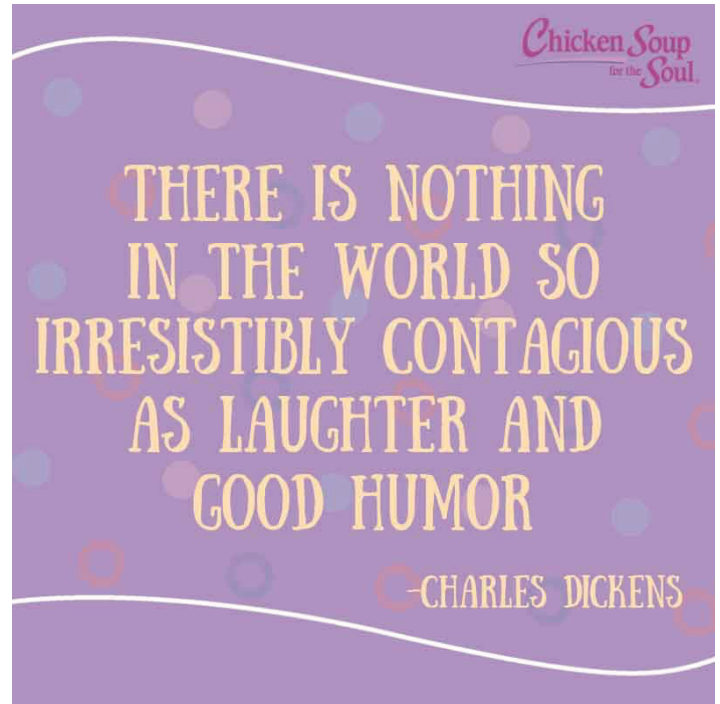


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Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

Swimming Pool Hours

Open Swim Daily: 1 p.m. to 4:50 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Fun Night is every Friday from 6:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Adult Water Aerobics: Monday through Thursday: 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 pm

Adult Lap Swim: Monday through Friday: 7 a.m. to 8 a.m.; Monday through Thursday: 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.; Friday-Sunday: 4:50 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Swimming Lessons: First Session: June 17-27

CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Tuesday, June 4

5:30 p.m.: U10 Pee Wees host Borge (R,W)

5:30 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees host Borge on Nelson Field, (DH) (B)

6:30 p.m.: U12 Midgets host Borge

Olive Grove Golf Course: Bridge at Noon, Ladies League at 6 p.m.

7:00 p.m.: City Council Meeting at Groton Community Center

Wednesday, June 5

6:00 p.m.: T-Ball scrimmage at Falk Field (both) Softball hosts Britton, U12 (DH), 6 p.m.

Olive Grove: Kid's Golf Lessons from 10 a.m. to 10:45 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.; Men's League at 6 p.m.

Death Notice: Roger Aberle

Roger Aberle, 66, of Groton passed away June 4, 2019 at Avera St. Lukes Hospital, Aberdeen. Services are pending with Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

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Payton Colestock and Ashley Flihs represented Groton at the State A golf tournament in Aberdeen.

Traditions Hold Strong at 42nd Annual Fort Sisseton Historical Festival

PIERRE, S.D. – The 42nd annual Fort Sisseton Historical Festival presented visitors with a weekend full of activities, vendors, food and memories. Holding to tradition, the public came out to experience the variety the event offers.

Just over 9,000 visitors took in the three-day event. Uncharacteristically warm, sunny weather was a welcomed break from some of the traditional weather patterns of the last 42 years, according to Fort Sisseton manager Ali Tonsfeldt.

“Folks have seen everything from cold, rain and even snow a couple of years,” said Tonsfeldt. “It was a true blessing to have three days of extraordinarily nice weather for our annual event. We never know what the weather will bring to us, so we have a lot of backup plans.”

Several guests took advantage of the beautiful weather to enjoy some of the new activities that happened this year. Some of the activities included a melodrama, a beginner’s muzzleloaders class, 100th anniversary scavenger hunt, the Smithsonian exhibit, a movie under the big tent, and the arts and craft booths.

The days also included some of the traditional events such as military and rendezvous encampments, pie-baking contests, stage performances, muzzleloader shooting competitions and musical performances.

Lake Lakota Closed to Swimming until Further Notice

PIERRE, S.D. - The swimming beach at Lake Lakota at Newton Hills State Park near Canton is currently closed following tests that showed unhealthy levels of bacteria in the water.

According to district park supervisor Jason Baumann, beach closures often occur after heavy rainfall, but they don’t usually last long.

“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 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 at 605.987.2263.

Game, Fish and Parks Extending Prospectus Deadline for the Solicitation of a Roy Lake Resort Concession Operator

PIERRE, S.D. – According to the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP), entrepreneurs interested in operating Roy Lake Resort located within Roy Lake State Park in northeastern South Dakota can submit their proposals until July 10, 2019.

The prospectus for the operation of Roy Lake Resort is available online and through the Department of Game, Fish and Parks. The prospectus details the terms and conditions under which interested operators may submit a proposal for consideration. It also includes a detailed business opportunity, the requirements necessary to submit a proposal, and a draft concession agreement for a term of ten years. Required services include cabin and lodge room rental, retail goods, courtesy docks, and boat fuel.

A copy of the prospectus is available by contacting the South Dakota Department of Game, Fish and Parks, Division of Parks and Recreation at 523 East Capitol, Pierre, SD 57501 or at 605.773.3391. Printable versions of the prospectus are also available for free download from the Game, Fish and Parks website at: <https://gfp.sd.gov/parks/detail/roy-lake-state-park/>.

Roy Lake State Park is located 10 miles southeast of Lake City or 25 miles north of Webster of Highway 10.

Stop Signs at 5th Ave. West discussed

After determining that only three were needed for a quorum, the Groton City Council met in session about 7:09 Tuesday evening at the community center. There is one vacancy on the council at this time so only three were required for a quorum. Shirley Wells David Blackmun and Karyn Babcock were present with Mayor Scott Hanlon presiding.

The stop signs at Fifth Avenue West and Washington Street were discussed. Police Chief Stacy Mayou said that once the street work is done, perhaps the signs could be reversed to face east and west instead of north and south. The item will be placed on the agenda for the next council meeting.

Mayou also reported on the D.A.R.E. Graduation. There were 46 students who graduated from the class. Mayou said that POET of Groton sponsors the whole program.

The council approved the second reading of the \$12.50 monthly increase in the water rate for the construction of a new water tower. The rate will remain in place for 30 years. Also approved was the adjustment in the waste water rate. The rate will be based on usage during November, December, January, February, March and April. During those months, the waste water rate may fluctuate slightly based on water usage. The rate will remain at the April rate through the summer months.

The amateur baseball team would like a BYOB at the home games on June 9, 16, July 14, 21 and 23 for beer and wind only. Councilman Karyn Babcock asked if something were to happen, would the city be liable since there was drinking allowed on city property. Since the city is not selling it, there would be no liability for the city. The council granted permission for BYOB.

The contract with Clark Engineering for the water system improvement was approved.

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Today in Weather History

June 5, 1925: A severe thunderstorm that probably produced multiple numbers of small tornadoes moved northwest from Presho, in Jones County. There were large gaps of about 15 miles at times between tornadoes. One of these tornadoes passed 10 miles north of Ree Heights and ended north of Miller. Half dozen barns were destroyed west and north of Ree Heights. The strongest of the tornadoes was estimated as having F2 strength. Also on this date, a tornado moved from the southern edge of Fargo, North Dakota and on into Moorhead Minnesota. There were no injuries reported from this storm.

June 5, 1996: Hail, between a golf ball and tennis ball size, broke many windshields and dented vehicles in Watertown. Some houses in Watertown had their windows broken out because of the large hail. Golf ball sized hail also covered most of the ground at the Watertown Airport.

June 5, 1999: Winds gusting to 74 mph knocked down several trees throughout Groton. One tree took out a major transmission line and ripped the electrical service line off of a house. Power was out for parts of Groton for several hours. The high winds shattered the windows at a store on Main Street and tore a standing board on a sign loose which damaged five new vehicles at a dealership in Groton. The high winds also destroyed a small service building and the surrounding fence at the main juncture of natural gas pipelines at Groton. Winds to 70 mph brought several trees and many large tree branches down in Henry. Winds gusting to 80 mph snapped off several trees, blew a garage down, and brought power lines down in Hazel. In Watertown winds gusted to over 70 mph, blowing a portion of a roof off a house and destroyed the attached garage on another house. Near Watertown, a pole barn was destroyed, a hay bale was blown into a basement window of a house, and part of their deck was torn away. Near Florence, winds up to 80 mph tipped over and damaged a small shed, destroyed another storage shed, and also completely demolished a three stall garage.

June 5, 2008: Very heavy rains of 3 to 7 inches caused extensive flooding throughout Dewey County. Many roads, bridges, dams, culverts, along with some buildings were damaged or destroyed by the flooding. One man, west of Promise, used a boat to get back and forth from his ranch. A federal disaster declaration was issued for Dewey County and the Cheyenne River Reservation.

1976: When water began leaking from Idaho's new Teton Dam, there seemed to be no cause for alarm. On this date, warnings were frantic that the dam was about to break. As workers tried to shore up the crumbling dam, it crumbled shortly after 11 AM, sending 180 billion gallons of water pouring through Teton Canyon. 11 people lost their lives, but the toll would have been much higher if the dam had failed at night and residents had been asleep.

1859 - Frost was reported from Iowa to New England. The temperature dipped to 25 degrees in New York State, and up to two inches of snow blanketed Ohio. The cold and snow damaged the wheat crop. (David Ludlum)

1908 - Helena MT was deluged with 3.67 inches of rain to establish their all-time 24 hour rainfall record. (4th-5th) (The Weather Channel)

1916 - A tornado struck the town of Warren AR killing 83 persons. There were 125 deaths that day in a tornado outbreak across Missouri and Arkansas. (David Ludlum)

1917 - Residents near Topeka KS reported disk-shaped hailstones six to ten inches in diameter, and two to three inches thick. The hailstorm was accompanied by a tornado. (The Weather Channel)






1987 - International Falls, MN, dipped to a record low reading of 34 degrees during the morning. Williston, ND, and Glasgow, MT, reported record warm afternoon highs of 94 degrees. Major flooding was reported along the Guadalupe River in South Texas, with the water level at Cuero reaching 18 feet above flood stage. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty cities in the south central and eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Asheville NC with a reading of 40 degrees. Fifteen cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. The high of 108 degrees at Glasgow MT was a record for June. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from the Lower Mississippi Valley to the Southern Atlantic Coast during the day and into the night. Four tornadoes were reported, and there were 87 reports of large hail and damaging winds. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Sunny	Mostly Clear	Slight Chance T-storms	Partly Cloudy	Sunny then Sunny and Breezy
High: 81 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 87 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 88 °F


National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD

Turning Cooler for the Weekend

Warm End to the Work Week

Today  80-85°
Scattered Storms Late
West River

Thursday  84 to 88°

Friday  85 to 90°
Breezy
Thunderstorms Possible
Late Afternoon

Updated: 6/5/2019 5:32 AM Central

Published on: 06/05/2019 at 6:36AM

Warm temperatures are expected for the next couple of days with highs in the 80s. The weekend will feature much cooler temperatures with highs on Sunday only in the upper 60s to the low 70s.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 92 °F at 4:11 PM

Low Temp: 64 °F at 5:18 AM

Wind: 22 mph at 4:52 PM

Day Rain: 0.00

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1933

Record Low: 37° in 1907

Average High: 74°F

Average Low: 51°F

Average Precip in June.: 0.46

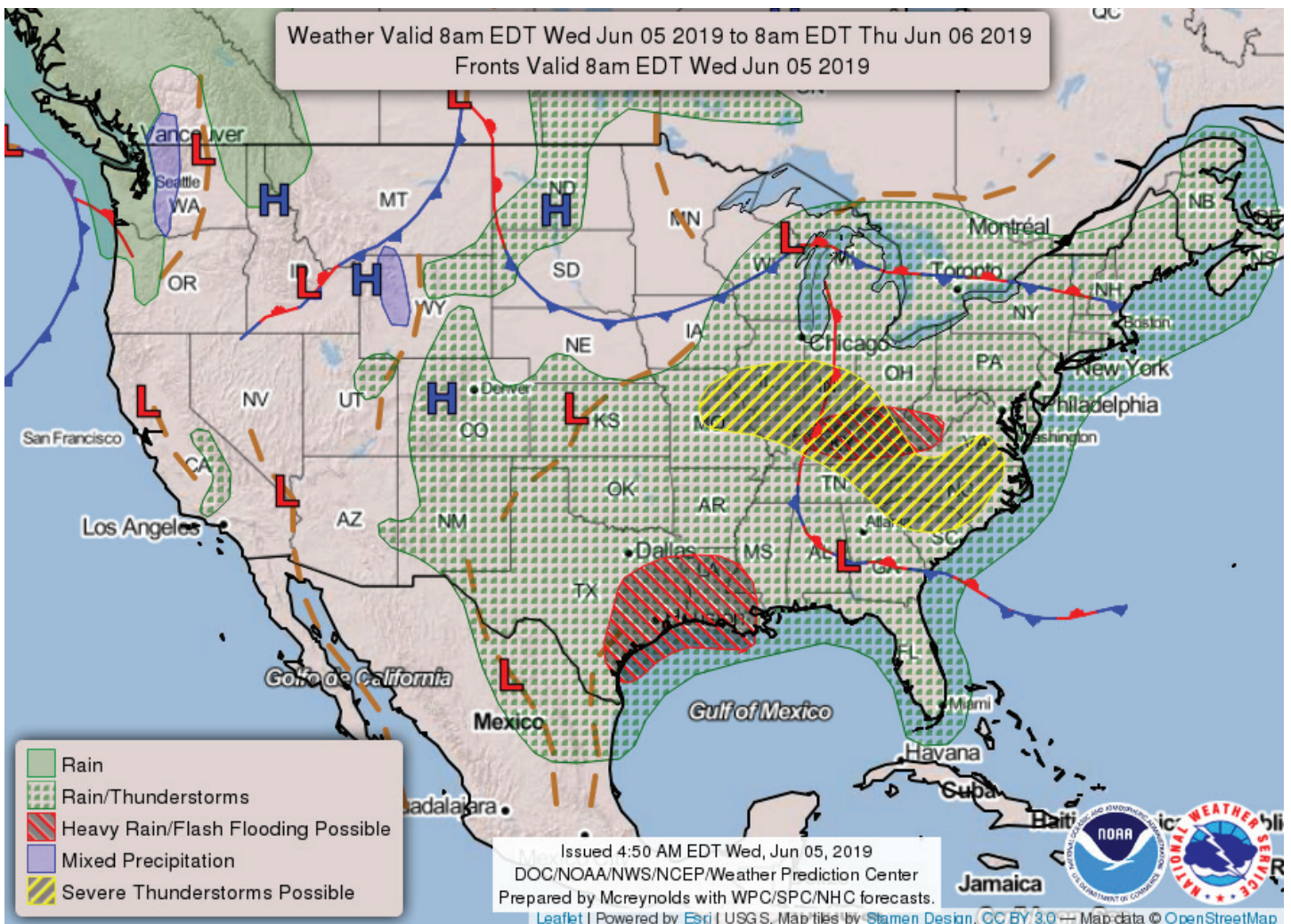
Precip to date in June.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 7.60

Precip Year to Date: 7.97

Sunset Tonight: 9:18 p.m.

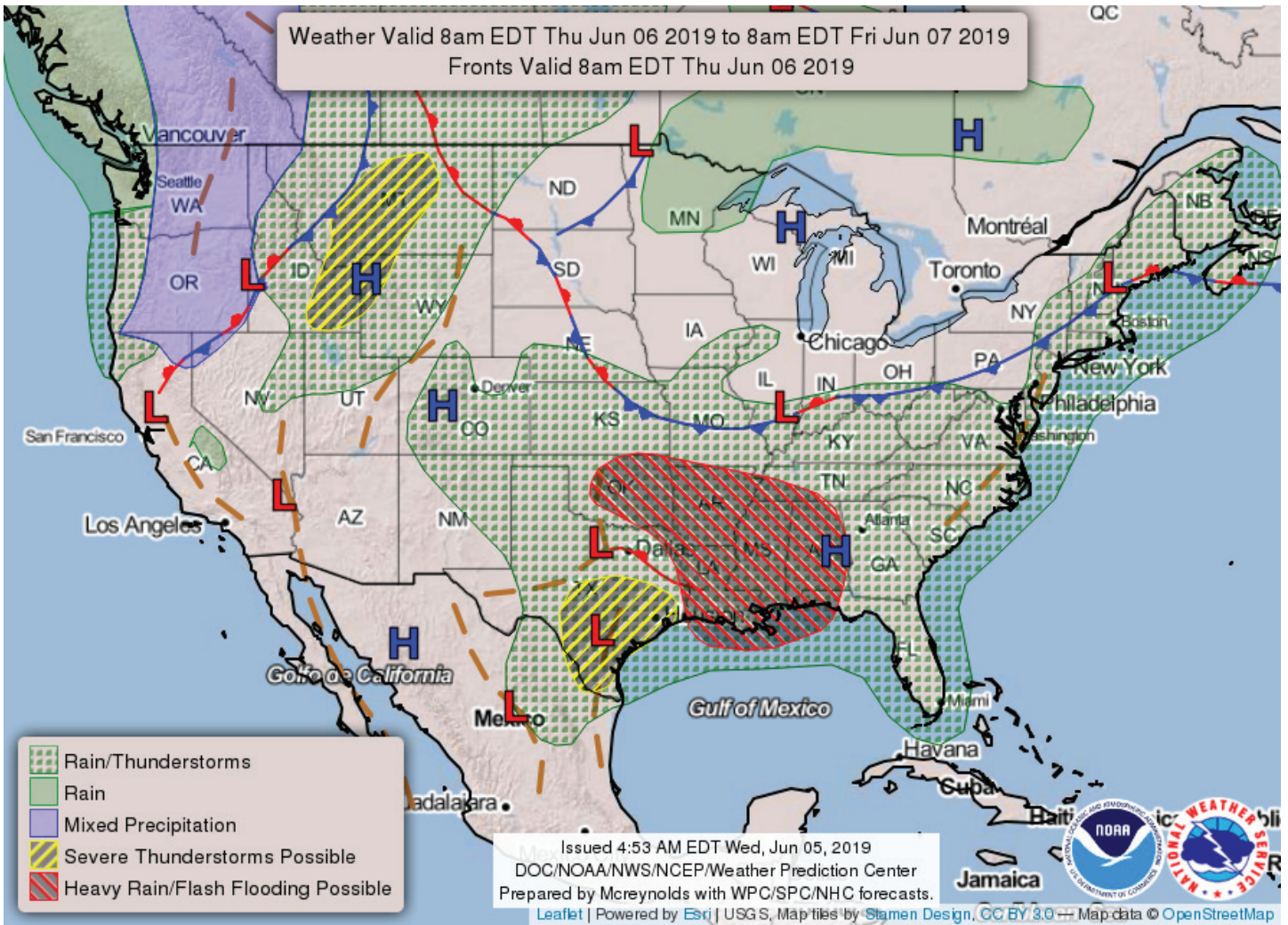
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:46 a.m.



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Tomorrow's Weather Map



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HELP NEEDED

James had unwrapped all of his birthday presents except one. It was a small truck that had a bubble of plastic over it that was sealed to a piece of cardboard. He tried desperately to separate the plastic from the cardboard but had no success. Initially, he thought he could separate the two by trying to slip his small fingernail between them. But his nail was too short. Then he tried to carefully squeeze the plastic to see if it would open up enough space for him to get his hand on the truck. That plan failed, too. Then he put the plastic bubble on the table and pushed on the cardboard thinking that was the solution. Frustrated, he looked at the little truck with teary eyes. It was a prize that became more valuable each time he tried to unwrap it.

Then he looked up at his Dad and asked, What can I do to get my truck out of the box?

Well, said his Dad, you could ask me for help.

Every plan that James had and tried failed. They all seemed sensible to him, but when he tried to make them work, nothing happened. Then he lifted his eyes and found someone who would help him to achieve his goal successfully.

In his heart, a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps is great wisdom, worth accepting, and constantly applying. We may design detailed, thorough plans to reach our goals, but when we attempt to make them work with our own strength, applying our own wisdom, we will become frustrated and discouraged when they fail. Its essential to include the Lord in the praying and pre-planning stage, and then work with Him until they are fulfilled.

Prayer: Lord, we all want to succeed in everything we do. May we recognize how critical it is to always include You in everything we do, from the beginning to the end. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 16:9 In his heart, a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.

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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 Tuesday:

Mega Millions

25-37-46-48-68, Mega Ball: 25, Megaplier: 2

(twenty-five, thirty-seven, forty-six, forty-eight, sixty-eight; Mega Ball: twenty-five; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$475 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Woman accused of leaving child in hot pickup in South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A 67-year-old Box Elder woman is accused of leaving a 2-year-old child in a hot vehicle for more than two hours in Rapid City.

Police reports say the woman left the child in a locked pickup with no windows open on Monday morning while she received dialysis treatment at a clinic.

The woman told police she is the child's legal guardian. The woman said she is homeless and had no one to watch the child.

A police officer responded after someone reporting seeing the child in the truck. The officer reported the child was "profusely sweating."

While someone distracted the child, the officer broke open the passenger window with his baton.

The Department of Social Services took the child into custody. The Rapid City Journal reports the woman faces an aggravated child abuse charge.

Sioux Falls police cracking down on red light runners

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls police are using new technology to help catch drivers who run red lights.

This spring, the city's traffic division in cooperation with the Sioux Falls Police Department installed what are being called "red light enforcement beacons" at intersections where red light violations regularly occur.

The blue LED bulbs are mounted to backs of traffic signals and turn on when a light turns red, thus allowing an officer to tell if a signal is red from different angles.

Sioux Falls Police Chief Matt Burns told the Argus Leader on Monday that it can be challenging for officers to safely enforce red light laws when they are not in traffic and unable to clearly tell if the light was red before a car entered the intersection.

"If you don't have the right angle ... you can't enforce it," Burns said. "It's using a little bit of technology to help us do that more efficiently and more safely."

The blue lights were installed in early April at seven intersections. So far, officers have issued eight red light citations at those intersections, the police chief said.

Officials will monitor those intersections to see how successful they are in helping officers enforce traffic laws and reduce the frequency of red lights being run, crashes and injuries, Sioux Falls Principal Traffic Engineer Heath Hoftiezer said.

Hoftiezer said other U.S. cities have had success with the red light enforcement beacons. Bismarck, North Dakota, has the beacons installed at 107 of the city's 133 intersections that have signals, according to the Bismarck Police Department.

"We're going to rely on the Police Department (to determine) if they're useful," Hoftiezer said.

To date, Sioux Falls has spent more than \$6,200 purchasing and installing the beacons.

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

New school program helps Sioux Falls youth express emotions

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Several Sioux Falls elementary schools have implemented a new mental health program that uses emoji and educational videos to help young students better understand how they're feeling.

Cleveland Elementary is among the elementary schools in the district that are using the Move This World program this school year, the Argus Leader reported. The program offers online curriculum and videos that teach students about bullying prevention, stress management and conflict resolution, among other things.

Mitchell Sheaffer, the school's principal, said the program also helps teachers identify which students might need extra support.

"All of our teachers are great at identifying and reading kids when they come in through the door in the morning, but this might kind of take them to that next level to see where they're at," he said.

Teacher Lindsey Olson said she uses a list of about 100 emoji for students to reference throughout the day to express their emotions. She also has posters that encourage students to practice cool-down mechanisms or positive coping skills.

Olson uses the program's videos to lead her students through movement exercises, including one that asks them to express their excitement level with different smiles and grins. Another video pushes students to celebrate their mistakes rather than criticize themselves.

Olson said the program has helped her students understand how to respond to the emotions they're experiencing.

"Now as a class, we're not only able to celebrate successes with each other, but push each other through some of those difficult times we have," Olson said.

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

Woman, 38, accused of sexually assaulting 13-year-old boy

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A Sioux Falls woman is accused of sexually assaulting a 13-year-old boy with whom she is acquainted.

Police say officers were on patrol near the Pioneer Memorial Saturday when they came across a parked car. Police spokesman Sam Clemens says officers found the 38-year-old woman and the boy in the back seat along with drugs, drug paraphernalia and sex toys.

The woman is facing charges of having sexual contact with a child, sexual exploitation of a minor, among other counts.

Sephora closes US stores for diversity training

By **ALEXANDRA OLSON AP Business Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Sephora is closing its U.S. stores for an hour Wednesday morning to host "inclusion workshops" for its 16,000 employees, just over a month after R&B star SZA said she had security called on her while shopping at a store in California.

The beauty retailer said the training had been in development months before SZA's experience, which undermined the company's efforts to cast itself as a champion of diversity. Sephora, which apologized to SZA last month, said the incident "does reinforce why belonging is now more important than ever."

In addition to the store closures, the company said it would also close its distribution centers and corporate office for the workshops to discuss what it means to belong in the context of "gender identity, race and ethnicity, age abilities and more." The stores will open to customers following the training.

Sephora provided few details about its workshops, which were closed to the public. The company said

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they would be followed by "future training moments" for employees but did not answer questions about what would be taught, who would conduct the workshops and or how they were designed.

The initiative echoed Starbucks' decision to close its stores last year for anti-bias training sessions following an uproar over the arrest of two black men for sitting at a Philadelphia Starbucks without ordering anything. That incident triggered protests, threats of boycotts, and eventually prompted the Philadelphia Police Department to announce a new policy on how to confront people accused of trespassing on private property.

While Starbucks also kept its training private, it released training materials showing that that employees were asked to break into small groups to talk about their experience with race. The program was developed with the NAACP Legal Defense and Education Fund.

Public reaction was more muted when SZA tweeted on April 30 that a Sephora employee had called security to make sure she wasn't stealing. SZA, who once appeared in an ad for the Fenty makeup line that Sephora carries, identified the employee only as "Sandy Sephora." Sephora responded with an apologetic tweet, saying it takes such complaints seriously.

Sephora billed the workshops as part of a diversity-focused marketing campaign titled "We Belong to Something Beautiful."

The company, which is owned by luxury group Moët Hennessy Louis Vuitton LVMH, has long made diversity part of its brand. Two years ago, the company helped launch Rihanna's Fenty line, known for its range of foundations that range from pale to deep brown shades.

Whether diversity training works is up for debate. Some businesses are rethinking their approach to anti-bias training in the wake of academic studies suggesting such programs have done little to improve workplace diversity, and in some cases, can backfire.

In 2016, a pair of sociologists, Alexandra Kalev of Tel Aviv University and Frank Dobbin of Harvard University, published a paper in the Harvard Business Review based on a study suggesting that the effects of diversity training rarely last and in some cases foster resentment, in part because many companies use "negative messaging" in their training.

The study, which analyzed 30 years of data from more than 800 U.S. companies, found that the number of black and Asian managers declined among firms that relied on mandatory diversity training. The study found better results among companies where training was voluntary.

The Harvard Review paper said nearly all Fortune 500 companies use diversity training of some sort. Various firms have revamped their approach in recent years, including making it part of the onboarding process for all new employees, in part so that it will not be perceived as a punitive measure for bad behavior.

Audra Jenkins, chief diversity and inclusion officer at the employment agency Randstad, said her company redesigned its own training program, which it now calls "conscious inclusion." She said every new employee is automatically registered for the training, which uses e-learning gamification to help people recognize bias and help them navigate them.

Jenkins said Sephora was right to send a swift and strong message to its employees and customers in an era when social media amplifies missteps, but she cautioned that it can only be considered a first step.

"You have to come out publicly or you will get the backlash instantly," Jenkins said. "But one day is not enough to deal with years of issues. It cannot just be a message that goes away quickly because the employees will figure that out quickly."

Trump reads from FDR's prayer to the US on D-Day

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

PORTSMOUTH, England (AP) — President Donald Trump read from a prayer delivered by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as he joined other world leaders and veterans Wednesday in marking the 75th anniversary of D-Day.

Roosevelt went on national radio on June 6, 1944, to address the US for the first time about the Normandy invasion. Trump, with images of an American flag and Roosevelt projected behind him, read to

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crowd: "Almighty God, our sons, pride of our nation, this day, have set upon a mighty endeavor, a struggle to preserve our republic, our religion and our civilization and to set free a suffering humanity."

Trump traveled to the southern coast of England Wednesday to pay respects to American service members and allies who helped rescue Europe from Nazi Germany. He sat between Queen Elizabeth II and the first lady during the program, which focused on a telling of events leading up to D-Day. Some 300 World War II veterans also attended the seaside ceremony.

A chilly breeze blew off the English Channel as Trump arrived for the event, the first of two he is attending to mark the 75th anniversary of D-Day when the Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen conducted an invasion that helped liberate Europe from Nazi Germany.

Trump joined in giving a standing ovation to a group of World War II vets who appeared on stage as the commemoration began. He sat in a VIP area in between the queen and his wife, first lady Melania Trump.

During a news conference Tuesday, Trump said he is grateful for the warm welcome he received from the British royal family and prime minister as "we remember the heroes who laid down their lives to rescue civilization itself." He played down protests of his visit, describing the thousands of people who demonstrated in London as a "small protest."

Trump has used his speeches to emphasize a longstanding bond between the U.S. and Britain. He noted that more than 1.5 million Americans were stationed in England in advance of the invasion.

"The bonds of friendship forged here and sealed in blood on those hallowed beaches will endure forever," Trump said at the news conference.

Also on Tuesday, Trump and first lady Melania Trump toured the Churchill War Rooms, the British government's underground command center during World War II. Then it was time for a fancy dinner that the Trumps hosted at the U.S. ambassador's residence for Prince Charles, his wife, Camilla, and other dignitaries.

While at the Churchill War Rooms, he worked to clean up a diplomatic spat, telling "Good Morning Britain" host Piers Morgan that he meant no royal insult when he used the term "nasty" in discussing the American-born Duchess of Sussex, Meghan Markle. The phrase generated a lot of media coverage and Trump has worked diligently to explain that he was speaking specifically on her comments about him, not about her.

Trump said: "She was nasty to me. And that's okay for her to be nasty, it's not good for me to be nasty to her and I wasn't."

Trump said the controversy did not come up when he spoke with Markle's husband, Prince Harry, who he says "couldn't have been nicer."

Trump was also asked about whether he would support banning silencers after a gunman in Virginia used two semi-automatic handguns, a silencer and extended ammunition magazines to slaughter 12 people at a municipal building.

Trump said it was something "I'm going to seriously look at."

Trump has strongly resisted stricter gun laws in response to mass shootings in the United States. However, the Trump administration has banned bump stocks, an attachment used by a gunman in a 2017 massacre in Las Vegas, Nevada, to make his weapons fire rapidly like machine guns. Trump said "the bad guys are not getting rid of their guns."

While overseas, the president's mind appeared to be on matters back at home, as he unleashed Twitter attacks on Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, former Vice President Joe Biden and even actress and singer Bette Midler. A couple of the broadsides came in about 1 a.m. local time.

Trump will also make his first presidential visit to Ireland on Wednesday, spending two nights at his golf club in Doonbeg, which sits above the Atlantic. After Dublin balked at holding a meeting in the city, a deal was struck for Trump to meet Irish Prime Minister Leo Varadkar at the VIP lounge at Shannon Airport, hardly the grand setting usually afforded a meeting of world leaders.

Associated Press writers Gregory Katz and Jill Lawless in London and Darlene Superville and Deb Riechmann in Washington contributed to this report.

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GOP senators line up against Trump's 5% Mexico tariff plan

By LISA MASCARO, LUIS ALONSO LUGO and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In a rare confrontation, Republican senators are declaring deep opposition to President Donald Trump's threatened tariffs on all goods coming into the U.S. from Mexico. But it's unclear they have the votes to stop him, and Trump said they'd be "foolish" to try.

All sides, including officials from Mexico meeting with Trump negotiators in Washington this week, remain hopeful that high-level talks will ease the president away from his threat. But with the tariffs set to start next Monday — and Trump declaring them "more likely" than not to take effect — fellow Republicans in Congress warned the White House they are ready to stand up to the president.

The public split and looming standoff over 5% tariffs on all goods imported from Mexico revealed a fundamental divergence in values between the president and his party. Trump uses tariffs as leverage to get what he wants, in this case to force Mexico to do more to halt illegal immigration. For Republicans, tariffs are counter to firmly rooted orthodoxy and viewed as nothing more than taxes they strenuously oppose.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said Tuesday with understatement, "There is not much support in my conference for tariffs, that's for sure."

At a lengthy closed-door lunch meeting at the Capitol, senators took turns warning Trump officials there could be trouble if the GOP-held Senate votes on disapproving the tariffs. Congressional rejection would be a stiff rebuke to Trump, even more forceful than an earlier effort to prevent him from shifting money to build his long-promised border wall with Mexico.

"Deep concern and resistance," is how Sen. Ted Cruz of Texas characterized the mood. "I will yield to nobody in passion and seriousness and commitment to securing the border, but there's no reason for Texas farmers and ranchers and manufacturers and small businesses to pay the price of massive new taxes."

Ron Johnson of Wisconsin, who was among the senators who spoke up, said, "I think the administration has to be concerned about another vote of disapproval. ... I'm not the only one saying it."

The outcome would be uncertain — Trump could try to veto a disapproval resolution as he did before. But many Republicans who voted against Trump earlier this year actually supported his ultimate goal of building the border wall. They were just uneasy with his executive reach to do it. Now, the president doesn't have anywhere near the same backing for the tariffs.

The GOP opposition is grounded in fears over what Trump's tariffs would do to the livelihoods of ordinary Americans. Senators worry they would spike U.S. consumers' costs, harm the economy and imperil a major pending U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade deal.

With jitters running high, Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said Tuesday he's prepared to respond to protect the economy, and stocks rallied on that signal that the Fed will likely cut interest rates later this year.

Mexico is concerned about the tariffs as well, but top officials seemed optimistic about a resolution.

"By what we have seen so far, we will be able to reach an agreement," Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said during a news conference at the Mexican Embassy in Washington. "That is why I think the imposition of tariffs can be avoided."

Trump, during a press conference in London, offered mixed messages.

"We're going to see if we can do something," he said on the second day of his state visit to Britain.

"But I think it's more likely that the tariffs go on," he said. He also said he doubted Republicans in Congress would muster the votes against him. "If they do, it's foolish."

The Mexican officials arrived in Washington over the weekend as Mexico launched a diplomatic counteroffensive and fresh negotiations. On Tuesday, Mexico's trade negotiator Jesus Seade was meeting with U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, and Ebrard will meet Wednesday with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo.

Republican senators are hopeful those talks will prevent the tariffs. But if negotiations should fail, the

lawmakers warn they may have no choice but to take action to stop Trump.

"Our hope is the tariffs will be avoided," McConnell said.

Lawmakers and business allies worry the tariffs will derail the long-promised United-States-Mexico-Canada trade deal—a rewrite of the North American Free Trade Agreement that Trump campaigned against and promised to replace.

Sen. Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa, chairman of the Finance Committee, told reporters Tuesday the tariffs make passage of USMCA "more difficult."

Questions remained, meanwhile, over how, exactly, the president would invoke executive authority to slap tariffs on the Mexican goods -- and what Congress could do to block him.

Trump has indicated he will rely on the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, a national emergency executive action he can take without congressional approval.

But lawmakers say they can quickly vote on a resolution to disapprove. That's what happened earlier this year when Congress, stunned by Trump's claim of executive power, tried to block him from taking funds for the border wall with Mexico. Congress voted to disapprove of Trump's actions, but the president vetoed the resolution.

This time, Republicans warn the numbers could be higher against the president — possibly a veto-proof majority in the Senate. But it's unclear the president could be blocked in the House where Republicans may be less likely to oppose him.

Democrats and some Republicans doubt the tariffs will ever take effect. Senate Democratic leader Chuck Schumer said Tuesday that "Trump has a habit of talking tough and then retreating."

Trump struck back against Schumer on Twitter, insisting the tariff threat was "no bluff."

Earlier Tuesday, Trump claimed "millions of people" are entering the U.S. through Mexico and criticized congressional Democrats for not passing new laws. He said, "Mexico should not allow millions of people to try and enter our country."

It is unclear what more Mexico can do and what would be enough to satisfy Trump on illegal immigration, a signature issue of his presidency.

The United States has not presented concrete benchmarks to assess whether the U.S. ally is sufficiently stemming the migrant flow from Central America. Mexico calls the potential tariffs hurtful to the economies of both countries and useless to slow the northbound flow of Central American migrants.

Associated Press writer Padmananda Rama contributed to this report.

Queen, world leaders honor veterans on D-Day anniversary

By **DANICA KIRKA, JOHN LEICESTER and JILL LAWLESS** Associated Press

PORTSMOUTH, England (AP) — World leaders including U.S. President Donald Trump gathered Wednesday on the south coast of England to mark the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings. But the stars of the show were the elderly veterans of that campaign who said they were surprised by all the attention: They were just doing their jobs.

The Royal British Legion has brought about 300 veterans, aged 91 to 101, to the ceremonies in Portsmouth, where many of the troops embarked for Normandy on June 5, 1944. After a flyover by the Royal Air Force and a salute from the Royal Navy, the veterans will return to the landing beaches overnight, just as they did 75 years ago.

One of those veterans was Harold Wilson who was startled when a young French family stopped to thank him for liberating their country when the old soldiers visited Dunkirk on Tuesday.

"I think it's amazing after all these years," Wilson said before the ceremony, proudly wearing the tartan-trimmed cap of his old unit, the Fife and Forfar Yeomanry. "It makes it clear to me how useful it was."

Queen Elizabeth II is set to join British Prime Minister Theresa May, other world leaders and the hundreds of veterans in Portsmouth on England's south coast to honor the Allied soldiers, sailors and airmen who risked and gave their lives in the invasion that helped liberate Europe from Nazi Germany.

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Britain has promised "unprecedented commemorations," involving testimony from veterans and military spectacle, including a flyby of 24 vintage and modern military aircraft.

Les Hammond, 94, who landed at Juno Beach with the Royal Electrical Mechanical Engineers, said he wasn't worried that the presence of Trump — on the final day of a three-day state visit to Britain — and the other world leaders might take some of the focus away from the veterans.

"I don't feel in any way like we're second class," he said.

"What happened to me is not important," he added. "I'm not a hero. I served with men who were. I'm very lucky. I'm a survivor."

The event, which kicks off two days of D-Day anniversary observances, is intended as a tribute to the troops who shaped history during the dangerous mission to reach beachheads and fight in German-occupied France.

D-Day saw more than 150,000 Allied troops land on the beaches of Normandy in northwest France on June 6, 1944, carried by 7,000 boats. The Battle of Normandy, codenamed Operation Overlord, was a turning point in the war, and helped bring about Nazi Germany's defeat in May 1945.

"The Normandy landings 75 years ago were a moment of historic international cooperation," May said. "And it is right that at the heart of today's commemorations are the veterans who fought to secure the liberty and the peace that we now enjoy."

Planning to attend are presidents, prime ministers and other representatives of the countries that fought alongside Britain in Normandy: the United States, Canada, Australia, Belgium, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Luxembourg, Denmark, France, Greece, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway and Poland.

The leader of the country that was the enemy in 1944, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, is also attending.

Russian President Vladimir Putin, who attended 70th anniversary commemorations in France five years ago, has not been invited. Russia was not involved in D-Day but was instrumental in defeating the Nazis on the Eastern Front.

In Portsmouth, dignitaries plan to read from historical documents linked to D-Day. In May's case, it's a letter written by Capt. Norman Skinner of the Royal Army Service Corps to his wife, Gladys, on June 3, 1944, a few days before the invasion. It was in his pocket when he landed in Normandy.

"I can imagine you in the garden having tea with Janey and Anne getting ready to put them to bed," wrote Skinner, who was killed the day after D-Day. "Although I would give anything to be back with you, I have not yet had any wish at all to back down from the job we have to do."

On Thursday the focus shifts to France, where commemorations will be held at simple military cemeteries near the Normandy beaches.

Events in France began early Wednesday morning with U.S. Army Rangers climbing the jagged cliffs of Normandy's Pointe du Hoc to honor the men who scaled them under fire 75 years ago.

Elderly veterans looked on as members of the 75th Ranger Regiment started mounting the limestone promontory at dawn, pulling themselves up on ropes one by one, seagulls swooping above.

They were recreating a journey taken by the U.S. Army's 2nd and 5th Ranger Battalions to destroy Nazi guns atop the cliffs. The operation helped prepare the way for Allied troops landing on beaches up a few kilometers (miles) up the coast to break Hitler's stranglehold on France.

Of the 235 men who took on the cliffs in 1944, only 90 were fit for battle two days later.

Elsewhere in Normandy parachutists were jumping from C-47 transporters in World War II colors and other aircraft, aiming for fields of wild flowers on the outskirts of Carentan, one of the early objectives for Allied troops.

Among the jumpers will be American D-Day veteran Tom Rice, 97. He jumped into Normandy with thousands of other parachutists in 1944, and recalled it as "the worst jump I ever had."

Like many other veterans, Rice said he remains troubled by the war.

"We did a lot of destruction, damage. And we chased the Germans out and coming back here is a matter of closure," he said. "You can close the issue now."

Follow all the AP's coverage of D-Day at <https://apnews.com/WorldWarII>

Leicester reported from Carentan, France and Lawless from London. Milos Krivokapic in Pointe du Hoc, France and Gregory Katz in London contributed.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. BRITAIN PLANS 'UNPRECEDENTED' D-DAY EVENT

World leaders and World War II veterans are gathering on the southern coast of England to honor the Allied soldiers who helped liberate Europe from Nazi Germany 75 years ago.

2. GOP SENATORS LINE UP AGAINST TRUMP'S MEXICO TARIFF PLAN

It's unclear if lawmakers have the votes to stop the 5% tariffs on all Mexican goods, and the U.S. president says they'd be "foolish" to try.

3. SUDANESE MILITARY SIGNALS WILLINGNESS FOR TALKS

After a deadly crackdown on pro-democracy protesters, the head of Sudan's ruling military council says it is ready to resume negotiations with the opposition.

4. SAUDI ARABIA FLIES IRANIAN TO HOSPITAL OFF 'HOSTILE' SHIP

This is the second-such relief mission Riyadh says it has offered in recent weeks amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

5. 'I'M AN AMERICAN'

After being adopted by an American family and living in the U.S. for more than 30 years, a man was deported to Brazil because of his criminal record, illuminating Trump's hard line immigration policy.

6. TOP CARDINAL ACCUSED OF PROTECTING DEPUTY AFTER SEX ABUSE

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, archbishop of Galveston-Houston, is being accused of mishandling a sexual misconduct case involving a Monsignor and a married woman, AP reports.

7. OAKLAND LEGALIZES MAGIC MUSHROOMS

Speakers testify that psychedelics helped them overcome depression, drug addiction and post-traumatic stress disorder.

8. SEC POISED TO ISSUE NEW RULES FOR BROKERS

Federal regulators are moving to require that brokers provide customers with detailed disclosures of their potential conflicts of interest when dispensing financial advice.

9. SEPHORA CLOSING FOR DIVERSITY TRAINING

The beauty retailer will host "inclusion workshops" for 16,000 employees after R&B star SZA says she had security called on her while shopping at a store in California.

10. KD STILL OUT FOR WARRIORS

Golden State will again take the floor for Game 3 against Toronto without two-time reigning NBA Finals MVP Kevin Durant.

Top US cardinal accused of mishandling aide's sex abuse case

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — When Cardinal Daniel DiNardo first met Laura Pontikes in his wood-paneled conference room in December 2016, the leader of the U.S. Catholic Church's response to its sex abuse scandal said all the right things.

He praised her for coming forward to report that his deputy in the Galveston-Houston archdiocese had manipulated her into a sexual relationship and declared her a "victim" of the priest, Pontikes said. Emails and other documents obtained by The Associated Press show that the relationship had gone on for years — even as the priest heard her confessions, counseled her husband on their marriage and pressed the

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couple for hundreds of thousands of dollars in donations.

She says the archdiocese assured her that the priest, Monsignor Frank Rossi, would never be a pastor or counsel women again.

Months after that meeting, though, she found out DiNardo had allowed Rossi to take a new job as pastor of a parish two hours away in east Texas. When her husband confronted DiNardo, he said, the cardinal warned that the archdiocese would respond aggressively to any legal challenge — and that the fallout would hurt their family and business.

On Tuesday, three years after the meeting with DiNardo and after written inquiries by the AP last week, the church temporarily removed Rossi, announcing in a statement from his new bishop that he was being placed on administrative leave.

Laura Pontikes, a 55-year-old construction executive in Texas, had been at a low point in her life when she sought spiritual counseling from Rossi, the longtime No. 2 official in the Galveston-Houston archdiocese DiNardo heads. Instead, she said, Rossi preyed on her emotional vulnerability to draw her into a physical relationship that he called blessed by God.

"He took a woman that went into a church truly looking for God, and he took me for himself," she told the AP.

Rossi's sexual relationship with Pontikes is now the subject of a previously undisclosed criminal investigation in Houston. Yet it is DiNardo's handling of the case that poses far-reaching questions for the church in the #MeToo era, when powerful men and institutions are being called to account over sex abuse.

As the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, DiNardo will lead a meeting next week in Baltimore to address the church's credibility crisis over its failure to fully reckon with sexual abuse, 17 years after it committed to cleaning house. DiNardo is expected to present his brother bishops with new proposals to hold one another accountable for sexual misconduct or negligence in handling abuse cases.

But Pontikes' case lays bare that even leaders in the Catholic hierarchy who have vowed to do right by victims continue to fail them. Pontikes said DiNardo has been negligent by keeping in ministry a priest who "seduced, betrayed and ultimately sexually victimized" her, Pontikes' therapist told Texas prosecutors.

The June 11-14 meeting in Baltimore is part of the church's effort to confront sexual abuse worldwide. In a little more than a year, Pope Francis admitted he made "grave errors" in Chile's worst case of cover-up, an Australian cardinal was convicted of abuse and a French cardinal was convicted of failing to report a pedophile.

In the U.S., a Pennsylvania grand jury blasted church leaders for following "a playbook for concealing the truth," and attorneys general in at least 15 states are investigating sex abuse by Catholic clergy and its cover-up.

The Galveston-Houston archdiocese acknowledged an inappropriate physical relationship between Rossi and Pontikes, but asserted that it was consensual and didn't include sexual intercourse. In a statement to The Associated Press, it said Rossi was immediately placed on leave and went for counseling after Pontikes reported him.

Rossi returned to active ministry, without restrictions, based on recommendations from an out-of-state "renewal" program for clergy he completed, the statement said.

After the AP story ran, the archdiocese said a number of comments the Pontikeses attributed to DiNardo were "an absolute fabrication" but didn't say which ones. It said that DiNardo had acted "swiftly and justly" in the case, and that Laura Pontikes had during an Aug. 1, 2017 meeting demanded \$10 million.

Pontikes acknowledged she suggested an unspecified amount of money in a spontaneous outburst after Rossi had begun his new assignment and church officials told her to come up with something less than \$10 million. But she had been clear from the start that she wasn't interested in a financial payoff — a position articulated in April 2016 emails to the archdiocese and reiterated as recently as this April in a letter to the Vatican. The Pontikeses and their lawyer told AP the details of mediation, including any financial negotiations, were confidential.

Pontikes filed a police report in August. Under Texas criminal law, a member of the clergy can be charged

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with sexual assault of an adult if the priest exploited an emotional dependency in a spiritual relationship.

Rossi's attorney, Dan Cogdell, said Rossi is cooperating with the investigation and has met with police. He declined further comment.

Pontikes' allegations against DiNardo add to questions about how he has dealt with abuse in the past. SNAP, a national group of survivors of clergy abuse, has called for him to resign as head of the bishops conference because he allowed predator priests to remain in ministry in Houston, as well as in his previous diocese in Sioux City, Iowa.

And when law enforcement raided DiNardo's offices in November as part of an investigation into an alleged abuser, they found files locked away in a bank vault that the archdiocese had failed to turn over, according to police documents released last month.

Rossi previously helped handle Galveston-Houston's abuse cases for more than two decades. But in a church bulletin in February, he minimized the number of abusers nationwide, accused the media of hyping the scandal and insisted that while even one case of abuse was too many, the vast majority of accused were "good men" who simply made a "terrible single decision."

Pontikes provided the AP with seven years of her email correspondence with Rossi, therapists, priests and friends, along with financial data and communications with the archdiocese. She told the Vatican in April that Rossi heard her confessions after their relationship became physical — a potentially serious crime under church law that DiNardo never asked her about. The Vatican said her complaint was under review.

The church, which has been grappling for decades with the sexual abuse of children, is now being forced to reckon with the idea that adults too can be sexually exploited by clergy. Last summer, amid revelations that ex-Cardinal Theodore McCarrick had preyed on adult seminarians, DiNardo used his pulpit to apologize for the leadership's failures.

"This is especially true for adults being sexually harassed by those in positions of power," DiNardo said Aug. 27. "We will do better."

That statement gave Pontikes hope, but nothing changed, she said. She said she came forward to protect other women and expose DiNardo's handling of her case, which has left her so distraught that she can barely sleep or work.

"They're not going to play with my life like this," said Pontikes. "They just can't get away with it...Somebody had better stand up and tell the damned truth."

Pontikes first met Rossi in the confessional at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in December 2007. At the time, Pontikes sought to fill the void of an emotionally distant husband and mounting pressures at the family business by throwing herself into her faith, giving sizeable weekly donations at Mass.

Rossi's easy manner and laughter broke the ice.

Soon the coiffed and charismatic preacher was calling her "Laura dear" and attending family dinners. In 2008, while she showed him a religious painting in their downstairs wine cellar, Rossi slipped his hand under her jacket and rested it on her bare waist, she said.

She froze, embarrassed, but didn't know what to do, she said. So she did nothing.

During a 2009 dinner, Rossi asked the couple to give to an ambitious capital campaign that included rebuilding the St. Michael rectory where the parish priests lived. Their firm built the new rectory for \$900,000, more than half of which the couple donated themselves. In addition, Laura Pontikes donated nearly \$250,000 in religious art and furnishings, including \$20,000 for an 18th-century scroll depicting the Virgin Mary as the Good Shepherdess, according to a list of vendors provided to AP.

In all, the Pontikeses said they gave the church about \$2 million over nine years, and Rossi asked for more, including \$750,000 for a new school chapel they couldn't afford. The archdiocese countered that their construction firm benefited from contracts worth \$24 million over that time.

Pontikes began seeing Rossi for regular spiritual direction in 2010, at the same time her husband was trying to get an annulment for his first marriage. The couple wanted their civil marriage of two decades to be recognized by the church.

Rossi married the Pontikeses in a religious ceremony at St. Michael's in August 2012. Less than four

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months later, during a session of spiritual counseling in his office, Pontikes said, Rossi started their physical relationship with an intimate, sexual embrace. The next day, Rossi wrote her an email with the subject line "blessings."

"It was wonderful to visit with you yesterday and continue to unfold the love of God in your life," he wrote.

She felt blessed and special to him, but also conflicted, knowing a boundary had been crossed. That same confusion tormented her during the many times he induced her to perform sexual acts in his office during spiritual direction, she said.

Pontikes phoned and emailed Rossi several times a day with spiritual musings and work and family problems, and he responded with the attention she sought. In time, she was increasingly questioning her feelings for him.

"I have blocked my faith mightily over my fear of my love for you," she wrote him Jan. 5, 2013.

Rossi assured her that such feelings are common in spiritual direction, that the Lord had brought them together and that "holy touches" were not only sanctioned but encouraged by St. Paul the Apostle.

Houston architect Ken Newberry was dismayed at seeing his longtime friend and client fall under Rossi's spell. "She was like someone that was hypnotized or mesmerized," Newberry said.

Newberry recognized a process of grooming that he went through when he was abused by a Catholic priest at the age of 15. He eventually told Pontikes he couldn't bear to hear any more, because it was triggering his own trauma.

"Someone is talking to you about God," he says, "and they're pulling you in and telling you that this is right...It is very, very confusing and overwhelming."

Throughout the relationship, Pontikes said, Rossi was her confessor. On Dec. 20, 2012, about two weeks after their first sexual embrace in Rossi's office, he agreed to hear her confession: "I would be most happy to celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation with you if you would like."

A few months later, Pontikes was rushing to catch a flight to visit a friend whose husband had died. Guilt-ridden about her growing intimacy with Rossi, she wanted to ease her conscience with confession before leaving town.

He was not happy with her request and said he didn't have time. But she chased him down, followed him out the side chapel and made him hear her, according to Pontikes. She confessed that she had been inappropriate with her priest.

He absolved her of their sin, she said, and told her, "Go forth and sin no more."

The so-called "absolution of an accomplice" crime, one of the most serious in canon law, must be reported to the Vatican and can carry the penalty of excommunication. It occurs when a priest absolves someone with whom he has engaged in a sexual sin, including merely a lustful touch.

The archdiocese claims Rossi never heard Pontikes' confession during or after their physical relationship, but the emails Pontikes turned over to church officials include several references to confession.

Edward Peters, a leading U.S. canon lawyer and consultant at the Vatican high court, says that "as a matter of good governance" the bishop in question — DiNardo — should have asked Pontikes about possible confession-related crimes. Pontikes said neither DiNardo nor his subordinates ever did.

The sexual relationship grew during a March 2013 trip to Taormina, Sicily, one of several family vacations Rossi joined at the Pontikeses' invitation and expense. The family also had begun building a guest cottage for him at their weekend retreat on Trinity Bay.

George Pontikes, who knew nothing of the sexual encounters with his wife, reached out to Rossi for advice after the trip. She was growing more distant, irritable and distracted, he said, and the couple was on the verge of separation.

"I don't know whether I'm asking for help or sympathy," he wrote on April 3, 2013. "I know Laura listens to you."

Rossi responded that she was going through strong mood swings. "My gut feeling is that she is on the verge of a breakdown due to the stress," he wrote.

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George Pontikes reached out again two weeks later.

"Frank: Laura is close to losing it," he wrote Rossi. "I want to help. She does not want it. I think you should give it a try. She trusts you."

Four days later, on a Friday night after George had gone to bed, the priest and parishioner consummated the relationship in the pool house bathroom of her Houston home, Laura Pontikes said. It was the first of up to half a dozen such sexual encounters over more than a year, according to Pontikes.

"I wish I could have walked away from it, but I just didn't and I just couldn't," she said.

The archdiocese denied key portions of Pontikes' claim, saying the relationship included encounters of a sexual nature but not intercourse. It also said Rossi ended the physical relationship, but Pontikes continued sending him "hundreds of unsolicited messages primarily by email and phone."

Although Pontikes acknowledged the continued correspondence, she said she was desperate to hold onto the spiritual relationship because she believed it an essential part of her faith. Rossi assured her that their relationship was "a blessing from God."

"I am praying fervently and digging deeper and deeper into my own soul," he wrote her in 2015, after the physical relationship had ended. "I ache at my very core."

The turmoil tore Pontikes up so much that she sought therapy. Gradually, painfully, she came to believe that Rossi had preyed upon her. Her suspicions were confirmed when she watched him interact with other women, and she remembered seeing him touch one on the bare shoulder at her wedding.

Then two friends told her about his inappropriate attentiveness to yet another woman on a Holy Land pilgrimage. It was the tipping point. She confided in her friends, and they urged her to turn him in.

Pontikes reported Rossi to the archdiocese April 7, 2016. She met with Auxiliary Bishop George Sheltz and Sister Gina Iadanza. They didn't ask questions, Pontikes recalled, but Iadanza wrote down everything she said, and she left them with a stack of email correspondence.

That night, as she sat in the prayer chair in her living room, she finally told her husband.

"What have you done?" George Pontikes asked his wife in shock.

Over the next few days, Laura checked herself into a residential clinic to cope with the trauma. George spoke with her therapists, read the emails between Rossi and his wife and began to realize that the priest had manipulated and betrayed them both. He was livid.

Less than a month after reporting Rossi, Laura Pontikes said, she got a phone call from Iadanza. She and her husband listened together.

"She said they had completed their investigation and that a committee had determined that he must be turned over to the authorities," Pontikes said. "I panicked. I did not want to ruin anyone's life, even as mine appeared to be in shambles."

The archdiocese maintained that it was not legally obliged to report Rossi to police at the time, and that Pontikes "vehemently resisted" their suggestion that she do so. However, Joe Bailey, a onetime assistant district attorney in Harris County who is now advising the Pontikeses, said Rossi's wrongdoing is clear and should have been reported immediately. The archdiocese did report the case last year, and said it is cooperating with the investigation.

For Pontikes, this case is as much about DiNardo as it is about Rossi.

DiNardo's archdiocese is known for its secrecy among victim advocates. In the November raid on the archdiocese, prosecutors backed by 60 members of the Texas Rangers and federal agents seized records related to the Rev. Manuel La Rosa-Lopez, who has been charged with sexually abusing minors. Two of LaRosa-Lopez's alleged victims have accused DiNardo of downplaying their claims and keeping him in ministry, around children, until his arrest in September.

DiNardo also allowed the Rev. John Keller to celebrate Mass on the same day his name appeared on the archdiocese's list of accused priests, even though allegations that he fondled a 16-year-old boy had been public since 2003.

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In 2002, during his tenure as bishop of Sioux City, Iowa, DiNardo apologized for allowing the Rev. George McFadden to continue working as a priest after he molested at least 25 children.

Rossi, for his part, helped handle Galveston-Houston's abuse cases as vice-chancellor, chancellor and vicar general of the archdiocese. Pontikes recalls he boasted that his bosses couldn't take action against him since "I know where all the bones are buried."

In 1998, Rossi signed a form letter stating that the Rev. Jesse Linam was a validly ordained priest who had been granted "complete retirement for medical reasons," according to documents obtained by AP. The letter didn't mention that Linam had been removed from ministry five years before after admitting to sex abuse. In a 2003 letter with a \$2,000 loan to Linam for legal fees, Rossi wrote, "Jesse, I realize that this has been a very difficult time for you. It has been for Bishop (Joseph) Fiorenza and myself as well."

In his new posting in east Texas, Rossi continues to express sympathy for accused priests.

"These men need our prayers, as they too are suffering due to the harm they know they have caused," he wrote in the Feb. 2-3 parish bulletin.

A month after Pontikes reported him, Rossi sent an email to the staff of St. Michael's with a letter to parishioners announcing his resignation as pastor, effective May 7, 2016.

"I am being faced with some very difficult personal issues affecting my priesthood which require my full and single focused attention;" Rossi wrote. He vowed to return after "a period of renewal."

Pontikes said Iadanza later told her that Rossi would never be a pastor again, and that the archdiocese was looking for a position for him as a port chaplain or in prison ministry — where he wouldn't have access to women. The archdiocese said Pontikes' account of Iadanza's comments is "not accurate," but did not elaborate.

The Pontikeses found out about Rossi's return to Houston when they learned a parishioner had invited them all to the same Christmas party. George Pontikes pressed DiNardo in a subsequent meeting to hold Rossi accountable, but said he came away feeling threatened.

"He told me that this could be headed for some type of civil or criminal matter and that we should resolve this problem because 'Laura can't handle it, you can't handle it and your business can't handle it,'" George Pontikes recalled DiNardo warning him.

"I told him, 'Neither can you.' He said, 'You're right. I'll put money, art and everything on the table. Let's have a mediation.'"

Scott Allen, an attorney representing Pontikes, also thought the church was bullying the couple. After a May 31, 2017 meeting, he wrote that archdiocesan lawyer Robert Schick had tried to warn them off litigation by mentioning the "public domain exposure to Laura, George their business" as well as the potential for "St. Michael's community fallout."

"Despite attempt at 'cordiality,' I found the tone and content purposefully vaguely & opaquely threatening and somewhat insulting," Allen wrote.

The archdiocese didn't respond to questions about the exchanges.

Rossi's "retirement" from the archdiocese was announced that spring, along with his new appointment as pastor of Our Lady of the Pines in Woodville, Texas, a humble parish that seats about 100 people. Laura Pontikes said Iadanza assured her Rossi would be under a strict monitoring protocol. In the meantime, DiNardo defended his actions to George.

"They started telling me things like, 'His life is ruined, George. We've already punished him,'" George Pontikes said. "'We've sent him out to east Texas... He will never ever be looking at an upward mobility anymore.'"

By October 2017, Dr. Ken Buckle, Laura Pontikes' Catholic therapist, had outlined mediation proposals. They included a formal apology for actions by Rossi and by the archdiocese; ongoing monitoring of Rossi along with five years of therapy, with annual reports to the couple; and "more compassionate" policies in cases of inappropriate conduct.

But Pontikes said that during two years of mediation, the church focused exclusively on a financial

settlement.

What happened between Pontikes and Rossi is under investigation by the Houston police department, and Harris County prosecutors have subpoenaed her therapists in the name of a grand jury.

In an affidavit seen by the AP, Buckle wrote that Pontikes was in crisis as a result of "sexual and religious abuse" and that the decision to relocate Rossi to another parish was "highly distressing" to her. Texas law states that sex is without consent if a clergyman exploits a person's emotional dependency on him.

"It's recognized that the person really can't give consent," said Tahira Khan Merritt, a Dallas lawyer who represents abuse victims. "And the church knows that."

The archdiocese said it informed Rossi's new bishop of his violation of his vow of chastity and time in a renewal program.

Beaumont Bishop Curtis Guillory didn't respond to questions about what other information or monitoring recommendations DiNardo had provided. He told AP that he accepted Rossi into his diocese as a retired Houston priest "in good standing," and that he has received no allegations of misconduct in his parish. In a press release Tuesday put on the Beaumont website, he announced Rossi had been placed on temporary administrative leave pending the police investigation.

Until the suspension, neither the criminal investigation nor the years-long mediation with the archdiocese appeared to have crimped Rossi's ministry. As usual, he led a 13-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Jordan in early November. The pews at his new parish were full on Palm Sunday, when Rossi celebrated Mass and then greeted visitors in near-perfect Spanish.

"At times, we betray the Lord, through our evil acts of sin," Rossi said in his homily. "And then we regret our sins."

Rossi's parish bulletins have included posts on spousal love and sexuality, including how husbands and wives should communicate. Laura Pontikes read them in disgust, seeing them as an attempt by Rossi to find women in troubled marriages who might seek counseling.

She enclosed the bulletins in her April letter to the Vatican, including one from November that read: "Holding hands, kissing, embracing and sexual intimacy are all ways of communicating marital love... For a person whose primary love language is touch, physical contact with their spouse is essential."

AP writer Nomaan Merchant contributed to this report.

US tariffs looming, many in Mexico back president's approach

By CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN and PETER ORSI Associated Press

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Facing possible crippling tariffs U.S. President Donald Trump is threatening to impose on the United States' biggest trading partner, Mexican President Andrés Manuel López Obrador has responded with calm and calls for continued friendship, and avoided strong language that could cause the dispute to deteriorate.

He wants dialogue, not a Twitter spat, and much less a trade war with the country that buys 80 percent of Mexican exports. Mexicans have seen enough Trump tweets not to think the sky is falling even at this latest threat, and while some might wish their president would take a couple of swings at a figurative Trump pinata, most seemed to think López Obrador was taking the right approach in trying to head off the tariffs.

"We do not want conflict, a war. Let us avoid that," said Gilberto Lozoya, a 26-year-old in the northern city of Nuevo Laredo, across the border from Laredo, Texas, who works for a factory that exports boilers for U.S. brands like Whirlpool.

The business stands to take a hit if the tariffs, starting at 5% and rising as high as 25%, take effect on a Monday deadline Trump has given Mexico for slowing irregular migration through its territory. And while Lozoya feels his country could probably do more on that issue, he believes things are in good hands with López Obrador.

"The way the president has responded is very good," Lozoya said. "He is a very sensible person."

The Mexican government, which has struggled to cope with large numbers of mostly Central American

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migrants, has not publicly proposed any new policies, instead seeming to opt for a strategy of convincing Washington that it is already doing its part on migration.

Under López Obrador, who took office Dec. 1, Mexico has increased deportations and highway checkpoints in the south while raiding migrants traveling in a large caravan and atop freight trains. It has also insisted that human rights are at the core of its policy, and said it won't criminalize migration.

Where previous President Enrique Peña Nieto was roundly criticized for not taking a more forceful line in responding to then-candidate and later President Trump, López Obrador does not seem to have suffered significant backlash over his handling of the latest tiff between the North American neighbors.

A poll tracking his day-to-day popularity saw it rise about four points from Trump's announcement May 27 to nearly two-thirds approval as of Tuesday. And on Sunday, voters handed López Obrador's Morena party the governorships in two states with significant trade ties to the United States — Puebla, home to a Volkswagen plant, and Baja California, which borders California and is dotted with manufacturing and assembly plants known as "maquiladoras."

Index, a national business chamber representing export manufacturers, said in a recent statement that it fully supports the Cabinet-level Mexican delegation that travelled to Washington to negotiate, while urging officials to take action on immigration issues that Trump has complained about. It also called on negotiators to separate trade from immigration.

Isidro Morales, a political scientist at the Monterrey Institute of Technology and Higher Education, said it was astonishing that trade threats would be used as leverage to force Mexico on the unrelated issue of migration. He complained that Trump "is creating an environment of uncertainty."

Morales called on the president himself to visit the U.S. to make his case if necessary to defend a new trade deal that would replace the North American Free Trade Agreement if ratified by U.S., Mexican and Canadian lawmakers.

"He has to be very, very tough, or rather very 'firm' is the word, in saying Mexico cannot tolerate commercial blackmail being linked to immigration policy," Morales said, adding that he sees a good chance the tariffs won't happen because the outcry from U.S. business interests would be too great.

That's not to say the Mexican president doesn't have his critics. Plenty of Mexicans feel they are a political punching bag as Trump repeatedly hits the country on Twitter, calling it "an 'abuser' of the United States, taking but never giving," and saying Mexicans can stop illegal immigration easily "if they want."

Alejandro Sánchez, who runs a newsstand on Mexico City's stately Reforma Avenue, considers López Obrador's response to have been tepid and believes that if Trump won't listen to reason, Mexico's president should be more forceful.

"Maybe I don't know much about politics, but we are letting ourselves be jerked around a lot by the U.S. president. ... If he does not want anything to do with us anymore, you have to look elsewhere. There are markets that can be better for us," Sánchez said.

There is also plenty of advice being directed López Obrador's way on social media.

After Trump tweeted Monday that "Mexico should immediately stop the flow of people and drugs through their country and to our Southern Border" — upping the ante to include a demand on narco-trafficking — former Mexican Ambassador to the United States Arturo Sarukhan opined that should merit a symmetrical response from Mexico. "The US should immediately stop the flow of guns and bulk cash across its Southern border," he wrote, a reference to longstanding Mexican complaints that those weapons and laundered money fuel the country's rising violence and keep drug cartels flush.

Yolanda Arellano, an accountant in the capital, expressed concern that the United States can hurt Mexico as a powerful country that often "ends up doing what it wants." She said she believes Trump is in the wrong, even as she can also see things from his perspective.

"If one puts oneself in his shoes, I wouldn't like it if someone invaded my home," Arellano said. "Jeez, it is complicated for everyone."

As for López Obrador's handling of the dispute, she said: "It is by talking that people reach understanding."

López Obrador said Tuesday that early conversations with the Americans were going well and predicted

an agreement would be reached before Monday's deadline.

"I am very grateful for the solidarity of Mexicans," the president said. "There has been lots of support from all sectors."

Associated Press writer María Verza contributed to this report.

This corrects to "would take" in 2nd paragraph.

SEC moving to require brokers to reveal conflicts for advice

By MARCY GORDON AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal regulators are moving to require that brokers provide their customers with detailed disclosures of their potential conflicts of interest when dispensing advice for retirement planning and other investments.

But critics say the Securities and Exchange Commission's new measure, supported by the financial industry, doesn't go far enough to protect retail investors against abuses. They say a stricter standard advanced under the Obama administration should apply to brokers.

The stricter fiduciary duty rule required all financial professionals — not just registered investment advisers — to act as trustees obligated to put their clients' interests before their own. It was targeted for watering-down by President Donald Trump in early 2017 and defeated in the courts by the industry.

Americans increasingly seek financial advice to help them navigate an array of options for retirement, college savings and more.

Many financial pros provide investment advice, but not all of them are registered advisers who are legally required to put clients' interests above their own or to disclose potential conflicts of interest that could color their advice. Critics of the current system say investors lose billions of dollars a year because of advice from brokers with conflicts.

The change to be adopted by the SEC on Wednesday could affect how hundreds of billions of dollars in Americans' retirement and other investments are handled by brokers. Brokers sell stocks, bonds, mutual funds, annuities and other investments, which they may recommend to clients. They sometimes receive commissions for selling specific financial products.

As proposed over a year ago, the SEC "best interest" regulation would require brokers to tell clients how much they collect from recommending products. They would have to provide clients with a new short-form disclosure document with key facts about the broker-client relationship, including potential conflicts of interest.

SEC Chairman Jay Clayton has said the regulation is "a significant step" toward increasing investor protection while also "preserving investors' access to a range of products and services at a reasonable cost."

Brokers wouldn't be allowed to use the term "adviser" as part of their name or title in dealings with retail investors. They also would have to give clients details of their registration status with the SEC.

Critics point out that "best interest" isn't specifically defined.

"The regulations the agency is set to approve are a betrayal of the 'Mr. and Ms. 401(k)' investors (Clayton) pledged to protect when he undertook this rulemaking," the Consumer Federation of America and Americans for Financial Reform said in a joint statement. "The drain on people's hard-earned savings will continue."

Details of the final regulation, which follows an extensive public comment period for the proposal, weren't immediately known but it was expected to fall close to the proposed plan.

"What they've proposed is a big step forward over what we've got now," said James Angel, a professor at Georgetown University's McDonough School of Business who's an expert on financial markets regulation.

Current regulations mandate brokers recommend only suitable investments to their clients — appropriate for their age, other demographic characteristics, tolerance for risk and investment goals. That's less stringent than the fiduciary standard.

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A key question, Angel suggested, is whether the SEC regulation will prohibit some especially egregious practices, such as contests rewarding brokers who sell the most products with trips to Florida in the winter and other perks.

Most Main Street investors may not be knowledgeable about financial industry practices, like the fees they're charged for investment advice or the commissions collected by their brokers. The typical client "knows they're making money off him somehow and they're not sure how," Angel said.

That's something George Wheeler, a retired information tech professional in Colorado, had mused about his broker. "We were always wondering how much he was making and how he made his money. He was never clear about that. ... We were trusting that our broker was working in our best interest."

Wheeler and his wife, Rachel, say they also hadn't known that fees were so high on the annuities the broker put them into, for which he promised annual returns of 7% or 8%. In fact, they earned 3% to 4% over a span of about 10 years, usually well below the overall stock market, they said in a telephone interview. As a result, their investment account ended up pretty much where it had started.

"I would like to have retired sooner," said Rachel, who's leaving her job as a physical therapist at the end of this month.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump spins tales on London protests, Brexit

By HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is spinning a tall tale about crowd sizes and the protests in London.

He's asserting there have been few protests over his visit to the United Kingdom — even though nearby protesters could be heard at 10 Downing Street. He also once again falsely said he predicted Brexit a day before the vote happened.

A look at the claims, in a tweet Wednesday and a news conference Tuesday with British Prime Minister Theresa May:

TRUMP: "I kept hearing that there would be 'massive' rallies against me in the UK, but it was quite the opposite. The big crowds, which the Corrupt Media hates to show, were those that gathered in support of the USA and me." — tweet Wednesday.

TRUMP: "There were thousands of people (Monday) on the streets cheering. And even coming over today, there were thousands of people cheering and then I heard that there were protests. I said: 'Where are the protests? I don't see any protests.' I did see a small protest today when I came, very small, so a lot of it is fake news, I hate to say. ... There was great love. ... And I didn't see the protesters until just a little while ago and it was a very, very small group of people." — news conference Tuesday.

THE FACTS: The protests over Trump's visit were more than just "very, very small."

Thousands of protesters crowded London's government district, shouting angry chants as he met May nearby. While police erected barricades to stop protesters from marching past the gates of Downing Street, they could be heard as Trump and May emerged from the prime minister's official residence for a photo op and before their news conference.

The demonstrators expressed outrage over his lavish welcome and protested him as a danger to the world.

The protests included a giant Trump baby balloon and a robotic likeness of Trump sitting on a golden toilet, cellphone in hand, dubbed "Dump Trump." The robot made flatulent sounds and recited familiar Trump phrases like "No collusion" and "You are fake news."

TRUMP, referring to how he stood at his Scottish golf resort, Turnberry, on the eve of the Brexit referendum and predicted the British would vote to leave the European Union: "I really predicted what was going to happen. Some of you remember that prediction. It was a strong prediction, made at a certain location, on a development we were opening the day before it happened." — news conference Tuesday.

THE FACTS: He didn't predict Brexit the day before it happened.

As when he has told this story before, Trump is mixing up his predictions and his days. Three months

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before the vote, he did predict accurately that Britain would vote to leave the EU. The day after the 2016 vote — not the day before — he predicted from his Scottish resort that the EU would collapse because of Britain's withdrawal. That remains to be seen.

Associated Press writers Jill Lawless and Kevin Freking in London and Darlene Superville in Washington contributed to this report.

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Koch tackles poverty by coaching nonprofits on business

By SALLY HO Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — If a billionaire's approach to philanthropy is a reflection of himself, Charles Koch's latest initiative tackling poverty embodies both the wealthy industrialist's business acumen and his distaste for big government.

The 3-year-old Stand Together Foundation has lately taken center stage in the Koch empire, which has been recalibrating some of its wide-ranging operation that is both villainized and revered by the American public. The shifting strategy comes as the GOP icon's sprawling network of rich donors, powerful political groups and various tax-exempted advocacy organizations continues to downplay its more well-known but controversial political agenda, which has pumped hundreds of millions of dollars into shaping U.S. elections and policy debates.

In 2018, for example, most of the Stand Together's \$30 million budget went to pay for nonprofit grants. Also last year, Koch pledged to spend \$400 million on politics and policy, with much of its midterm elections spending focused on helping conservative candidates. Koch's political arm, Americans for Prosperity as the most prominent affiliate, also is widely known for supporting the Tea Party movement and fighting to overturn President Barack Obama's health care expansion.

Cast by Democrats as a dark-money force in GOP politics, Koch is redirecting his public focus on innocuous charity work and leaning deeper into the traditional philanthropy model of giving grants to benefit local community organizations. A key part of this foray is infusing the work of private nonprofits with corporate principles and business management training. Koch also gives the charities grant money and extends his influence to help them expand.

"We are trying to increase the efficacy and drive more results in the philanthropic sector, so it's been a great experience working with Koch Industries and the business leaders in this network to bring that for-profit mindset to the social sector," said Lauren McCann, executive vice president of the Stand Together Foundation.

The 140 private groups that Koch supports in Stand Together generally share a central mission to help the needy with a path toward self-sufficiency, rather than charitable handouts.

Many focus on job training. Dallas-based Café Momentum, for instance, preps formerly jailed teens and young people for culinary and hospitality jobs.

Some of Stand Together's most prominent grantees claim that free from onerous restrictions, they're privately doing social work better than the public government safety net.

The foundation's model stands out in the burgeoning big-ticket philanthropy landscape. Aaron Dorfman of the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy said he knows of no other program like Koch's intensive six-month training designed to coach nonprofit leaders on business principles.

But as president of the philanthropy watchdog group, Dorfman remains skeptical of Koch's intentions. He said supporting private organizations that claim superiority over the way government functions is an affront to the nation's system of taxation and spending. Dorfman, a former community organizer, also is a longtime critic of the Kochs' other tax-exempted advocacy work for advancing their business and political agendas.

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"It's hard to be too enthusiastic about one stand-alone initiative. Their influence on our society, on balance, it is for sure mostly bad for poor people," Dorfman said, citing examples such as Koch's efforts to fight environmental regulations and public transit proposals.

McCann says the foundation appreciates the government's role in social services and the Koch grants aren't tied to any political objectives, though there are some overlapping interests with its agenda, such as prison reform and school choice.

She also said Koch's name and reputation have at times preceded Stand Together's budding body of work, and the foundation has had to prove itself to skeptical nonprofit boards in the minority communities it seeks to help.

"We talk about our values of openness and equal rights and toleration, and sometimes you can see people are processing and, you know, confused," McCann said.

Chad Houser, founder and executive chef at Café Momentum, said Stand Together's Catalyst Network training helped his nonprofit outline its vision, which included changes to its governing board. He said the lessons are a refreshing turn not seen in other nonprofit development programs and have given him the freedom and skills to run his restaurant like a business rather than a charity.

"If I never had to go out and beg for money ever again and could just focus on the kids, it would be so amazing," Houser said.

Among the more than 750 young people the nonprofit has worked with, only 15 percent have returned to jail, compared with Texas' 48 percent recidivism rate for the same age group, according to Houser. He said starting and sustaining the restaurant and job training program has cost about \$4 million, but it has saved Dallas taxpayers \$30 million in its juvenile justice system.

Café Momentum has received \$700,000 in grant money from Stand Together. In April, Koch also flexed its influence to create a donations-matching campaign supported by the National Football League that will benefit Café Momentum with an eye toward expanding its model into other cities.

The workers at the popular, money-making restaurant are paid, and Houser's staff also takes on social worker duties, helping them with essential needs from housing to family issues.

Kaileigh Johnson said her previous job at a government-funded agency was heavily institutionalized with too many rules, and pales in comparison to her work now as a Café Momentum case manager.

"We're changing the trajectory of traditional social work, and it's more effective," Johnson said.

That's all central to Koch's latest campaign to establish himself as a major philanthropic player and shed some of the political associations tied to the former "Koch Brothers" entity. Younger brother David Koch, who retired in 2018 due to health issues, was the Libertarian Party's vice presidential candidate in 1980.

This shift was evident at Charles Koch's biannual private retreat in January, when Stand Together was spotlighted in front of hundreds of donors who each contribute at least \$100,000 annually to the network's wide-ranging agenda.

And in May, the entire Koch umbrella reorganized, adopting the "Stand Together" heading for the overarching organization that was previously known as the "Seminar Network," which has encompassed other prominent groups such as Freedom Partners and the LIBRE Initiative.

"Stand Together is a call to action to social entrepreneurs across the country, and that's what we've become," said Brian Hooks, who as Koch's top lieutenant is chairman and CEO of the entire network. "For too many years, we've let people define who we are, and now we're defining ourselves."

Sally Ho covers philanthropy and education. Follow her on Twitter: https://twitter.com/_SallyHo

Woman accuses top US cardinal of dismissing sex abuse case

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The cardinal leading the U.S. Catholic Church's response to the sex abuse crisis has been accused of mishandling a case alleging that his then-deputy manipulated a woman into a sexual relationship, even as he counseled her husband on their marriage, heard her confessions and solicited

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their donations.

The allegations against Cardinal Daniel DiNardo come just a week before he presides over a meeting of U.S. bishops to adopt new measures to hold church leaders accountable for sexual misconduct or for covering it up. Laura Pontikes, a 55-year-old Houston construction executive and mother of three, told The Associated Press that DiNardo has been negligent in her case, after she reported Monsignor Frank Rossi to the Galveston-Houston archdiocese in April 2016.

Pontikes reported that Rossi, the longtime chancellor and vicar general of the archdiocese, seduced her when she came to him for spiritual counseling at a low point in her life. Pontikes gave the archdiocese and the AP seven years of emails with Rossi to show her emotional dependency on him.

"He took a woman that went into a church truly looking for God, and he took me for himself," she said.

DiNardo initially declared her "the victim" and thanked her for coming forward, and his staff told her Rossi would never be a pastor or counsel women again, according to Pontikes. But a few months later, DiNardo allowed Rossi to take up a new assignment as pastor at Our Lady of the Pines in Woodville, Texas.

The archdiocese said Tuesday that DiNardo had handled the case "swiftly and justly." The archdiocese said a number of comments attributed by the Pontikeses to DiNardo were "an absolute fabrication."

The archdiocese told AP earlier that the relationship was consensual and did not include intercourse. In a statement, it said DiNardo put Rossi, 62, on leave after receiving the complaint, and returned him to active ministry without restrictions in a new diocese based on recommendations from an out-of-state "renewal" program for clergy that he had completed.

DiNardo's archdiocese said it informed Rossi's new boss, Beaumont Bishop Curtis Guillory, of his violation of the chastity vow and his time in the program. Also on Tuesday, after the AP alerted the church that it was preparing a story, Guillory announced he had placed Rossi on temporary leave. The leave is pending the outcome of a criminal sexual misconduct investigation launched by Houston police after Pontikes reported Rossi in August.

Rossi's attorney, Dan Cogdell, said Rossi was cooperating fully with the investigation and had met with police, but declined further comment.

The exact focus of the investigation isn't known, but Texas law states that sex with an adult is without consent if a clergyman exploits a person's emotional dependency on him in a spiritual counseling relationship. Pontikes' Catholic therapist, Dr. Ken Buckle, said in a sworn affidavit that she was in crisis after being "seduced, betrayed and ultimately sexually victimized" by Rossi, and that the archdiocese's decision to relocate Rossi to another parish was "highly distressing" to her because she felt he was a danger to other women.

Pontikes said she cannot sleep and can barely work after the betrayal by Rossi and the archdiocese.

"They're not going to play with my life like this," Pontikes said. "They just can't get away with it."

It's the latest case of victims denouncing treatment by DiNardo and the archdiocese, which is known for its secrecy within victim advocacy circles. Prosecutors searched archdiocese headquarters in November after DiNardo left in ministry an accused priest now indicted on child indecency charges. The two victims in that case have said DiNardo disregarded their claims.

Pontikes first met Rossi in the confessional at St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church in December 2007. His easy manner broke the ice, and soon the coiffed and charismatic preacher was calling her "Laura dear" and attending family dinners.

He actively solicited donations, including for an ambitious capital campaign to rebuild the parish rectory. In all, Pontikes estimated the couple gave the church more than \$2 million over nine years.

Suffering from work and marriage problems, Pontikes phoned or emailed Rossi several times a day, and he responded with the attention she sought. Within a year she was questioning her growing feelings for Rossi, but he assured her that such closeness is common in spiritual direction.

During a Dec. 4, 2012 session of spiritual counseling in his office, Pontikes said, Rossi began a physical relationship with an intimate, sexual embrace. The next day, Rossi started email contact with the subject line "blessings."

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"It was wonderful to visit with you yesterday and continue to unfold the love of God in your life," he wrote. She said that was followed by instances of Rossi inducing her to perform sexual acts on him during spiritual direction in his office.

Pontikes' husband, George, began reaching out to Rossi for help in March 2013 because of his wife's increasing distance and irritability.

"I know Laura listens to you," George Pontikes wrote Rossi April 3, 2013.

Rossi responded that same day: "My gut feeling is that she is on the verge of a breakdown due to the stress."

Two weeks later, George Pontikes asked Rossi again for help. "She trusts you," he wrote.

Four days after that, on a Friday night after George had gone to bed, the priest and parishioner consummated the relationship, Laura Pontikes said. It was the first of up to half a dozen such sexual encounters over more than a year, she said. The archdiocese disputed her account and said the two never had intercourse.

Pontikes has also taken her case to the Vatican. She said Rossi absolved her of their sexual sins at confession, a serious canonical crime DiNardo never asked her about. The archdiocese said Rossi never heard her confession during or after the physical relationship. However, several references to confession are found in the email correspondence Pontikes gave the archdiocese.

The Vatican spokesman said Pontikes' complaint is being reviewed.

AP writer Nomaan Merchant contributed to this story.

Asian shares jump on US Fed's rate cut bandwagon

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Shares surged Wednesday in Asia following a rally on Wall Street spurred by signs the Federal Reserve is ready to cut interest rates to support the U.S. economy against risks from escalating trade wars.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index jumped 1.8% to 20,773.86 while the Hang Seng in Hong Kong advanced 0.7% to 26,953.77. The Shanghai Composite index gained 0.6% to 2,880.18 and Australia's S&P ASX 200 climbed 0.6% to 6,367.20. South Korea's Kospi added 0.2% to 2,071.06. Shares also rose in Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

Shares also were boosted by the Australian central bank's decision on Tuesday to trim its benchmark interest rate by a quarter of a percentage point in the first such cut in nearly three years.

Australia's economy expanded at a 1.8% annual rate, 0.4% quarterly, in the first quarter, as the doldrums in trade and the housing market were offset by large inventories, the government reported Wednesday.

But the biggest lift for regional markets came from Fed Chairman Jerome Powell's comment that the central bank was "closely monitoring" trade developments and would "act as appropriate" to sustain the U.S. economic expansion.

Investors read his remarks as a signal that the Fed will likely cut interest rates later this year.

Fresh hopes for resolving the U.S.-Mexico trade dispute also helped.

Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard said Mexico can likely reach a deal with the U.S. at a meeting Wednesday. That would stave off President Donald Trump's threat to place 5% tariffs on Mexican goods beginning June 10 as part of a broader immigration dispute.

Automakers rallied. Many vehicle makers import vehicles from Mexico and would be hit particularly hard if the U.S. imposes tariffs. Ford Motor climbed 3.2%, General Motors gained 6% and Fiat Chrysler added 4%.

Investors have been worried the expanding conflicts between the U.S. and some of its biggest trading partners could slow U.S. economic growth and stymie corporate profits. They've been dumping stocks for the past month and fleeing to safer holdings such as bonds.

"The concern in the market is that economic data is going to worsen," said Jeff Zipper, managing director at U.S. Bank Wealth Management. "If economic data worsens, then growth slows down. So obviously a rate cut would provide liquidity into the economy and the marketplace, and that's what investors are

looking at right now.”

The Nasdaq composite rode the rally in technology stocks, gaining 2.7%, to 7,527.12. The index recouped losses racked up a day earlier, when tech stocks slumped over concerns that several big internet companies could face more scrutiny from antitrust regulators.

The S&P 500 index gained 2.1% to 2,803.27, its best performance since Jan. 4. The Dow vaulted 512.40 points, or 2.1%, to 25,332.18.

The Russell 2000 index of small companies picked up 38.58 points, or 2.6%, to 1,508.56.

Powell didn't explicitly say what the Fed would do, but investors in the futures market are now pricing in a 59 percent chance of a Fed rate cut by July.

Robust market gains earlier this year were partly fueled by the Fed's adoption of a more patient approach to its rates policy after steadily raising rates for two years. Investors have been hoping it will go further and cut interest rates to give the economy another push.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude shed 38 cents to \$53.10 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It gained 0.4% to settle at \$53.48 a barrel on Tuesday. Brent crude oil, the international standard, gave up 28 cents to \$61.69 per barrel. It closed 1.1% higher at \$61.97 per barrel overnight.

CURRENCIES: The dollar slipped to 108.11 Japanese yen from 108.15 yen on Tuesday. The euro strengthened to \$1.1261 from \$1.1251.

AP Business writers Damian J. Troise and Alex Veiga contributed.

Florida deputy charged for inaction during Parkland shooting

By **CURT ANDERSON** and **TERRY SPENCER** Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The Florida deputy who knew a gunman was loose at the Parkland high school but refused to go inside to confront the assailant was arrested Tuesday on 11 criminal charges related to his inaction during the massacre that killed 17 people.

Scot Peterson was on duty as the resource officer at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School on the day of the February 2018 shooting but never entered the building while bullets were flying. He was charged with child neglect, culpable negligence and perjury — allegations that carry a maximum prison sentence of nearly 100 years.

Peterson was seen on surveillance video rushing with two staff members toward the building where the shooting happened. When they arrived, he pulled his weapon and went forward but then retreated and took up a position outside, where he stood with his gun drawn.

The charges follow a 14-month investigation by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, which conducted interviews with 184 witnesses, reviewed hours of surveillance videos and compiled 212 investigative reports, the agency said.

Peterson “did absolutely nothing to mitigate” the shooting, FDLE Commissioner Rick Swearingen said in a statement. “There can be no excuse for his complete inaction and no question that his inaction cost lives.”

Lori Alhadeff, whose 14-year-old daughter, Alyssa, was killed, said she was surprised to hear of Peterson's arrest. She recalled sending a text to her daughter when she heard there was shooting.

“I told her to hide, that help was on the way. Well, Peterson was that help, but he froze, and he failed us all that day,” Alhadeff said. “He was supposedly the good guy with the gun who was supposed to go in and meet the threat, and he let us all down.”

Tony Montalto, whose daughter Gina Montalto, also 14, died in the attack, said families wanted justice to be done.

“We are happy to see some accountability for this tragedy,” said Montalto, president of the Stand With Parkland victim families' group.

Peterson, 56, was jailed on \$102,000 bail. If released, he will be required to wear a GPS monitor and surrender his passport and will be prohibited from possessing a gun, the prosecutor said.

His lawyer, Joseph DiRuzzo III, said in a statement that Peterson is merely a scapegoat. He called the

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charges "a thinly veiled attempt at politically motivated retribution."

"We will vigorously defend against these spurious charges that lack basis in fact and law," he said, arguing that Peterson was not a caregiver, which he said the law defines as a parent, adult household member or other person responsible for a child's welfare. "The definition of 'other person responsible for a child's welfare' expressly excludes law enforcement officers acting in an official capacity."

It was not immediately clear when Peterson would make his initial court appearance. That typically occurs the day after an arrest.

Sen. Rick Scott, a Republican who was Florida governor at the time of the shooting, initiated the law enforcement probe and said Tuesday in a statement that he was glad the investigation was finished.

"Now it's time for justice to be served," Scott said.

After the shooting, Peterson took retirement rather than accept a suspension.

He has now been formally fired, according to Broward County Sheriff Gregory Tony. Another deputy, former Sgt. Brian Miller, was also fired, although he faces no criminal charges.

"It's never too late for accountability and justice," Tony said.

David S. Weinstein, a former federal prosecutor now in private practice, said key to the case will be the culpable negligence charge, which essentially means an "utter disregard for the safety of others."

The perjury charge stems from a statement Peterson gave under oath to investigators contending that he did not hear any shots fired after taking up his position outside the school. Investigators determined through video, witnesses and other evidence that was not true.

The arrest is the latest fallout from investigations into the shooting.

Gov. Ron DeSantis suspended then-Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel for "neglect of duty and incompetence" over the department's actions that day. Israel is appealing that decision to the state Senate and said he intends to run again next year.

The case also spawned a state commission that issued a 458-page report detailing many errors before and during the shooting, including Broward deputies who stayed outside the school building and the policies that led to that, such as Israel's decision to change guidelines to say that deputies "may" confront an active shooter rather than "shall" do so.

The commission also recommended voluntary arming of teachers, which state lawmakers approved this year.

The chairman of the Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School Public Safety Commission, Pinellas County Sheriff Bob Gualtieri, said in an interview that the charges against Peterson were "absolutely warranted."

Peterson "is a coward, a failure and a criminal," Gualtieri said. "There is no doubt in my mind that because he didn't act, people were killed."

Nikolas Cruz, 20, faces the death penalty if convicted of the first-degree murder charges filed in the attack. His lawyers have said Cruz would plead guilty in return for a life sentence, but prosecutors have refused that offer.

Cruz is expected to go on trial in early 2020.

Spencer reported from Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

AP Was There: D-Day correspondent returns 10 years later

By **DON WHITEHEAD** Associated Press

OMAHA BEACH, Normandy (AP) — This story was first published on June 5, 1954 AP journalist Don Whitehead, known by his colleagues as "Beachhead Don," returned to Normandy for the tenth anniversary of the D-Day invasion, which he covered when he followed the 1st Infantry Division onto Omaha Beach. The AP is republishing Whitehead's tenth anniversary story on the 75th anniversary of the assault that began the liberation of France and Europe from German occupation, leading to the end World War II.

Between the rows of white crosses they walked hand in hand, the gray-haired man and woman who had

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traveled across an ocean to visit the American cemetery overlooking the invasion beaches of Normandy.

They walked slowly among their memories of the dead. And then they paused besides a cross distinguished from thousands of others only by the name and number it bore. They stood and looked for a long moment at the name. They were alone with a heartbreak that went back to that day of invasion, June 6, 1944.

Above the man and woman and the crosses rose the outlines of the cemetery chapel, on which were chiseled these words:

"These endured all and gave all that justice among nations might prevail and that mankind might enjoy freedom and inherit peace."

They come by the hundreds - Americans, British, Canadians, French and Germans - to visit these beaches called "Omaha" and "Utah" which with the years have become symbols of man's struggle for freedom and peace.

Never Has Symbolism Meant So Much

Never before, with another brand of tyranny rising from the ashes of world war II, has the symbolism meant so much as on this 10th anniversary of the invasion.

The visitors come to stand for a moment with someone they loved or to wonder how it was they themselves lived through the inferno of battle while others died. They come to see the historic battleground, carrying flowers in honor of the dead.

A few, like Albert Dossmann, 13, and Rene Bataille, 6, come with no memories of invasion day because they were born too late for such memories. They are there to hunt for bayonets and carbines in the sand and to play the game of war among crumbling ruins of trenches and old blockhouses.

Beyond where the youngsters play - clutching rusty carbines in their hands and peering from under battered old helmets - fishermen set their fishing lines in the sand and bait them for the incoming tide. Only battered bits and pieces of the invasion fleet and artificial harbor can be seen even at low tide to mark the landing site. Channel tides slowly are breaking these up and wearing them away.

The brown sand stretches hard and smooth to the rock-shale shelf marking the high-tide line. The sand is clean again. The tides have washed away the blood and debris of battle.

Grass, Vines Almost Hide Scars of War

Beyond the beach rise the bluffs where the Germans built their first line of defenses with trenches and blockhouses. The blockhouses still stand. The eyes of their gunports stare at the scene impotently. The trenches have crumbled. The green grass and vines almost hide the scars, but not quite. Slowly the signs of war are disappearing.

Looking at this country and standing again at the water's edge, the memories come with a rush ... memories of that terrible dawn when the Allies smashed across the beaches in the great drive on which hung the hope of peace.

Through the night the vast invasion armada rode the rough channel waters toward Normandy. Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower had given the signal to go. Now the decision had passed from his hands to the men riding the invasion craft. The greatest invasion gamble in history couldn't be halted.

Gen. Omar N. Bradley, commanding the American forces, had chosen the 1st Infantry Division to carry the weight of the drive against Omaha Beach because "The Big Red One" had been hardened in the battles in North Africa and Sicily. The division was commanded by Maj. Gen. Clarence Huebner.

34,000 Men Composed Initial Assault Force

This initial assault force had the code name of "Force O." It was a battering ram of 34,000 men and 3,300 vehicles plus artillery, armor, rangers, engineers and service elements. Behind them came the follow-up waves of 25,000 men and 4,400 vehicles from the 29th Infantry Division. In other waves waited tons of thousands more.

On the left were the British and Canadians. And on the right, Gen. J. Lawton Collins led his U.S. 7th Corps toward Utah Beach with the 4th Infantry Division as his spearhead.

Ahead was Omaha Beach. The first waves were under the command of Col. George Taylor, commanding the 1st Division's 16th Regimental combat team. In his cabin aboard the USS Samuel Chase, Taylor outlined the battle plan:

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"The first six hours will be the toughest. That is the period when we'll be weakest. But we've got to open the door. Somebody has to lead the way - and if we fail ... well ...then the troops behind us will do the job. They'll just keep throwing stuff onto the beaches until something breaks. That is the plan."

Already the paratroopers of the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions were dropping from the skies into the hedgerows of Normandy. Bombers and naval guns were pounding the coastline.

Assault Boats Head for The Beach

At dawn, the men climbed over the ship's side into the pitching assault boats and headed for the beach. Soon the roar and smoke of battle rolled over us. Our craft found an opening blown in the steel and barbed wire defenses at the beach and ploughed through. The ramp lowered. We waded to the rocky shingle where thousands of men were burrowing in the shale.

Machine gun bullets whipped across and ripped small geysers in the water. A shell screamed into an assault boat just as the ramp was lowered.

Men clawed foxholes with bare and bloody fingers. The wounded moaned at the water's edge, and the bodies of the dead moved gently with the tide or were frozen in stillness there on the rocky shelf. The moans of the wounded grew muffled. But it would be hours before all the wounded could be removed. The incoming waves of men and machines had priority over the suffering.

During the night the German 352nd Infantry Division had moved onto the bluffs in a training maneuver. They had no hint the invasion was under way. Suddenly the maneuver was real. From the trenches and blockhouses they poured a deadly fire across the bloody beach called Omaha.

Order Formed Out Of Vast Confusion

The sands were strewn with the dead. Still the invaders came.

In the vast confusion, order began to take shape because of men like Col. Taylor and Maj. Paul Gale and Capt. Joe Dawson, and Sgt. John Griffin, and Lt. Carl W. Giles and Pvt. Vincent Dove. They were a few among many heroes on that day.

In his twangy Indiana voice, Col. Taylor said: "Gentlemen, we're being killed on the beaches. Let's go inland to be killed."

And so they went inland. They fought their way from the water's edge across the open flats, through the barbed wire and minefields, and onto the bluffs where the German guns blazed.

With only a sweatshirt as armor, Pvt. Dove climbed into the seat of a bulldozer and while bullets and shells whipped around him he bulldozed the first roadway off Omaha Beach.

US court weighs if climate change violates children's rights

By **ANDREW SELSKY** Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — In a courtroom packed with environmental activists, federal judges wrestled Tuesday with whether climate change violates the constitutional rights of young people who have sued the U.S. government over the use of fossil fuels.

A Justice Department attorney warned three judges from the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals that allowing the case to go to trial would be unprecedented and open the doors to more lawsuits.

"This case would have earth-shattering consequences," Assistant Attorney General Jeffrey Clark said.

He called the lawsuit "a direct attack on the separation of powers" and said the 21 young people who filed it want the courts to direct U.S. energy policy, instead of government officials.

The young people are pressing the government to stop promoting the use of fossil fuels, saying sources like coal and oil cause climate change and violate their Fifth Amendment rights to life, liberty and property.

The judges seemed to feel the enormity of the case, which the plaintiffs' lawyer compared in scope to the U.S. Supreme Court's *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling that mandated desegregation of schools in the 1950s.

If the case moves forward, the judiciary would be "dealing with different branches of government and telling them what to do," said Judge Andrew Hurwitz, instead of issuing court orders telling officials to stop doing something deemed unconstitutional.

The dire threat to people, particularly the young, demands such action, said Julia Olson, chief legal counsel for Our Children's Trust, which is representing the plaintiffs.

"When our great-grandchildren look back on the 21st century, they will see that government-sanctioned climate destruction was the constitutional issue of this century," Olson told the judges.

The lawsuit asks the courts to declare federal energy policy that contributes to climate change unconstitutional, order the government to quickly phase out carbon dioxide emissions to a certain level by 2100 and mandate a national climate recovery plan.

The Obama and Trump administrations have tried to get the case dismissed since it was filed in Oregon in 2015.

"It's just really disappointing to see the lengths that they go to — to not only not let us get the remedy that we're seeking, but not even let us have the chance to prove our facts or present our case at trial," said Nathan Baring, a 19-year-old from Fairbanks, Alaska, who joined the lawsuit when he was 15.

Baring said a social media campaign in the early days featured the hashtag #KidsvsGov, which was changed to #YouthvsGov as they got older.

"I think eventually it's just going to have to be #AdultsvsGov," Baring said, laughing.

As the case drags on, sea ice that protects coastal Alaska communities from fierce storms is forming later in the year, leaving those villages vulnerable, he said.

The young people argue that government officials have known for more than 50 years that carbon pollution from fossil fuels causes climate change and that policies promoting oil and gas deprive them of their constitutional rights.

Lawyers for President Donald Trump's administration say the young people didn't find any "historical basis for a fundamental right to a stable climate system or any other constitutional right related to the environment."

The lawsuit says the young are more vulnerable to serious effects from climate change in the future. The American Academy of Pediatrics, 14 other health organizations and nearly 80 scientists and doctors agreed in a brief filed with the appeals court.

They pointed out that the World Health Organization estimates 88% of the global health burden of climate change falls on children younger than 5.

The case has become a focal point for many youth activists, and the courtroom in Portland was packed.

If the 9th Circuit judges decide the lawsuit can move forward, it would go before the U.S. District Court in Eugene, where the case was filed. The appeals court judges will rule later.

Follow Andrew Selsky on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/andrewselsky>

White House tells 2 ex-aides to defy congressional subpoena

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The White House on Tuesday again directed former employees not to cooperate with a congressional investigation, this time instructing former aides Hope Hicks and Annie Donaldson to defy subpoenas and refuse to provide documents to the House Judiciary Committee.

The letters from the White House to the Judiciary panel are the latest effort by the White House to thwart congressional investigations into President Donald Trump. Trump has said he will fight "all of the subpoenas" as Democrats have launched multiple probes into his administration and personal financial affairs.

House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler issued subpoenas for documents and testimony from Hicks, former White House communications director, and Donaldson, a former aide in the White House counsel's office, last month. Both are mentioned frequently in special counsel Robert Mueller's report, along with former White House counsel Donald McGahn. The White House has also directed McGahn to refuse to provide documents or testify before the committee.

Mueller's investigation concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 election in hopes of getting Trump elected, though his report said there was not enough evidence to establish a conspiracy between Russia

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and the Trump campaign. Last week Mueller emphasized he had not exonerated Trump on the question of whether he obstructed justice — in effect leaving it to Congress to decide what to do with his findings.

In a letter to Nadler, White House counsel Pat Cipollone said Hicks and Donaldson “do not have the legal right” to disclose White House documents to the panel. Cipollone said requests for the records should be directed to the White House, adding that they remain “legally protected from disclosure under longstanding constitutional principles, because they implicate significant executive branch confidentiality interests and executive privilege.”

In a letter obtained by The Associated Press, Hicks’ lawyer wrote Nadler on Tuesday and confirmed that she would be withholding documents in her possession, as well as her lawyers’ possession, from her tenure at the White House as well as some from the transition period. The lawyer, Robert Trout, said in the letter that they would not provide those materials because they were not authorized by the White House or the transition and there were “institutional interests at stake.”

Trout said they would provide documents from Hicks’ time on the Trump campaign, however, and said she had also previously provided some documents in March, after Nadler sent out his original requests for information.

In directing witnesses not to comply, the White House has frequently cited executive privilege, or the power to keep information from the courts, Congress and the public to protect the confidentiality of the Oval Office decision-making process.

But that only extends so far. Nadler said in a statement that while the White House had instructed the former aides not to turn over materials, Hicks has agreed to turn over some documents related to her time on Trump’s presidential campaign. Those materials are not covered by executive privilege.

Nadler said he thanked Hicks for “that show of good faith.” But it was unclear how much material the committee would receive.

The committee is arguing that the documents would not be covered by executive privilege if they left the White House months ago.

“The president has no lawful basis for preventing these witnesses from complying with our request,” Nadler said. “We will continue to seek reasonable accommodation on these and all our discovery requests and intend to press these issues when we obtain the testimony of both Ms. Hicks and Ms. Donaldson.”

The subpoenas also demanded that Hicks appear for a public hearing on June 19 and that Donaldson appear for a deposition on June 24. They have not yet said whether they will appear.

As the White House has pushed back on the investigations, some Democrats have ramped up their calls for Nadler to open an impeachment inquiry, arguing it would improve congressional standing in the courts as they try to enforce subpoenas. But House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has been reluctant to launch impeachment proceedings, despite a growing number in her caucus who have called for it.

On Tuesday, progressive groups expressed “deep disappointment” over Pelosi’s unwillingness and called on her to act, according to a letter obtained by The Associated Press. The groups said in the letter that voters gave Democrats control of the House “because they wanted aggressive oversight of the Trump administration.”

Pelosi says impeachment requires more public support and would detract from the legislative agenda. She has instead favored a slower, more methodical effort.

As part of that approach, the House is expected next week to hold McGahn and Attorney General William Barr, who has refused to turn over the full Mueller report, in contempt of Congress. The resolution scheduled for a June 11 vote will allow the Judiciary Committee to seek court enforcement of its subpoenas.

With that vote approaching, the Justice Department sent a letter to Nadler Tuesday with a final offer to resume negotiations over access to redacted portions of the Mueller report and underlying documents — but only if the Judiciary panel nullifies its May vote to recommend contempt for Barr and cancels the June 11 vote in the full House.

Nadler rejected that offer, saying: “We urge you to return to the accommodation process without conditions. We are ready to begin negotiating immediately.”

Nadler has also said his panel will launch a series of hearings on “the alleged crimes and other misconduct” in Mueller’s report as Democrats try to keep the public’s focus on his findings in the Trump-Russia investigation.

The hearings will serve as a stand-in of sorts for Mueller, who said last week he would prefer not to appear before Congress and would not elaborate on the contents of his report if he were forced to testify.

The first hearing, on June 10, looks at whether Trump committed obstruction of justice by intervening in the probe. It will feature John Dean, a White House counsel who helped bring down President Richard Nixon’s presidency.

Democrats have suggested they will compel Mueller’s appearance if necessary, but it’s unclear when or if that will happen. Negotiations over Mueller’s testimony are ongoing.

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff said Tuesday that his panel will also hold hearings on the Mueller report, focusing on Russian interference in the 2016 election.

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker, Michael Balsamo and Alan Fram contributed to this report.

Powell hints Fed will cut rates if needed over trade wars

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Chairman Jerome Powell said Tuesday that the Federal Reserve is prepared to respond if it decides the Trump administration’s trade conflicts are threatening the U.S. economy. Investors read his remarks as a signal that the Fed will likely cut interest rates later this year.

Powell’s remarks helped drive up stock prices, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average ending the day up more than 500 points, or 2%.

Speaking at a Fed conference in Chicago, Powell said, “We are closely monitoring the implications of these developments for the U.S. economic outlook and, as always, we will act as appropriate to sustain the expansion.”

Powell didn’t explicitly say what the Fed would do. But expectations are rising that the Fed will cut rates at least once and possibly two or more times before year’s end, in part because of the consequences of the trade war. There is concern that the U.S. expansion, which next month will become the longest on record, could face growing risks of a recession as retaliatory tariffs weaken U.S. exports.

Investors in the futures market are pricing in a 59% chance of a Fed rate cut by July.

Also Tuesday, Vice Chairman Richard Clarida declined to speculate on the possibility of a Fed rate cut that soon but said in an interview with CNBC, “We will put in policies that need to be in place” to sustain the economic expansion.

James Bullard, head of the Fed’s St. Louis bank, had said on Monday that a Fed rate cut “may be warranted soon,” in part because potential risks from trade uncertainties.

Trump has imposed far-reaching tariffs on imports on China, which has retaliated with tariffs of its own on U.S. exports. He has also threatened to impose an escalating series of tariffs against Mexico unless it stops a flow of migrants from Central America into the U.S. At a news conference in London, President Donald Trump reiterated that his import taxes on Mexican goods will take effect next week at a level of 5%, rising to a peak of 25% until Mexico complies with his demand to cut off Central America migration.

The Fed conference in Chicago is focused on how the central bank can make its rate policy more effective at a time when inflation has remained chronically below the Fed’s target level. In his remarks, Powell called persistently low inflation the “pre-eminent monetary policy challenge of our time,” because it limits the Fed’s ability to support the economy by cutting rates.

Powell said that in its first-ever public review of its operations, the Fed will aim to improve its rate strategies, the tools it uses to achieve its objectives and the way it communicates its actions to the public.

He called persistently low inflation the “pre-eminent monetary policy challenge of our time,” because it limits the Fed’s ability to support the economy by cutting rates. Next month, the economic expansion will become the longest period of uninterrupted growth on record, surpassing the 10-year expansion of

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the 1990s.

The Fed manages interest rates to achieve two goals: maximum employment and stable prices. Even though unemployment has reached a 50-year low of 3.6%, inflation has failed to rise to the Fed's target of 2%. The Fed regards that target as the optimal level for annual price increases and becomes concerned if inflation stray too far above 2% or too far below it.

But the Fed's efforts to achieve the 2% target have so far failed even though it kept its key policy rate at a record low near zero for seven years. It began gradually increasing its policy rate in 2015.

After raising rates nine times, it declared in January that it would be "patient" in raising rates further. The policy rate at the moment is in a range of just 2.25% to 2.5%, meaning that the Fed has less room than usual to cut rates to stimulate growth.

What the central bank can do to manage the economy when inflation is so low and rates have little maneuvering room will be a key topic at the two-day conference.

"Our obligation to the public we serve is to take those measures now that will put us in the best position to deal with our next encounter with the ELB," Powell said, referring to the "effective lower bound" for interest rates — essentially, zero.

"With the economy growing, unemployment low and inflation low and stable, this is the right time to engage the public broadly on these topics," Powell said.

In addition to the Chicago conference, the Fed is holding listening sessions around the country to gather public comments. Powell said that after this outreach, Fed officials will begin using their regular meetings to discuss possible changes.

Trump administration halts cruises to Cuba under new rules

By **MATTHEW LEE** and **MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration on Tuesday ended the most popular forms of U.S. travel to Cuba, banning cruise ships and a heavily used category of educational travel in an attempt to cut off cash to the island's communist government.

Cruise travel from the U.S. to Cuba began in May 2016 during President Barack Obama's opening with the island. It has become the most popular form of U.S. leisure travel to the island, bringing 142,721 people in the first four months of the year, a more than 300% increase over the same period last year. For travelers confused about the thicket of federal regulations governing travel to Cuba, cruises offered a simple, one-stop, guaranteed-legal way to travel.

That now appears to be over.

"Cruise ships as well as recreational and pleasure vessels are prohibited from departing the U.S. on temporary sojourn to Cuba effective tomorrow," the Commerce Department said in a statement to The Associated Press.

The new restrictions are part of a broader effort by the administration of President Donald Trump to roll back the Obama-era efforts to restore normal relations between the United States and Cuba, which drew sharp criticism from the more hardline elements of the Cuban-American community and their allies in Congress.

Treasury said the sanctions would take effect on Wednesday after they are published in the Federal Register.

U.S. national security adviser John Bolton, who declared Cuba part of a "troika of tyranny" along with Nicaragua and Venezuela as he outlined plans for sanctions in November, said the new policy is intended to deny the Cuban government a vital source of revenue.

"The Administration has advanced the President's Cuba policy by ending 'veiled tourism' to Cuba and imposing restrictions on vessels," Bolton said on Twitter. "We will continue to take actions to restrict the Cuban regime's access to U.S. dollars."

The Cuban government imposed food rationing last month as a result of tightened U.S. sanctions and a drop in subsidized oil and other aid from Venezuela. For the Cuban government, cruise travel generated

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many millions of dollars a year in docking fees and payments for on-shore excursions, although those figures were never made public. Cuba also has become the most-requested destination for many South Florida-based cruise lines.

"The Trump administration deserves tremendous credit for holding accountable the Cuban regime," Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio said. "The United States must use all tools available under U.S. law to counter the Cuban regime's deceitful activities to undermine U.S. policy."

The new restrictions take effect Wednesday, but the government said it will allow anyone who has already paid for the trip to go ahead with it. But the process going forward for passengers isn't clear.

Cruise companies appeared to be caught off guard, with several, including Norwegian Cruise Lines and Royal Caribbean, urging ticketed passengers to be patient in response to queries on social media.

Finally, more than nine hours after the Treasury announcement, Royal Caribbean said it was canceling the Cuba stops on its June 5 and 6 cruises and would issue further guidance on future trips as soon as it was practical.

"We expect to know more within the next 24 hours and will communicate any changes as soon as we are able. In the meantime, we are adjusting the itineraries of our June 5 and June 6 sailings, which will no longer stop in Cuba. We are communicating with our guests about those changes," Royal Caribbean said in a notice posted to its website.

Cruise lines carrying passengers booked before Tuesday had been hoping that they could request specific federal permits to complete their trips to Cuba, said Pedro Freyre, a Miami-based attorney who represents Carnival and three other major cruise lines.

"For now, it's prohibited unless the cruise lines requests a specific license," Freyre said. He said cruise lines had been trying to determine "if there's any opening there to at least complete trips that have been booked and passengers that have made travel plans."

Norwegian Cruise Line said in a statement that it was scrutinizing the new rules and consulting with lawyers and trade experts.

"We are closely monitoring these recent developments and any resulting impact to cruise travel to Cuba," Norwegian Cruise Line said in a statement. "We will communicate to our guests and travel partners as additional information becomes available."

Shore excursions from cruise ships tend to be organized by the cruise lines in cooperation with Cuban government tour agency Havanatur. A smaller number hire private tour guides or drivers of restored classic cars who wait outside Havana's cruise docks.

"This affects all of us," said William Martínez, 58, a Cuban-born American who lived in Florida for 46 years but returned five years ago to drive a classic car for tourists. "It's inhuman, the sanctions that they're putting on Cuba."

Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said the measures are a response to what it calls Cuba's "destabilizing role" in the Western Hemisphere, including support for the government of President Nicolas Maduro in Venezuela.

"This administration has made a strategic decision to reverse the loosening of sanctions and other restrictions on the Cuban regime," Mnuchin said. "These actions will help to keep U.S. dollars out of the hands of Cuban military, intelligence, and security services."

Along with the cruise ships, the U.S. will also now ban most private planes and boats from stopping in the island.

Cruises have become more popular than flights for leisure travelers to Cuba — nearly 30,000 more came by cruise ship than flights this year. The figures exclude Cuban-born Americans visiting family on the island.

"I've been dying to come to Cuba forever, to see the cars, the buildings," said Maria Garcia, a 46-year-old teacher from Puerto Rico who arrived in Havana Tuesday morning on a Norwegian cruise line. "I could do it with this cruise ... Trump needs to understand that people should come to this country, to enjoy and get to know its culture, just like we would do in any other part of the world."

Commercial airline flights appear to be unaffected by the new measures and travel for university groups,

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academic research, journalism and professional meetings will continue to be allowed.

Collin Laverty, head of Cuba Educational Travel, one of the largest Cuba travel companies in the U.S., called the new measures "political grandstanding aimed at Florida in the run up to the 2020 elections."

"It's also terrible for U.S. companies that are providing employment and paying taxes in the US and creating an economic footprint on the island," he said.

Weissenstein reported from Havana, Cuba. Associated Press writers Andrea Rodriguez in Havana, Adriana Gomez-Licon in Miami and Ben Fox in Washington also contributed to this report.

Police: Don't call us with Taco Bell complaint

SLIDELL, La. (AP) — A police department in Louisiana is reminding people that it's there to serve, just not handle customer service complaints about Taco Bell.

The Slidell Police Department posted on Facebook Monday that someone called to complain that a local Taco Bell had run out of "both hard and soft taco shells."

The department says while it was a "travesty," it can't do anything about it.

The department hoped the taco shell stock has been replenished.

The officers say "we can't make this stuff up."

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, June 5, the 156th day of 2019. There are 209 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 5, 2004, Ronald Wilson Reagan, the 40th president of the United States, died in Los Angeles at age 93 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

On this date:

In 1794, Congress passed the Neutrality Act, which prohibited Americans from taking part in any military action against a country that was at peace with the United States.

In 1917, about 10 million American men between the ages of 21 and 31 began registering for the draft in World War I.

In 1933, the United States went off the gold standard.

In 1947, Secretary of State George C. Marshall gave a speech at Harvard University in which he outlined an aid program for Europe that came to be known as The Marshall Plan.

In 1950, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Henderson v. United States*, struck down racially segregated railroad dining cars.

In 1963, Britain's Secretary of State for War, John Profumo, resigned after acknowledging an affair with call girl Christine Keeler, who was also involved with a Soviet spy, and lying to Parliament about it.

In 1967, war erupted in the Middle East as Israel, anticipating a possible attack by its Arab neighbors, launched a series of pre-emptive airfield strikes that destroyed nearly the entire Egyptian air force; Syria, Jordan and Iraq immediately entered the conflict.

In 1968, Sen. Robert F. Kennedy was shot and mortally wounded after claiming victory in California's Democratic presidential primary at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles; assassin Sirhan Bishara Sirhan was arrested at the scene.

In 1976, 14 people were killed when the Teton Dam in Idaho burst.

In 1981, the Centers for Disease Control reported that five homosexuals in Los Angeles had come down with a rare kind of pneumonia; they were the first recognized cases of what later became known as AIDS.

In 2002, Magic Johnson was introduced as a member of the 2002 class elected to the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

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In 2013, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Robert Bales, accused of killing 16 Afghan civilians, many of them sleeping women and children, pleaded guilty to murder at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, to avoid the death penalty; he was sentenced to life in prison.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama, while visiting Germany, became the first U.S. president to tour the Buchenwald concentration camp, where he honored the 56,000 who died at the hands of the Nazis. Ex-CIA operative and Watergate burglar Bernard Barker died in suburban Miami at age 92.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama said he "absolutely makes no apologies" for seeking the release of Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl in a prisoner swap with the Taliban, vigorously defending an exchange that caused controversy.

One year ago: Fashion designer Kate Spade, known for her sleek handbags, was found dead in her Park Avenue apartment in New York in what the medical examiner determined was a suicide by hanging; she was 55. After it became clear that most players from the Super Bowl champion Philadelphia Eagles weren't going to show up, President Donald Trump gave the boot to a White House ceremony for the team, and instead threw his own brief "Celebration of America." Former TV mogul Harvey Weinstein pleaded not guilty in New York to rape and criminal sex act charges; he'd been indicted a week earlier on charges involving two women. The Miss America pageant announced that it was eliminating the swimsuit competition from the event; the new head of the organization's board of trustees, Gretchen Carlson, said on ABC, "We're not going to judge you on your appearance because we are interested in what makes you you."

Today's Birthdays: Actor-singer Bill Hayes is 94. Broadcast journalist Bill Moyers is 85. Former Canadian Prime Minister Joe Clark is 80. Author Dame Margaret Drabble is 80. Country singer Don Reid (The Statler Brothers) is 74. Rock musician Freddie Stone (AKA Freddie Stewart) (Sly and the Family Stone) is 72. Rock singer Laurie Anderson is 72. Country singer Gail Davies is 71. Author Ken Follett is 70. Financial guru Suze Orman is 68. Rock musician Nicko McBrain (Iron Maiden) is 67. Jazz musician Peter Erskine is 65. Jazz musician Kenny G is 63. Rock singer Richard Butler (Psychedelic Furs) is 63. Actress Beth Hall is 61. Actor Jeff Garlin is 57. Actress Karen Sillas is 56. Actor Ron Livingston is 52. Singer Brian McKnight is 50. Rock musician Claus Norreen (Aqua) is 49. Actor Mark Wahlberg is 48. Actor Chad Allen is 45. Rock musician P-Nut (311) is 45. Actress Navi Rawat (ROH'-waht) is 42. Actress Liza Weil is 42. Rock musician Pete Wentz (Fall Out Boy) is 40. Rock musician Seb Lefebvre (Simple Plan) is 38. Actress Chelsey Crisp is 36. Actress Amanda Crew is 33. Electronic musician Harrison Mills (Odesza) is 30. Musician/songwriter/producer DJ Mustard is 29. Actress Sophie Lowe is 29. Actor Hank Greenspan is nine.

Thought for Today: "Dare to be naive." — R. Buckminster Fuller, American inventor and philosopher (1895-1983).