (Disclosure) is 28. Olympic gold medal gymnast Aly Raisman is 25.

Thought for Today: "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know." — Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist and poet (1803-1882).