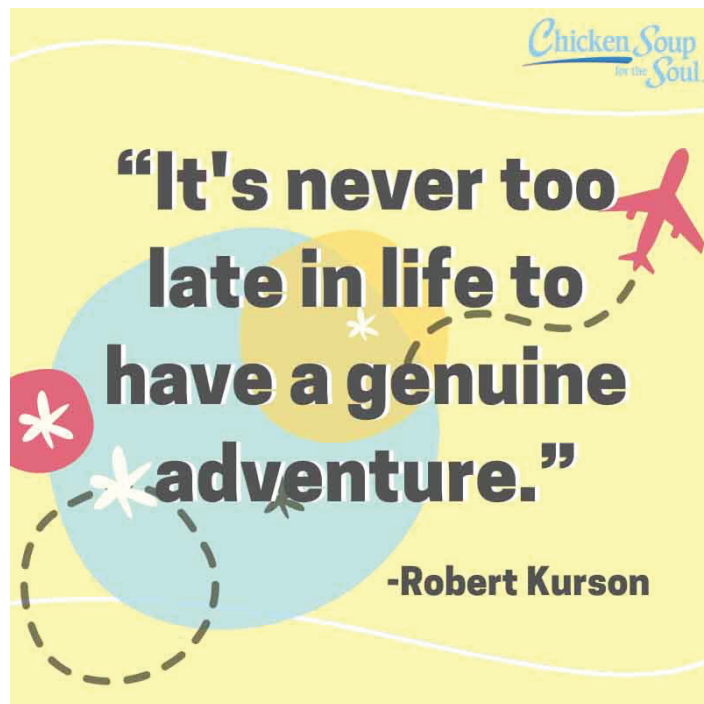


Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 1 of 59

- 2- In God we Trust sign put up at Groton Area
- 3- Professional Management Services Ad
- 4- Truss Pros Ad
- 5- SDDA's Role in Pesticide Regulation
- 6- Structure Work Begins on Highway 212 in Watertown
- 7- Saul Phillips Takes the Reigns of Northern State Men's Basketball
- 9- Today in Weather History
- 10- Weather Pages
- 13- Daily Devotional
- 14- 2019 Groton Events
- 15- News from the Associated Press



CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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

Wednesday, June 12

6:00 p.m.: Legion hosts Redfield, (DH)

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.

6:00 p.m.: T-Ball hosts Columbia, Falk Field (Gold)
Softball hosts Sisseton, U12 at 6 p.m., Nelson Field

Thursday, June 13

5:00 p.m.: Junior Teeners host Lake Norden, (DH)

5:30 p.m.: Junior Legion at Milbank, (DH)

5:30 p.m.: U12 Midgets at Warner, (DH)

6:00 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees host Watertown, (DH)
s (R,B)

Softball at Faulkton, U14 (DH), 6 p.m.

Softball at Clark (U8 at 5 p.m. (1 game), U10 at 6 p.m. (1 game), U12 at 7 p.m. (2 games)

Friday, June 14

6:00 p.m.: T-Ball Scrimmage (both)

Softball at Britton, U12 (DH), 6 p.m.

Olive Grove Golf Course: SDSU Golf Tournament, 18 holes, Noon Shotgun Start.



A new South Dakota State Law now requires that all public schools must display the nation's motto, "In God We Trust." The one at Groton Area was hung up yesterday, as reported by Kim Weber's facebook page.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 3 of 59



PROFESSIONAL
MANAGEMENT
SERVICES

FEED GREATNESS®

Event



JUNE 11 - JUNE 12



- Play our Feed Greatness® game for deals!
- Orion® Cooler Giveaway!
- Specials on Purina® Feeds in stock!
- Grandpa's cheese samples available on Tuesday starting at 8 AM
- On Wednesday at 11 AM, rib-eye sandwiches and chips will be available upon donation to SPURS Therapeutic Riding Center. Make sure to visit with their volunteers, riders and their parents, board members and the director of this very special organization!

NOW HIRING!

Truss Pros

10954 424th Avenue | Britton, SD 57430

Looking for assemblers - both shifts

- * New Starting Wage - \$15/hr day shift and \$16/hr night shift
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BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Comprehensive Health, Dental & Vision insurance
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- Referral Bonuses

To apply visit www.uslbm.com/careers or call Diane at 605-448-2929.

SDDA's Role in Pesticide Regulation

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Agriculture (SDDA) is the primary enforcement agency for state and federal pesticide laws in cooperation with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The SDDA registers pesticide products, licenses applicators and conducts compliance inspections and investigations.

Pesticides sold in South Dakota must be registered with the SDDA to ensure that they meet the criteria established by state and federal law. If all criteria are met by the manufacturer, the SDDA registers the product for use in South Dakota.

Anyone applying pesticides for agricultural use must be licensed. The SDDA partners with South Dakota State University Extension to train applicators throughout the state. Applicators must renew their license every 2 or 5 years, depending on whether they are a commercial or private applicator.

The SDDA completes routine inspections to ensure compliance of applicators and agricultural retailers across the state. These include use inspections conducted during applications, inspections of storage and handling of pesticides, and record keeping inspections.

Additionally, the SDDA investigates alleged misuse, misapplication or spills of agricultural products, including pesticides and fertilizers. When the SDDA receives timely information of an alleged violation of pesticide laws, an agricultural inspector is assigned by the department to investigate. As part of the investigation, the inspector interviews applicators, witnesses and others relevant to the investigation; gathers weather data and spray records; takes photos and plant samples; and documents other relevant information.

The SDDA reviews the inspector's report, sample results and product label. It is important to keep in mind that not every inspection or investigation results in a violation. In many cases, applicators are properly licensed and pesticide applications are made according to product labels. The SDDA takes action any time a violation is found, although the SDDA is not mandated to do so by state law. Actions range from warnings to financial penalties to administrative sanctions. For example, if an applicator is found in violation they could be subject to a Class 2 misdemeanor and fined up to \$5,000 per violation by the circuit court, and have their license modified, suspended or revoked by the secretary of agriculture. Any financial penalty collected is deposited in the state general fund, not given to the SDDA or an impacted party.

Finally, damages caused by the off-target application of pesticides cannot be recovered by the SDDA. Damage can occur when there is no violation and violations can occur when damage is not present. Individuals with damage from off-target applications of pesticides can recover their damages through private civil actions between those damaged and those liable for the damage.

It is the SDDA's goal as a regulatory entity to assure the proper certification and licensure of pesticide applicators and the safe and effective use of pesticide products. For more information, visit the SDDA's website, sdda.sd.gov.

Structure Work Begins on Highway 212 in Watertown

WATERTOWN, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Transportation says a portion of Highway 212 will be closed for structure replacement over the Big Sioux River starting June 17, 2019.

This segment of the project will be closed to thru traffic from just west of Highway 20 to the west side of 3rd Street W. A signed detour will be in place for thru car traffic running along Broadway and 4th Avenue S. This work is being done concurrently with other phases of the project.

The \$10.3 million project will reconstruct one mile of Highway 212 from Highway 20 to Highway 81 and includes utility work, grading, storm sewer, curb and gutter, sidewalk, structure, concrete paving, lighting and signal upgrades.

Public meetings for the project continue to be held Thursdays at 10 a.m. at the Watertown Police Department located on North Maple Street in Watertown. These meetings will help the public to stay up to date on project timing and answer questions.

Thru truck traffic is being advised to take an alternate route due to anticipated traffic volumes, narrowed lanes and detour on city streets. All local traffic should make sure to slow down, be prepared to stop and watch for turning vehicles.

The overall completion date for the project is set for Oct. 25, 2019.

For complete road construction information, visit www.safetravelusa.com/sd or dial 511.

Saul Phillips Takes the Reigns of Northern State Men's Basketball



Aberdeen, S.D. – Saul Phillips was announced as the 22nd head men's basketball coach in Northern State University program history earlier today at a press conference from the Barnett Center. Phillips comes to Northern State after Division I head coaching stops at North Dakota State University and Ohio University. He is just the sixth head coach for the Wolves since 1946.

"I am honored and thrilled to be the head coach at Northern State University," explained Phillips. "Obviously the legacy I am following of Swisher, Wachs, Olson, Meyer, and Sather is humbling and it's exciting. Taking over program with this type of tradition is something that is unique and is kind of a once in a lifetime opportunity, and I look forward to trying to advance the legacy of this program and very humbly serve as the head basketball coach here."

Phillips takes the helm of the Northern State program after spending the past five seasons at Ohio University, and previous seven at North Dakota State. He went 81-77 overall leading the Bobcats and 134-84 with the Bison.

Phillips will look to continue the strong tradition of Northern State basketball, as the Wolves have won back-to-back NSIC Conference Championships and are the NCAA Division II National Attendance leaders for the last 11 seasons, averaging well over 3,000 fans per game.

"We're excited to welcome Saul and his family to Wolves Nation," noted Dr. Tim Downs, Northern State President. "Saul has a long history of coaching great basketball teams and I believe he will pick up where Coach Sather left off. I expect the community of Aberdeen and the surrounding region to rally behind Saul and the team. Our university's goal is to unleash the potential of our students, community and region. After visiting with Saul, I feel confident that he will continue Northern's long tradition of winning basketball. Go Wolves!"

Phillips led the Ohio University Bobcats to the CBI semifinal round in his tenure with the program. OU saw 11 all-conference performances in five seasons under Phillips including one MAC Player of the Year honor (Antonio Campbell) and one MAC Freshman of the Year award (Jordan Dartis). Jaaron Simmons broke the single season Ohio University and MAC assist records in 2015-16, dishing out 275 on the year. Campbell was an Associated Press All-America selection following a stellar 2015-16 campaign, where the Bobcats tallied their best season under Phillips going 23-12 overall.

"We couldn't be more excited to welcome Saul and his wonderful family to NSU and Aberdeen," added Josh Moon, Director of Athletics. "Coach Phillips has a proven track record of success as a head coach, winning at the highest levels of college basketball. He has coached and studied under some of the best coaches in the country and his diverse experience will be a tremendous asset to our program. He understands and respects the rich tradition of excellence that is Wolves basketball and his personality and approachability will help make for an easy transition to NSU and Aberdeen."

In his seven seasons at North Dakota State, Phillips led the Bison to two Summit League Championships, two Summit League Tournament Championships, and two appearances in the NCAA Tournament. A total of 14 Bison earned all-conference accolades in his seven seasons, while four were named to the NABC All-District team and two tallied All-American accolades.

Phillips directed NDSU to their first Summit League crown and NCAA Division I Championship appearance in 2009; he was named the Summit League Coach of the Year and was one of ten finalists for the Hugh Durham Mid-Major Coach of the Year award. Senior Ben Woodside received Summit League Player of the Year honors that season, the first in NDSU program history. The 2013-14 campaign brought similar honors for the program winning their second Summit League Championship and a berth to the NCAA Tournament. In addition to being named the league coach of the year, senior Taylor Braun earned the league player of the year award.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 8 of 59

The Bison advanced to the third round of the NCAA Tournament in his final season with the program, posting a 26-7 record overall, and 12-2 mark in Summit League action. The No. 12-seeded Bison knocked off No. 5-seeded Oklahoma in overtime, 80-75 in the Second Round. He left his legacy on the program as the fourth winningest coach in school history.

Phillips continued, "I think we have a group that can be successful, I think we have a lot of talent, I think I have to mesh myself with this group and be part of what they are doing. I am confident that my experiences and the people I have learned from hopefully can add some energy. But I do want to be perfectly clear that Paul and his predecessors have put this program in a spot where it is an honor to be taking it over and I will do everything I can to uphold what has been done here already."

Phillips began his coaching career as a graduate assistant at NSIC counterpart Wayne State College as a member of Greg McDermott's staff. From there he made assistant coaching stops at Lake Superior and Milwaukee, before taking the Director of Basketball Operations post at Wisconsin. With the Badgers, Phillips handled the day-to-day scheduling, coordinated travel, budgeting and on-campus recruiting for Bo Ryan's staff. Phillips then joined former Northern State assistant, Tim Miles as an assistant at NDSU. He spent three years on Miles' staff before being elevated into his first head-coaching role in 2007.

A native of Reedsburg, Wis., Phillips graduated from Wisconsin-Platteville with a degree in business and psychology in 1996. He played basketball for four seasons at UWP under Bo Ryan and was captain of the Pioneers' undefeated national championship team in 1995.

Phillips and his wife, Nicole, have one daughter, Jordan, and two sons, Charlie and Benjamin.

What Others are Saying

"Being a proud graduate of Northern State University and having the opportunity to start my coaching career in a program with such great tradition, pride, and support makes it very special for me to see my good friend and colleague Saul Phillips as the new head basketball coach of the Wolves. Saul and I helped usher North Dakota State University into the Division 1 era with tremendous success. He built on that by winning two Summit League championships and taking the Bison to the NCAA tournament twice. He won at Ohio University as well as winning championships as a player at UW-Platteville under Hall of Fame coach Bo Ryan. Saul knows the recipe for success. Saul and Nicole along with their children, Jordan, Charlie, and Ben, will be a tremendous addition to Northern State University and Aberdeen. Congratulations to all." – Tim Miles, Former NCAA Division I Head Coach at Nebraska, Colorado State, and North Dakota State

"Congrats to Northern State on a terrific hire! Saul is a connector. His players and the Aberdeen community are going to love him. He is the perfect coach to carry on the strong tradition of NSU basketball." – Greg McDermott, Head Coach at Creighton University

"Saul Phillips is a tremendous basketball coach who has tremendous passion for the game, winning, and his athletes. He is not only a tremendous basketball coach but also, a tremendous person with a wonderful family. They will be a great addition to Northern and the Aberdeen community. He will continue the great tradition of Wolves basketball and the athletes will love playing for him." – Gene Taylor, Director of Athletics at Kansas State University

"Northern State has made a great choice in Saul Phillips. As a player, he was a good listener and a fast learner; as a coach on my scout team staff, he was running the offense better than the opponents we were preparing for. He believes in player development and bringing people together. I look forward to the Wolves continued success." - Bo Ryan, Former Head Coach at Wisconsin-Platteville, Milwaukee, and Wisconsin, and College Basketball Hall of Fame Member

"Saul Phillips is a tremendous choice for Northern State. Phillips has never forgotten where he came from and what made him a successful teacher and coach of the game. From Wisconsin to North Dakota to Ohio, Phillips has always stayed true to himself. He is of high-character, energetic, engaging and treats his program like family. His infectious personality will create a healthy and welcoming atmosphere at Northern State. No job or task is below Saul. This should be a great fit." – Andy Katz, NCAA.com

Today in Weather History

June 12, 1924: A tornado moved southeast from the southwestern edge of Lake Kampeska, passing southwest of Watertown. Two barns were destroyed, and 20 smaller farm buildings were heavily damaged. This tornado was estimated to have F2 strength.

June 12, 1983: Lightning struck and killed two cows near Miller in Hand County. Lightning also hit a home six miles north of Aberdeen, breaking a ceramic statue, and blow out light bulbs. Another home in Aberdeen was struck by lightning, rupturing a gas line and starting the house on fire. Also, heavy rains up to seven inches fall around the area. Some storm total rainfall amounts include; 2.00 inches at 2NW of Stephan; 2.40 inches in Miller; 3.03 at 4 miles west of Mellette; and 6.30 inches in Orient.

June 12, 1994: In Hand County, a thunderstorm caused an estimated 3 million dollars in crop damage. Hail, the largest being baseball size, was reported in drifts of three to four feet high. About 70 thousand acres of cropland and pastures were destroyed. Pheasants, ducks were killed by the hail and many cattle injured. Many windows were broken in homes, holes were punched in mobile homes, damaged occurred to contents of dwellings from hail which entered through windows, and many vehicles were extensively damaged.






June 12, 2013: A line of thunderstorms moving northeast across the region brought damaging wind gusts from 60 to 80 mph to parts of central and northeastern South Dakota. Many branches along with several trees were downed. Some buildings were also damaged with a couple of buildings destroyed. An estimated eighty mph wind destroyed a cabin on the east shore of the Missouri River and north-northwest of Pierre. A hundred foot by seventy-five-foot storage building was flattened south of Doland in Spink County. Tractors and planters and other equipment in the building were damaged.

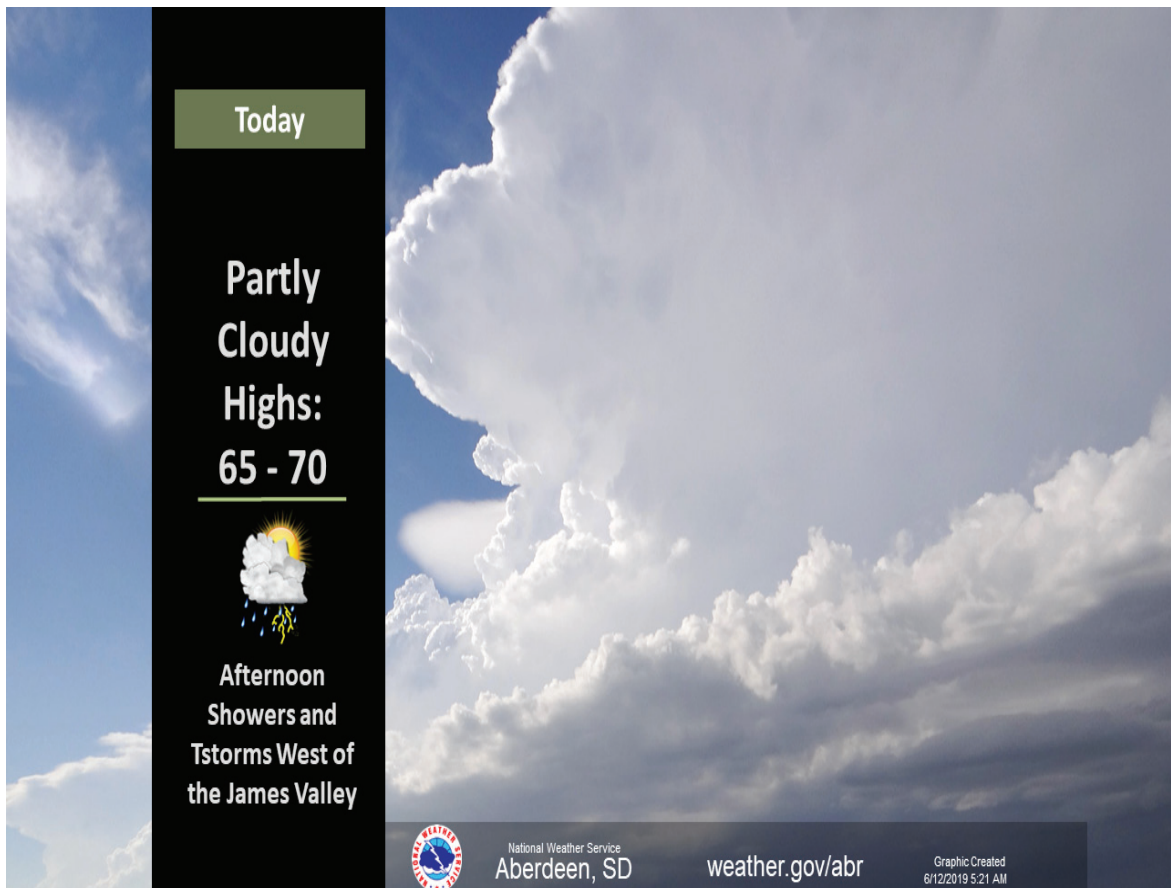
1915: An estimated F4 tornado moved northeast from northwest of Waterville, Iowa crossing the Mississippi River two miles south of Ferryville, Wisconsin. A man and his daughter were killed in one of three homes that were obliterated southwest of "Heytman," a small railroad station on the Mississippi River. 60 buildings and eight homes were destroyed in Wisconsin. This tornado caused approximately \$200,000 in damage. In addition to this tornado, another estimated F4 tornado moved northeast across Fayette and Clayton Counties in northeast Iowa. One farm was devastated, the house and barn leveled. Heavy machinery was thrown 300 yards. Clothing was carried two miles.

1948: The Columbia River Basin flood peaked on this date in the Northwest. The flood produced the highest water level in the basin since the flood there in 1894. The damage estimate for the 1948 flood was \$101 million, and 75 lives were lost.

Broton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 10 of 59

Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Slight Chance T-storms then Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Becoming Sunny	Mostly Clear	Mostly Sunny then Chance T-storms
High: 69 °F	Low: 46 °F	High: 78 °F	Low: 58 °F	High: 87 °F



Today

Partly
Cloudy
Highs:
65 - 70



Afternoon
Showers and
Tstorms West of
the James Valley

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
weather.gov/abr

Graphic Created
6/12/2019 5:21 AM

Published on: 06/12/2019 at 6:27AM

Showers and thunderstorms will develop this afternoon, mainly west of the James Valley, before dissipating this evening. Cooler temps today with highs struggling to climb out of the 60s.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 11 of 59

Yesterday's Groton Weather

High Temp: 61 °F at 1:38 AM

Low Temp: 59 °F at 3:15 AM

Wind: 7 mph at 1:48 AM

Day Rain: 0.18

Today's Info

Record High: 103° in 1956

Record Low: 37° in 2012

Average High: 76°F

Average Low: 53°F

Average Precip in June.: 1.30

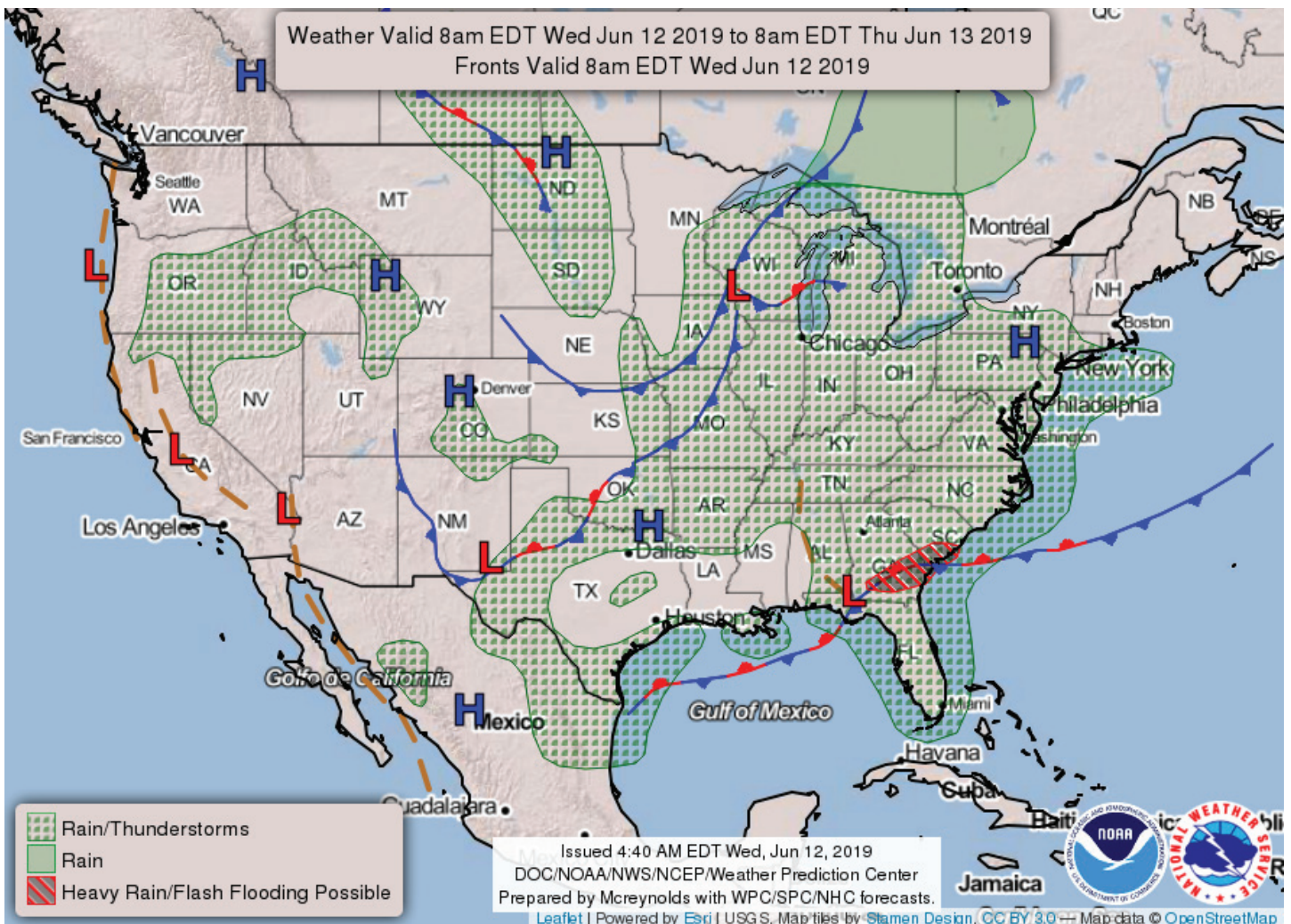
Precip to date in June.: 0.40

Average Precip to date: 8.62

Precip Year to Date: 8.19

Sunset Tonight: 9:23 p.m.

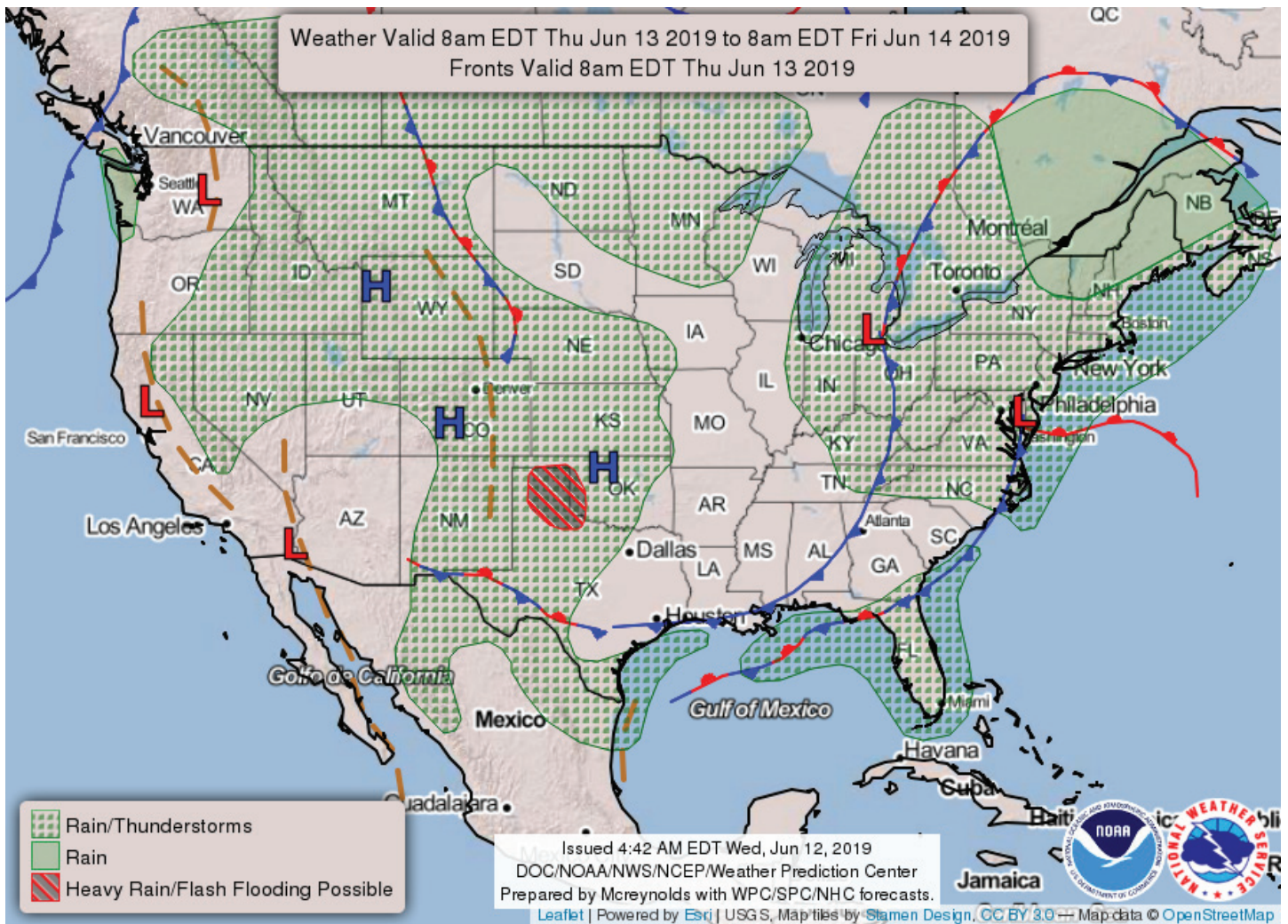
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:45 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 12 of 59

Tomorrow's Weather Map



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 13 of 59



PASS IT ON!

It was just before noon when Joseph walked into my office. His clothes were dirty and wrinkled. He must have been cold from the driving rain and winter wind.

I know I look nasty, he said. Ive been sleeping in a barn for the past three nights. Theres no heat, and its been hard to stay warm. Mind if I sit in your chair over in the corner? It really looks comfortable.

This soft drink is all Ive had for two days. Im a diabetic and need to eat but Im drinking this drink as slowly as I can until I find someone who can help me. I was thrown out of my home Christmas Day because I couldnt pay the rent. Do you have any money you can give me? Ill have some by Friday and can pay you back then.

Our offices are located on a state highway, and many folks like Joseph stop by daily. Cal stopped by Monday. His mother, along with his two-month-old daughter, was killed by a drunk driver the day before. He was on his way to Florida to make funeral arrangements before he deployed to Iraq with his Marine unit. He did not ask for anything except prayer. I saw your Chapel, he said, and I knew I could find someone here who could pray for me. Thats really all I need.

It is difficult to remember a day when no one has stopped by for help. Their stories are compelling, often even heart-breaking. Occasionally they are untrue. In the end, however, they answer to God for what they do. He who mocks the poor shows contempt for their Maker.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to help those who are poor and in need. Youve sent them our way for a reason. May we show Your love, mercy, and grace to those in need. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 17:5a He who mocks the poor shows contempt for their Maker.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 14 of 59

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

Some rural states double down on attracting new residents

By LISA RATHKE Associated Press

BENNINGTON, Vt. (AP) — With jobs unfilled and young people moving away, some rural states are doubling down on efforts to attract new blood by expanding programs that offer incentives to move there.

Over the past decade, states including South Dakota, Maine and Vermont have lured new residents with financial incentives or job help. Vermont's program has drawn 33 remote workers and their families to the state so far this year. In January, the program will expand to accept applicants who come to the state to work for local firms.

A Wyoming program has helped about 70 people return to the state by assisting in their job searches since the program started in 2015. And a Maine organization and campaign to lure new residents this year will be focusing on bringing former Mainers back.

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

20-34-39-43-57, Mega Ball: 13, Megaplier: 3

(twenty, thirty-four, thirty-nine, forty-three, fifty-seven; Mega Ball: thirteen; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$66 million

Native American health board to operate most of hospital

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A health board that advocates for Native Americans in the Great Plains will soon operate most of Sioux San Hospital in Rapid City.

The Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board, on behalf of the Oglala and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes, will take over most of the hospital's management from federal Indian Health Service, according to a news release from the agency. The transfer is scheduled for July 21. The Indian Health Service will continue to provide health care at the hospital, which serves Native Americans, the Rapid City Journal reported.

The Indian Health Service "recognizes that tribal leaders and members are in the best position to understand the health care needs and priorities of their communities," according to the statement, which said more than 60 percent of the agency's funding is administered by tribes.

In December, the Indian Health Service said it was terminating negotiations over hospital management after the Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council dropped its support of the transfer to the health board.

Charmaine White Face opposes the pending transfer. White Face — a Lakota elder, former Oglala Sioux Tribe treasurer and spokeswoman for the Sioux Nation Treaty Council — said she is concerned that not everyone will receive health care, or quality health care, at Sioux San once the transfer is complete.

"They're not a health care management system. They are an advocacy organization," White Face said of the health board. She has filed a cease-and-desist petition in state court in Rapid City, arguing that the health board is a state organization — not a tribal one — and that its agreement with the Indian Health Service is invalid. A hearing is scheduled Friday.

Sioux San is set to undergo a multi-million-dollar renovation. The Indian Health Service is soliciting bids for an \$80 to \$120 million, 200,000 square-foot and eco-friendly facility at the Sioux San campus in west Rapid City that will serve as a replacement for the current facilities.

The main building at Sioux San was built in 1938 to treat tuberculosis patients. Before that, the campus

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 16 of 59

served as a Native American boarding school.

The health board and the three tribes previously advocated for building an entirely new campus on a 25-acre plot of land in east Sioux Falls.

This story corrects that Great Plains Tribal Chairmen's Health Board will take over most of the hospital's management on behalf of Oglala and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes instead of Oglala and Cheyenne River Sioux tribes taking over most of the hospital's management.

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

Sioux Falls shifts city rule to comply with new gun sale law

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A longstanding Sioux Falls ordinance requiring gun sales to be registered with city police is being rewritten to comply with a new law that says only state government has the right to regulate the possession, sale or purchase of firearms, the mayor's office said.

The current ordinance requires pawnbrokers, gun dealers and secondhand vendors to report a firearm's serial number to the Sioux Falls Police Department so officers can check LEADS — an online database — to make sure it isn't stolen.

The new version written by Mayor Paul TenHaken's office and being presented to the City Council Tuesday removes reference to guns and gun dealers altogether, and instead requires pawnbrokers and secondhand vendors to notify police of any items with serial numbers. All firearms produced since 1968 have serial numbers, The Argus Leader reported.

The changes follow the passage of House Bill 1056 over the winter that effectively bars municipal gun-related ordinances. That law takes effect in July.

T.J. Nelson, deputy chief of staff in TenHaken's office, said via email that the proposed amendments intend to bring the ordinance in line with state law while allowing the city to keep stolen firearms out of Sioux Falls.

The author of the new law, Rep. Sue Peterson, could not be reached for comment Monday. The former president of Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association, Brandon Maddox, who worked on the legislation with Peterson, said private attorneys would review the ordinance to ensure it adheres to state law.

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

Longtime Division I coach to take over D-II Northern State

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — Small-college stalwarts Northern State of South Dakota pulled off an NCAA Division I swap when it landed Saul Phillips to coach its men's basketball program.

The former North Dakota State and Ohio University coach was named Tuesday to replace Paul Sather, recently selected to lead Division I University of North Dakota.

Phillips has won 215 games at the Division I level. He led North Dakota State to two national tournament appearances and won a second-round game in 2014.

The Wisconsin native took over at Ohio in 2014. He was 81-77 with the Bobcats, including one 23-win season. He was let go this year after back-to-back losing campaigns.

The Wolves advanced to the Division II title game two years ago. They have led Division II in attendance for 11 straight seasons.

2 brothers accused in Sioux Falls kidnapping

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Two brothers from Sioux Falls are accused of kidnapping a teenage boy and threatening him at gunpoint.

Police say the 17-year-old boy was sitting in his car at a stoplight Saturday about 2 a.m. when a 19-year-

old man jumped in, pulled out a gun and told him to drive. The boy drove to another intersection where he and the man struggled over the gun.

The Argus Leader reports police spokesman Sam Clemens says the victim ejected the magazine and threw it out of the window. The man got out to retrieve the magazine and that's when his 23-year-old brother showed up and told him to shoot the victim, who drove away.

Police don't know why the 17-year-old was targeted.

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

Livestock development initiative criticized as bribery

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota initiative to promote livestock development is being criticized as state-sanctioned bribery.

The initiative offers counties hundreds of thousands of dollars each time they approve a new permit for a large-scale livestock operation. Former Democratic legislator Kathy Tyler is a member of the grassroots group Dakota Rural Action. Tyler says the program amounts to bribery.

The initiative allows developers of a concentrated animal feeding operation, known as a CAFO, to assign sales and tax rebates to a county government if local officials approve a conditional use permit for their project.

Tyler tells the Rapid City Journal that concerns about noise, odors and environmental damage from the large livestock operations might be too easy to overlook by county officials eager for the revenue.

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

Confusion abounds as Trump's July 4 plans remain a mystery

By ASHRAF KHALIL Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With just over three weeks to go, exactly what's going to happen in Washington on the Fourth of July remains a subject of intense confusion.

Will the nation's premier Independence Day celebration be centered around the Washington Monument or shift to the Lincoln Memorial, as the White House has reportedly requested? Will President Donald Trump follow through on his plans to give a speech? And, if he does, will the speech be open to anyone, including protesters, or will the White House restrict his audience to supporters at the traditionally nonpolitical event?

The White House hasn't revealed its plans. The National Park Service, which is primarily responsible for the event, has also gone silent. That leaves the city government, which helps with security, in the dark.

Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton, the District of Columbia's representative in Congress, said interdepartmental planning meetings for July 4 usually begin up to three months in advance. But to her knowledge, none of those meetings has happened.

"The city is scrambling to figure out what to do, because all they have is the outline of what (the White House) wants," Norton said. She said she approached the Park Service for details but: "They wouldn't tell us a thing. You know why? Because they don't know a thing."

Mayor Muriel Bowser declined repeated requests for comment.

Independence Day normally draws tens of thousands of people to the National Mall for a celebration capped by fireworks. A major security overhaul was implemented following the Sept. 11 attacks, but the occasion has run smoothly for years.

The first sign that 2019's celebration may be a little different came in a February tweet from Trump announcing a special "Salute to America" on July 4 that would feature "an address by your favorite President, me!"

Last week, a National Park Service official was quoted in The Washington Post saying the White House was planning a Trump speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial during the event.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 18 of 59

But since that report, the White House and the National Park Service have refused to comment. Park Service spokesman Mike Litterst released a terse statement saying only that "We continue to work with the White House on creating a Salute to America program that will bring Americans from all over the country together in celebration of our great nation."

Norton is predicting a security nightmare, with a new location and format being instituted on short notice and the president's movements and security requirements causing chaos.

"This will be all sorts of headaches for security," she said.

The confusion extends to D.C. activists, who are uncertain about how to respond to a July 4 Trump speech. Some see a golden opportunity to disrupt Trump in a way he's not used to; others fear a trap.

Medea Benjamin, co-founder of the Code Pink movement, had planned to be in Havana on July 4 to protest the Trump administration's new restrictions on travel to Cuba. But she changed those plans last week, and her group is now organizing a protest.

"It's not that often that President Trump appears in a public venue in front of a crowd that's not guaranteed to be friendly," she said. "It's going to be really hard for them to control. We'll see what kind of trouble we can get into."

Others fear that an attempt to directly confront Trump or disrupt the event could backfire.

Nadine Bloch, a local organizer with a decadeslong history of protest, said a speech would provide leftist activists an opportunity to appear before TV cameras and get a large audience for their messages. But she said there's a risk that protesters could overplay their hand and end up being blamed for ruining the Fourth of July.

"It's a delicate balance," she said. "You could end up just making more enemies."

Adam Eiding, a prominent local activist, predicted that attempts to disrupt the speech will be easily suppressed, with security concerns as a justification.

"I fully expect the president to create a VIP section right up front where only his supporters are allowed in," he said. "Any protesters will be reduced to a couple people shouting in the distance."

Eiding said he's leaning toward sitting out this event.

"I think it's a trap to get the opposition to come out and mess up July Fourth," he said.

Follow Khalil on Twitter at: <https://twitter.com/ashrafkhalil>

Japan premier in Iran as Yemen rebels strike Saudi airport

By **AMIR VAHDAT, AYA BATRAWY and JON GAMBRELL** Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe landed in Tehran on Wednesday on a mission to ease tensions between the U.S. and Iran, just hours after Iranian-backed rebels in Yemen launched an attack on an airport in Saudi Arabia, wounding 26 people.

Abe's trip is the highest-level effort yet to de-escalate the crisis as Tehran appears poised to break the 2015 nuclear deal it struck with world powers, an accord that the Trump administration pulled out of last year. It's also the first visit of a sitting Japanese premier in the 40 years since the Islamic Revolution.

But success may prove difficult for Abe, as the Houthi rebel attack on Saudi's Abha regional airport underscored. Separately, the front page of the daily newspaper Farheekhtegan, or Educated, in Iran on Wednesday morning published a picture of a mushroom cloud from a nuclear blast — a reference to America's bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II.

"How Can You Trust A War Criminal, Mr. Abe?" the newspaper asked in dual English and Farsi headlines. Hard-line news outlets in Iran immediately picked up the front page from the paper, published by students of Islamic Azad University, which has campuses across the nation.

Abe's plane landed at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport on Wednesday afternoon where he was greeted by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif. He was to immediately meet Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

He landed just hours after the attack in Abha. The Houthis said they launched a cruise missile at the

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 19 of 59

Saudi airport while the kingdom said 26 people were hurt.

Though there were no fatalities, it was the largest number of civilians to be injured in Saudi Arabia as a result of an attack by the rebels, known as Houthis, since the start of the Saudi-led war in Yemen more than four years ago.

The rebels' Al-Masirah satellite news channel said the missile hit its intended target, halting air traffic at the airport in the town of Abha in the kingdom's southwest, some 165 kilometers (100 miles) from the Saudi-Yemen border. The war in Yemen, the Arab world's poorest country, has killed tens of thousands of civilians, with most of the deaths blamed on Saudi-led coalition airstrikes, and has pushed Yemen to the brink of famine.

Saudi coalition spokesman Turki al-Maliki was quoted on the state-run Al-Ekhabirya news channel as saying three women and two children were among those hurt and that eight people were hospitalized while 18 sustained minor injuries.

At least one Yemeni and one Indian national were among those injured in the attack, which al-Turki said struck the airport's arrivals hall between 2 a.m. and 3 a.m.

The Houthis have previously used ballistic missiles to target the Saudi capital, Riyadh, and the airport there. More recently, they have launched bomb-laden drones targeting a key oil pipeline and the southwest city of Khamis Mushait.

Batrawy and Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo and Samy Magdy in Cairo contributed to this report.

Ex-FBI leaders to testify on Russian threat, Mueller report

By **ERIC TUCKER, MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats angling to spotlight damning allegations from special counsel Robert Mueller's report are focusing Wednesday on contacts between the Trump 2016 presidential campaign and Russia.

The House Intelligence Committee has invited two former leaders of the FBI's national security branch to testify about the counterintelligence implications of Mueller's investigation. Mueller did not find a criminal conspiracy between the campaign and Russia but did detail a series of interactions and outreach that have alarmed Democrats and accelerated calls from some in the party for impeachment proceedings and renewed investigations.

Also Wednesday, the president's eldest son, Donald J. Trump Jr., is scheduled to testify behind closed doors before the Senate Intelligence Committee, according to two people familiar with the meeting. Senators want to discuss answers he gave the panel's staff in a 2017 interview and to another Senate panel in a separate interview that year.

President Donald Trump's former lawyer, Michael Cohen, told a House committee in February that he had briefed Trump Jr. approximately 10 times about a plan to build a Trump Tower in Moscow before the presidential election. Trump Jr. told the Judiciary panel he was only "peripherally aware" of the real estate proposal.

In the House hearing, both ex-FBI officials, Robert Anderson and Stephanie Douglas, retired from the bureau before it launched its investigation into the Trump campaign in summer 2016. By inviting them instead of agents involved in the investigation, Democrats are giving center stage to longtime career officials likely to be seen as more neutral and devoid of the political baggage that accompanies some of President Trump's more outspoken critics, including former FBI deputy director Andrew McCabe and former agent Peter Strzok. Both were fired last year.

It is unclear whether Republicans will seek to undermine the credibility of the witnesses at Wednesday's hearing, or merely try to minimize their testimony by noting that they weren't part of the investigation.

The hearing comes two days after the House Judiciary Committee heard from John Dean, the former White House counsel in the Nixon administration, who described how the Watergate investigation could

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 20 of 59

function as a roadmap for probes into the current president.

It also comes as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has brushed back calls for impeachment, saying Tuesday that "it's not even close" to having enough support.

The House voted 229-191 Tuesday to approve a sweeping resolution that will allow Democrats to accelerate their legal battles with the Trump administration. They're preparing Wednesday to hold more Trump officials in contempt for defying congressional subpoenas.

"We need answers to the questions left unanswered by the Mueller report," Pelosi said on the House floor ahead of the vote.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy countered that the Democratic maneuvers are all "just a desperate attempt to re-litigate the Mueller investigation."

Said McCarthy, "It's an impeachment effort in everything but name."

Earlier in the day Pelosi all but ignored questions about impeachment during a policy conference, saying the Democrats' strategy is "legislating, investigating, litigating" — in that order.

Pressed about Trump, she said: "I'm done with him. I don't even want to talk about him."

The far-reaching House resolution approved Tuesday empowers committee chairs to sue top Trump administration officials — Attorney General William Barr, former White House Counsel Don McGahn and others — to force compliance with congressional subpoenas, including those for Mueller's full report and his underlying evidence.

The move makes it easier to sue Trump administration officials and potential witnesses by empowering committee chairmen to take legal action without a vote of the full House, as long as they have approval from a bipartisan group of House leaders.

The Judiciary Committee Chairman, Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York, urged his colleagues to support the legislation "so we can get into court and break the stonewall without delay."

It's unclear how quickly Democrats will go to court. House leaders signaled they will hold off on suing Barr after the panel struck a deal with the Justice Department to receive some underlying materials from Mueller's report.

A court case could come more quickly for McGahn, who has defied subpoenas for documents and testimony at the behest of the White House.

McGahn is in "a particularly vulnerable situation" as a private person no longer employed by the government, said Rep. Hakeem Jefferies, D-N.Y., a member of the leadership team. "He should begin to cooperate immediately or face the consequences."

In an evolving legal strategy, Democrats have moved toward lawsuits and away from criminal contempt as they investigate the Trump administration. Criminal contempt would be referred to the Justice Department, where it would certainly be rejected. In the courts, meanwhile, Democrats have scored some early wins over Trump.

Easing tensions with Barr, at least for now, Nadler said the panel will not vote to hold the attorney general in criminal contempt. But with Tuesday's vote to authorize civil legal action, Democrats made clear that they are still willing to go to court if necessary.

Associated Press writer Laurie Kellman in Washington contributed to this report.

Sick Gaza child caught in Israeli permit regime dies alone

By ISABEL DEBRE and FARES AKRAM Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — When Palestinian preschooler Aisha a-Lulu came out of brain surgery in a strange Jerusalem hospital room, she called out for her mother and father. She repeated the cry over and over, but her parents never came.

Instead of a family member, Israeli authorities had approved a stranger to escort Aisha from the blockaded Gaza Strip to the east Jerusalem hospital. As her condition deteriorated, the child was returned to Gaza unconscious. One week later, she was dead.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 21 of 59

A photo of Aisha smiling softly in her hospital bed, brown curls swaddled in bandages, drew an outpouring on social media. The wrenching details of her last days have shined a light on Israel's vastly complex and stringent system for issuing Gaza exit permits.

It is a bureaucracy that has Israeli and Palestinian authorities blaming each other for its shortfalls, while inflicting a heavy toll on Gaza's sick children and their parents.

"The most difficult thing is to leave your child in the unknown," said Waseem a-Lulu, Aisha's father. "Jerusalem is just an hour away, but it feels as though it is another planet."

So far this year, roughly half of applications for patient companion permits were rejected or left unanswered by Israel, according to the World Health Organization. That has forced over 600 patients, including some dozen children under 18, to make the trek out of the territory alone or without close family by their side.

The system stems from the Hamas militant group's takeover of Gaza in 2007, when it violently ousted the Western-backed Palestinian Authority. Israel and Egypt responded by imposing a blockade that tightly restricted movement in and out of Gaza.

The blockade, which Israel says is necessary to prevent Hamas from arming, has precipitated a financial and humanitarian crisis in the enclave. For years, Gaza's 2 million residents have endured rising poverty and unemployment, undrinkable groundwater and frequent electricity outages. Public hospitals wrestle with chronic shortages of drugs and basic medical equipment. Israel blames Hamas, which it considers a terrorist group, for the crisis.

In what it portrays as a humanitarian gesture to help Gaza's civilians, Israel permits Palestinian patients to seek medical treatment at hospitals in Israel and the West Bank once they pass a series of bureaucratic hurdles. COGAT, the Israeli defense body that issues the permits, says it insists that all patients cross with an escort, usually a close relative, unless they wish to go alone or require immediate treatment that doesn't allow time for security screening.

In order to get a permit, patients must first submit a diagnosis to the West Bank-based Palestinian Health Ministry, proving that their treatment isn't available in Gaza. Then a Palestinian liaison requests exit permits from COGAT, which reviews the applications and passes them to Israel's Shin Bet security agency for background checks.

According to WHO, the approval rate has plummeted in recent years.

It said that in 2012, Israel allowed in 93% of patients and 83% of their companions for treatment. For the month of April 2019, the figure stands at just 65% of patients and 52% of their companions.

A COGAT official disputed the figures, saying they don't take into account that the number of permit applications has grown as Gaza's health care system deteriorates, and that Israel has started issuing permits less regularly but for prolonged stays. The official, speaking on condition of anonymity under agency rules, said COGAT has tried to ease restrictions by designating a permit specifically for parents of child patients.

The agency said it issued 4,000 permits for patient escorts in the first quarter of 2019, including 1,398 for parents of sick children.

After being diagnosed with brain cancer, Aisha received immediate approval to get out of Gaza for what was hoped to be life-saving surgery. But when her parents approached the Palestinian Civil Affairs Commission for escort permits, their process ground to a halt.

To their bewilderment, Palestinian officials told them not to apply, saying it was too risky.

At 37, Waseem is below the age that Israel deems acceptable for swift entry on security grounds. Today, all men under 55 require extra screening, which means waiting, usually for months, according to Mor Efrat, the Gaza and West Bank director for Physicians for Human Rights Israel. As for Aisha's mother, Muna, a quirk of her upbringing in Egypt left her without an official Israeli-issued ID card required to receive a permit.

"We tell families to find a companion that won't give Israel any reason to refuse," said Osama Najjar, spokesman for the Palestinian Health Ministry. "We want to save the child and, yes, that can mean sending them alone."

In this sense, the Palestinian Authority "acts as a subcontractor for Israel," said Efrat, forcing parents

to make a difficult choice: delay their child's urgent care, or search for someone else that Israel would be more likely to let cross.

Aisha's parents said they scoured for alternatives, applying for an aunt and her 75-year-old grandmother, but Israel rejected both.

The girl's only remaining hope, the Palestinian office told them, was to apply for as many older women as possible from their extended social network. A permit for Halima al-Ades, a remote family acquaintance whom Aisha had never met, was approved.

Muna said she had no choice but to sign COGAT's consent form and whisk her daughter out of Gaza for immediate treatment. She said the frustration of the sprawling bureaucracy, and the painful memory of her 5-year-old daughter crying for her on the phone during her last days, haunts her.

"It was the hardest time of my life," she said. "My heart was being ripped out every day and every hour."

The Shin Bet declined to comment on the case. But in a statement, it emphasized Israel's security concerns about Gaza patients and their companions. "The terrorist organizations in the Gaza Strip, headed by Hamas, are working tirelessly to cynically exploit the humanitarian and medical assistance provided by Israel," it said.

This means that Palestinians are often turned down without explanation or for reasons out of their control. "I feel confident telling you that most of these rejections are arbitrary," said Efrat, of Physicians for Human Rights Israel.

Israel denies any official change in policy.

Alon Eviatar, a former high-ranking official with COGAT, said the goal remains the same. "On the ground, this means to make daily life as difficult as possible for Hamas, without crossing the red line to humanitarian disaster," he said.

Eviatar acknowledged that the Israeli permit system was ineffective, inefficient and overburdened. "We are desperate for an alternative, to get Gaza to take care of itself and stop relying on Israel," he said.

Aisha's doctor in Jerusalem, Ahmad Khandaqji, said he has treated countless lone patients from Gaza over the past year, but that Aisha's story stuck with him. "She felt abandoned and betrayed," he said. "We saw how that directly impacted her recovery."

Akram reported from Gaza City, Gaza Strip.

Trump and Biden trade jabs in possible 2020 election preview

By **THOMAS BEAUMONT, DARLENE SUPERVILLE and WILL WEISSERT** Associated Press

DAVENPORT, Iowa (AP) — President Donald Trump and former Vice President Joe Biden repeatedly laid into each other while traveling in the battleground state of Iowa, unleashing verbal attacks that at times felt more appropriate for the final weeks before Election Day than a lazy summer about 17 months before voters go to the polls.

The back-and-forth on Tuesday laid bare the rising political stakes for each man. Trump has zeroed in on Biden as a threat to his reelection chances and is testing themes to keep him at bay. Biden, meanwhile, is campaigning as a front-runner with near-universal name recognition, relishing the fight with Trump while trying to ensure he doesn't ignore the demands of the crowded Democratic primary.

"People don't respect him," Trump said of Biden after touring a renewable energy facility in Council Bluffs. "Even the people that he's running against, they're saying: 'Where is he? What happened?'"

With a dose of exaggeration, the Republican president added: "He makes his stance in Iowa once every two weeks and then he mentions my name 74 times in one speech. I don't know. That reminds me of Crooked Hillary. She did the same thing." He went on to muse that standing for nothing but opposing his policies was the reason Clinton lost.

At almost the same moment in Mount Pleasant, Biden noted that his staff told him Trump was watching footage of his criticism of the president from early in the day as Air Force One landed in Iowa.

"I guess he's really fascinated by me," Biden said. "I find it fascinating." He started to say more but then

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 23 of 59

stopped himself, quipping: "My mother would say: 'Joey, focus. Don't descend. Stay up.'"

Speaking Tuesday evening in Davenport, Biden suggested Trump was an "existential threat to America" and said voters must stop the president's attempts to elevate his office beyond its traditional limits of power. He said Trump is "breaking down the barriers that constrain his power" and mockingly accused him of believing that he has "complete power."

"No, you don't, Donald Trump," Biden cried, drawing cheers from a crowd of around 500 at the Mississippi Valley Fairgrounds.

Biden is campaigning again in Iowa on Wednesday, this time without Trump in the state.

For his part, Trump has insisted that Biden is the candidate he wants to face in 2020.

"I'd rather run against Biden than anybody," Trump told reporters on the White House lawn before flying to Iowa. "I think he's the weakest mentally, and I like running against people that are weak mentally."

Biden began the day Tuesday in Ottumwa, the heart of Wapello County, a meat-packing and agricultural manufacturing center that Trump was the first Republican to carry since Dwight D. Eisenhower. The former vice president hit Trump on the economy — an issue the president often promotes as his chief strength in a time of low unemployment.

"I hope his presence here will be a clarifying event because Iowa farmers have been crushed by his tariffs toward China," Biden said. "It's really easy to be tough when someone else absorbs the pain, farmers and manufacturers."

Biden added that Trump "backed off his threat of tariffs to Mexico basically because he realized he was likely to lose" in manufacturing states such as Michigan and Ohio. He broadly branded Trump "an existential threat to this country" and said his behavior is often beneath the office of the presidency.

Trump used his visit Tuesday to display the power of incumbency, talking up his administration's accomplishments on trade and protection of agriculture in a state where both are vital. In Council Bluffs, he toured a plant that produces and sells the corn-based fuel additive ethanol, and he signed an executive order he said would help farmers.

"I fought very hard for ethanol, but you proved me right," Trump said, adding that he fought "for the American farmer like no president has fought before."

But he then mocked Biden again.

"He was someplace in Iowa today and he said my name so many times that people couldn't stand it," the president said.

Later, addressing an evening fundraiser in West Des Moines, Trump refrained from mentioning Biden by name but took a veiled swipe at the former vice president's recent reversal on the Hyde Amendment, a ban on using federal funds to pay for abortions. Biden now says he opposes the ban.

"They go for one thing for a lifetime, and then they flip, and they go to something totally different," Trump said. "It depends on which race they're running."

Superville reported from Council Bluffs. Weissert reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Alexandra Jaffe in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, contributed to this report.

Hong Kong police fire tear gas, rubber bullets at protesters

By CHRISTOPHER BODEEN Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong police fired tear gas and rubber bullets at protesters who had massed outside government headquarters Wednesday in opposition to a proposed extradition bill that has become a lightning rod for concerns over greater Chinese control and erosion of civil liberties in the territory.

The afternoon violence marked a major escalation in the semi-autonomous Chinese city's biggest political crisis in years. It came after protesters earlier in the day forced the delay of a legislative debate over the bill, which would allow criminal suspects in Hong Kong to be sent for trial in mainland China.

The overwhelmingly young crowd had overflowed onto a major downtown road as they overturned bar-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 24 of 59

riers and tussled with police outside the government building. But when some appeared to have breached the police cordon around the building, the police launched their response, which also included firing pepper spray and water hoses.

Earlier, a curt government statement said the legislative session scheduled to begin at 11 a.m. would be "changed to a later time." Officials gave no indication of when that would be and Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam canceled a scheduled news briefing.

The delay appeared to have been at least a temporary victory for the bill's opponents, whose protests are the largest since pro-democracy demonstrations closed down parts of the Asian financial center for more than three months in 2014. Some businesses closed for the day, and labor strikes and class boycotts were called.

The protests are a challenge to China's ruling Communist Party and President Xi Jinping, who has in the past said he would not tolerate Hong Kong being used as a base to challenge the party's authority. But they are also giving vent to young Hong Kongers alienated by a political process dominated by the territory's economic elite.

At a brief news conference held as the chaos swirled just outside, Police Commissioner Stephen Lo Wai-chung called the demonstration a riot. That could mean long jail terms for anyone arrested, adding to concerns that Hong Kong's government is using public disturbance laws to intimidate political protesters.

"We condemn such irresponsible behavior," Lo said. "There's no need to hurt innocent people to express your opinions," he said, adding that people should not "do anything they will regret for the rest of their lives."

Protesters were seen throwing rocks, bottles, metal barricades and other projectiles at police.

Police spokesman Gong Weng Chun defended the decision to use tear gas and other non-lethal weapons, saying officers wouldn't have had to do so if they weren't facing a serious threat that could seriously injure or even kill them.

The state of the legislative process remained unclear following the violence, which had largely ended by about 5 p.m. after police herded demonstrators across a pedestrian bridge. Traffic in one of the busiest parts of the city remained blocked, however, and several hundred protesters seemed in no hurry to leave.

Earlier in the day, protesters said they hoped the blockade would persuade Lam's administration to shelve the proposed amendments.

"We want the government to just set the legislation aside and not bring it back," said a protester who gave only his first name, Marco, to avoid possible repercussions from authorities.

Another protester, who gave her name only as King, also out of fear of repercussions, said the protest was a watershed moment for Hong Kong's young generation.

"We have to stand up for our rights or they will be taken away," she said.

Dressed in black T-shirts and jeans, many protesters appeared undaunted by demands to disperse from police. The demonstrators also appeared mindful of Beijing's growing use of electronic surveillance such as facial recognition technology to build dossiers on those it considers politically unreliable, with many donning surgical masks to hide their features, as well as to safeguard against tear gas.

Such protests are never tolerated in mainland China, and Hong Kong residents can face travel bans and other repercussions if they cross the border.

"Most of these protesters don't expect the government to compromise. They just want to express their own opinions," said Joseph Cheng, a long-time observer of Chinese and Hong Kong politics now retired from the City University of Hong Kong.

"The anger is still there and the anger will burst again at the next opportunity," Cheng said.

Under its "one country, two systems" framework, Hong Kong was supposed to be guaranteed the right to retain its own social, legal and political systems for 50 years following its handover from British rule in 1997. However, China's ruling Communist Party has been seen as increasingly reneging on that agreement by forcing through unpopular legal changes.

The government pushed ahead with plans to present the amendments to the legislature on Wednesday despite a weekend protest by hundreds of thousands of people that was the territory's largest political demonstration in more than a decade.

Lam has consistently defended the legislation as necessary to close legal loopholes with other countries and territories. A vote is scheduled on June 20.

At regular briefing Wednesday, China's Foreign Ministry repeated its support for the bill. Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang also denied Beijing has been interfering in the city's affairs in a way that violates agreements made when Hong Kong was handed back to China.

"Hong Kong people's rights and freedoms have been fully guaranteed in accordance with law," he said.

The protests are widely seen as reflecting growing apprehension about relations with the Communist Party-ruled mainland, where Xi has said he has zero tolerance for those demanding greater self-rule for Hong Kong.

Critics believe the extradition legislation would put Hong Kong residents at risk of being entrapped in China's judicial system, in which opponents of Communist Party rule have been charged with economic crimes or ill-defined national security offenses, and would not be guaranteed free trials.

Lam said the government has considered concerns from the private sector and altered the bill to improve human rights safeguards. She said without the changes, Hong Kong would risk becoming a haven for fugitives. She emphasized that extradition cases would be decided by Hong Kong courts.

Opponents of the proposed extradition amendments say the changes would significantly compromise Hong Kong's legal independence, long viewed as one of the crucial differences between the territory and mainland China.

Hong Kong currently limits extraditions to jurisdictions with which it has existing agreements and to others on an individual basis. China has been excluded from those agreements because of concerns over its judicial independence and human rights record.

Associated Press journalists Raf Wober and Alice Fung in Hong Kong, Johnson Lai in Taipei, Taiwan and Sally Ho in Seattle contributed to this report.

The long road: Hong Kong's democratic struggles since 1997

By YANAN WANG Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — On July 1, 1997, Tung Chee-Hwa, the first chief executive of Hong Kong, declared, "For the first time in history, we, the people of Hong Kong, will be master of our own destiny."

It was the moment that Hong Kong, previously a British colony, was returned to China under the framework of "one country, two systems." The "Basic Law" constitution guaranteed to protect, for the next 50 years, the democratic institutions that make Hong Kong distinct from Communist Party-ruled mainland China.

Despite that promise, Hong Kong's agency has been tested, reinforced and challenged again in the succeeding years, most recently this week, which witnessed what may have been the largest protest since Hong Kong became Chinese territory again.

Here's a look at key events in Hong Kong people's fight to determine their future:

2003: NATIONAL SECURITY

The first major ripple came when Hong Kong's leaders introduced legislation that would forbid acts of treason and subversion against the Chinese government. The bill resembled laws used to charge dissidents on the mainland, and also banned foreign political entities from conducting political activities and establishing relationships with political groups in Hong Kong.

It sparked one of the three largest protests of the post-1997 era. Organizers estimated that half a million people turned out against the bill, which they saw as an affront to Hong Kong's autonomy and rule of law. As a result of the backlash, a member of the chief executive's council resigned in protest and further action on the proposal was halted.

2010: DIRECT ELECTIONS

The Basic Law states that the ultimate aim is for Hong Kong voters to achieve a complete democracy,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 26 of 59

but 10 years after the handover, China decided in 2007 that universal suffrage in elections of the chief executive could not be implemented until 2017. Some lawmakers are chosen by business and trade groups, while others are elected by vote.

In a bid to accelerate a decision on universal suffrage, five lawmakers resigned. But this act was followed by the adoption of Beijing-backed electoral changes which expanded the chief executive's selection committee and added more seats for lawmakers elected by direct vote. The legislation divided Hong Kong's pro-democracy camp, as some supported the reforms while others said it would only delay full democracy while reinforcing a structure that favors Beijing. It nevertheless marked the first changes to the electoral system since the handover.

2014: UMBRELLA REVOLUTION

Harking back to its promise to allow Hong Kong residents to vote for their leader in 2017, the Chinese government introduced a bill allowing that, but with one major caveat: the candidates must be approved by Beijing. "The Chief Executive shall be a person who loves the country (China) and loves Hong Kong," read the decision by China's National People's Congress.

Pro-democracy lawmakers were incensed by the bill, which they called an example of "fake universal suffrage" and "fake democracy."

The move triggered a massive protest of a different kind as crowds occupied some of Hong Kong's most crowded districts for 70 days. The movement's organizers called it "Occupy Central with Love and Peace," but it came to be known around the world as the "Umbrella Revolution" for the yellow umbrellas that protesters used as shields against police pepper spray.

In June 2015, Hong Kong legislators formally rejected the bill, and electoral reform has been stalled since then. The current chief executive, Carrie Lam, widely seen as the Chinese Communist Party's favored candidate, was hand-picked in 2017 by a 1,200-person committee dominated by pro-Beijing elites.

2019: THE EXTRADITION BILLS

Lam is pushing forward amendments to extradition laws that would allow people to be sent to mainland China to face charges. The proposed legislation triggered a huge protest on Sunday, with organizers putting the turnout at 1 million, and a standoff Wednesday that forced the legislature to postpone debate on the bills.

Unease has been growing following a series of events which pointed to Beijing's growing influence on the region, and some residents say this may be their last chance to speak out publicly without threat of arrest at the request of mainland authorities.

Last year, a Hong Kong-based bookseller who had been released from prison in China was seized by Chinese agents while traveling on a train in January with Swedish diplomats. Gui Minhai, a Swedish citizen, sold gossipy books about Chinese leaders and was one of five Hong Kong booksellers who wound up in Chinese custody in 2015.

Then in September, Hong Kong banned the Hong Kong National Party, which advocates independence for the territory, on national security grounds. Shortly after, it denied a visa renewal for Hong Kong-based Financial Times editor Victor Mallet, who had introduced the leader of the party at a Foreign Correspondents' Club event in August.

Lam says the bill will include safeguards to protect human rights, but opponents have decried its potential to erode Hong Kong's rule of law and judicial independence.

Sanders to discuss 'what democratic socialism means to me'

By JUANA SUMMERS Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seeking to rebut President Donald Trump's attempts to cast him and Democrats as too liberal, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders plans to give a speech Wednesday on democratic socialism, the economic philosophy that has guided his political career.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 27 of 59

Sanders made similar remarks during his first presidential campaign in 2016, when he faced questions about his decadeslong association with democratic socialists. He's again confronting criticism from within and outside the Democratic Party during his second presidential bid, and the speech, which the campaign is billing as a major address, is an attempt to reframe the debate about his views.

But he's doing this in a reshaped political landscape in which he's no longer the sole progressive taking on an establishment candidate, as he was in 2016 when he battled Hillary Clinton. He's one of two dozen Democratic White House hopefuls, several of whom are also unabashed liberals. And they're all operating in an environment dominated by Trump.

"We now have a president who is attacking me and others because we believe in democratic socialism," Sanders said in a Tuesday interview with The Associated Press in which he previewed his speech. "This is a president who believes in socialism, but the difference is he believes in socialism for large corporations and the wealthy, not the working people."

"What tomorrow is about," he added, "is defining what democratic socialism means to me."

Shaping those terms will be crucial if Sanders is to convince voters that his embrace of democratic socialism isn't a barrier to winning the White House. He's argued that his populist appeal could help win back the working-class voters across the Midwest who swung from Democrats to Trump in 2016.

Sanders is fond of noting that many of his Democratic rivals now back policies, such as "Medicare for All," that were seen as too costly and too liberal in previous elections. But few of the other Democrats seeking the White House share his support for democratic socialism.

Former Vice President Joe Biden, who has jumped to the top of the Democratic field in part because of a perception that he's the most electable candidate in the race, has derided the notion that politicians must be socialists to prove they're progressive. Other liberal candidates, including Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Kamala Harris of California, have noted that while they have problems with the economic system, they remain capitalists.

Trump and his allies have nonetheless lambasted Sanders and the rest of the Democratic field, warning against what they call the threat of creeping socialism.

In this year's State of the Union address, Trump declared that America "will never be a socialist country." Weeks later, when Sanders entered the race, a spokeswoman for Trump's campaign said Sanders had "already won the debate in the Democrat primary because every candidate is embracing his brand of socialism" and said Trump is the only candidate who will keep the country "free, prosperous and safe."

On Tuesday in Iowa, Trump claimed Democrats will "destroy this country" and turn the U.S. into "another Venezuela."

"Don't let it happen to us," Trump warned at an Iowa GOP dinner in West Des Moines.

Sanders last spoke in depth about democratic socialism in November 2015. Also speaking in Washington, he invoked the legacies of President Franklin D. Roosevelt and the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., arguing that democratic socialism was reflected in their priorities.

While in Tuesday's interview Sanders promised he would be more explicit this time in describing his belief in democratic socialism, some of the themes he will discuss echo the 2015 remarks, including positioning himself as the heir of the ideals that originated with Roosevelt in 1944.

"Over 80 years ago, Franklin Delano Roosevelt helped create a government that made huge progress in protecting the needs of working families," Sanders will say, according to prepared remarks. "Today in the second decade of the 21st century, we must take up the unfinished business of the New Deal and carry it to completion. This is the unfinished business of the Democratic Party and the vision we must accomplish."

As he did in his first presidential run, much of Sanders' campaign speech is focused on promising a wholesale revolution, including a fundamental rethinking of the political system. Asked Tuesday how he would tangibly change Washington's centers of political power to make his visions a reality, he said he would do so "by taking politics out of Washington."

"What the political revolution means to me, above and beyond democratic socialism, is getting millions of people who have given up on the political process, working people and young people, to stand up and

fight for their rights. So those are the profound changes that we will be bringing about," he said.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. TENSIONS ESCALATE IN HONG KONG

Police deploy tear gas, pepper spray and high-pressure water hoses against protesters who lay siege to government buildings to oppose a contentious extradition bill.

2. BIDEN, TRUMP TRADE JABS IN POSSIBLE 2020 ELECTION PREVIEW

The two unleashed verbal attacks in Iowa that at times felt more like the closing stretch before Election Day rather than 17 months out.

3. WHERE RUSSIA PROBE IS GOING IN CONGRESS

A House panel invites two former leaders of the FBI's national security branch to testify about the counterintelligence implications of Mueller's investigation.

4. JAPANESE LEADER TO VISIT IRAN

Shinzo Abe's trip is the highest-level effort yet to de-escalate tensions between the U.S. and Iran and salvage the 2015 nuclear accord and comes as violence in the Persian Gulf continues.

5. PENTAGON STRUGGLES WITH MILITARY KID SEX ASSAULT CASES

The Defense Department is rolling out big changes to how it responds when the children of service members sexually assault each other — and the rollout has been uneven, AP finds.

6. WHAT WATCHDOG FOUND AT NURSING HOMES

That the facilities failed to report thousands of serious cases of potential neglect and abuse of Medicare beneficiaries even though the government requires it.

7. SICK PALESTINIAN GIRL SUFFERS LONELY END

The death of a 5-year-old Palestinian girl after brain surgery at a Jerusalem hospital draws attention to a harsh Israeli system for issuing travel permits to patients and their families from blockaded Gaza.

8. WHO IS ALARMED BY TRUMP'S TRADE POLICIES

The president's aggressive and wildly unpredictable use of tariffs spooks American business groups, long a potent force in his Republican Party.

9. BIG PAPI FELT SAFE IN DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The popular former Red Sox slugger traveled the dangerous streets of Santo Domingo with little or no security, trusting in his fans to protect him.

10. DURANT STILL SETS TONE FOR NBA FREE AGENCY

Even with an Achilles injury, the Golden State star will impact where the dominoes fall as players choose their destinations.

Watchdog: Neglect and abuse unreported in nursing facilities

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Nursing facilities have failed to report thousands of serious cases of potential neglect and abuse of Medicare beneficiaries even though the federal government requires such reporting, says a watchdog report due out Wednesday that calls for a new focus on protecting frail patients.

Auditors with the Health and Human Services inspector general's office drilled down on episodes serious enough that the patient was taken straight from a nursing facility to a hospital emergency room. Scouring Medicare billing records, they estimated that in 2016 about 6,600 cases reflected potential neglect or abuse that was not reported as required. Nearly 6,200 patients were affected.

"Mandatory reporting is not always happening, and beneficiaries deserve to be better protected," said Gloria Jarmon, head of the inspector general's audit division.

Overall, unreported cases worked out to 18% of about 37,600 episodes in which a Medicare beneficiary was taken to the emergency room from a nursing facility in circumstances that raised red flags. A copy

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 29 of 59

of the inspector general's report was provided to The Associated Press.

Responding to the report, Administrator Seema Verma said the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services does not tolerate abuse and mistreatment and slaps significant fines on nursing homes that fail to report cases.

Verma said the agency, known as CMS, is already moving to improve supervision of nursing homes in critical areas such as abuse and neglect and care for patients with dementia.

CMS formally agreed with the inspector general's recommendations to ramp up oversight by providing clearer guidance to nursing facilities about what kinds of episodes must be reported, improving training for facility staff, requiring state nursing home inspectors to record and track all potential cases and monitoring cases referred to law enforcement agencies.

Neglect and abuse of elderly patients can be difficult to expose. Investigators say many cases are not reported because vulnerable older people may be afraid to tell even friends and relatives much less the authorities. In some cases, neglect and abuse can be masked by medical conditions.

The report cited the example of a 65-year-old woman who arrived at the emergency room in critical condition. She was struggling to breathe, suffering from kidney failure and in a state of delirium. The patient turned out to have opioid poisoning, due to an error at the nursing facility. The report said a nurse made a mistake copying doctor's orders, and the patient was getting much bigger doses of pain medication as a result. The woman was treated and sent back to the same nursing facility. The nurse got remedial training, but the facility did not report what happened. The report called it an example of neglect that should have been reported.

The nursing facilities covered by the report provide skilled nursing and therapy services to Medicare patients recovering from surgeries or hospitalization. Many facilities also play a dual role, combining a rehabilitation wing with long-term care nursing home beds.

Investigators said they faced a challenge scoping out the extent of unreported cases. They couldn't query a database and get a number, since they were looking for cases that weren't being reported to state nursing home inspectors.

To get their estimate, auditors put together a list of Medicare billing codes that previous investigations had linked to potential neglect and abuse. Common problems were not on the list. Instead it included red flags such as fractures, head injuries, foreign objects swallowed by patients, gangrene and shock.

The investigators found a total of 37,600 records representing 34,800 patients. Auditors then pulled a sample of cases and asked state inspectors to tell them which ones should have been reported. Based on the expert judgment of state inspectors, federal auditors came up with their estimate of 6,600 unreported cases of potential neglect and abuse.

Investigators found that nursing facility staff and even state inspectors had an unclear and inconsistent understanding of reporting requirements.

Medicare did not challenge the estimates but instead said that billing data comes with a built-in time lag and may not be useful for spotting problems in real time.

The report also flagged potential problems with state nursing home inspectors reporting documented cases of abuse or neglect to local law enforcement. Separately, federal auditors pulled a sample of 69 cases across five states in which inspectors verified that nursing facility patients suffered neglect or abuse. Only two were reported to local law enforcement, although reporting is required.

In one case, a male resident was sitting in the facility's dining room when an employee walked by and pushed the back of his head, then kept walking. The employee denied it, but his actions were captured on surveillance video. The report said state inspectors verified what happened but did not report it to local law enforcement.

'How is this OK?' Sex assault case haunts Air Force mothers

By JUSTIN PRITCHARD and FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

To the mothers, the 13-year-old boy appeared largely unsupervised as he roamed among the clusters

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 30 of 59

of townhomes on the U.S. Air Force base in Japan.

It would have been unremarkable — the neighborhood was full of kids — except that young girls were starting to report the boy had led them from play and molested them.

"We were like, 'How is this OK?'" the mother of one 5-year-old girl told The Associated Press, which is granting her anonymity to protect her daughter's privacy. She locked her kids inside.

The first girl to report had to wait six days for officials on the largest Air Force installation in the Pacific to provide counseling. The mothers didn't feel much urgency from Air Force criminal investigators either. They told the families they'd waited 13 days to meet the boy's father.

By then, mothers had identified five girls, ages 2 to 7, who said the boy had taken them to some trees or a playground or his house. Another five kids would allege abuse soon after.

"We come here, and it takes the worst cases that you can imagine to find out that you don't have the services to support your children," the 5-year-old's mother said. "There's a feeling of complete distrust."

This was not supposed to happen again. Last August, Congress ordered the Defense Department to overhaul how it handles allegations of sexual assault among the tens of thousands of military kids who live or attend school on U.S. bases worldwide.

Yet the case at Kadena Air Base began unfolding in February — six months after President Donald Trump signed those landmark reforms.

For decades, justice has been elusive on American bases when the children of service members sexually assaulted each other. Help for victims and accountability for offenders was rare in the nearly 700 reports over a decade that an AP investigation documented.

The new law required reforms across the Pentagon. The school system it runs for service members' kids had to create new student protections. The Family Advocacy Program, whose social service counselors would turn victims away, must review reports. The Office of the Secretary of Defense will track cases and create a policy for how to handle them.

The reforms are now rolling out, and the rollout has been uneven.

The Air Force has not drafted new guidelines. Instead, it is "reserving decision on adding or amending policy until publication of a Department of Defense policy," according to spokesman Maj. Nicholas Mercurio.

Like other armed services, Air Force representatives are helping form that policy. A Pentagon spokeswoman could not say when it will be published.

Mercurio called the Japan case "an extremely difficult situation." He said the Air Force has scrambled to deliver "helping resources to the families involved while remaining focused on protecting the rights and privacies of all parties and preserving the integrity of the ongoing investigation."

Kadena Air Base spokeswoman Lt. Col. Christy Stravolo noted that the 13-year-old boy has returned to the U.S. with his family. That happened within several weeks of the first allegations. Attempts to reach his parents were unsuccessful.

The Army didn't wait to follow the Pentagon's lead. It wrote its own policy.

That March 21 directive mandates both a criminal investigation and victim assistance through Family Advocacy, which now must inform counterparts on other bases when an offender's family transfers.

Because military law doesn't apply to family members, justice must come under civilian law. So cases on Army bases will be referred to state or local district attorneys who, unlike federal prosecutors, have juvenile justice systems.

"There's a recognition that states are best able to adjudicate," said Charles Lozano, an Army attorney who helped draft the policy.

The policy does not explore the nuances of overseas bases, where host-nation civilian authorities may treat juvenile sex crime allegations very differently. Instead of handing over suspects to Japanese officials, for example, the military often flies them back.

Rep. Jackie Speier, who chairs the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Military Personnel, said she was encouraged that Army's policy was "more comprehensive" than the law required.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 31 of 59

"We're going to continue to track this," Speier said. "I'm not certain that this is enough. I'm very watchful in terms of observing what happens when these incidents occur. And they will occur."

The Navy and Marines fall between the Army and Air Force.

The Marine Corps is updating its guidelines to include "language and protocols that address problematic sexual behavior in children and youth," according to Maj. Craig Thomas. Publication is expected by year's end.

Naval leaders have directed base commanders to work with social services, according to spokesman Lt. Samuel Boyle. The Navy also has issued interim guidance, which it would not share.

The most detailed changes came to the Pentagon-run school system that educates more than 70,000 students on bases in the U.S., Asia and Europe.

These students have not received protections public school students get under Title IX, a federal law that's been used to investigate sexual assault in schools and to help victims. Congress said students at Pentagon-run schools must get protections "at least comparable to" Title IX. The school system published new policies in February.

School officials are supposed to be trained by Oct. 1, and a new incident logging system is scheduled to launch in the fall, the Department of Defense Education Activity said in a written statement. For now, the school system introduced a "Sexual Harassment Awareness and Prevention" website .

Four Title IX experts who reviewed the policies for AP said that while broadly they create comparable protections, their substantial shortcomings include a complex investigation process that relies on already-stretched school principals.

"It seems unlikely that a principal would have both the training and the time to conduct these investigations in a thorough and timely manner," said Megan Farrell, Title IX coordinator for the Palo Alto Unified School District in California.

A mid-April post on a Facebook page for teachers at Pentagon-run schools asked whether anyone was aware of the new policies.

Two said they had received training. One more mentioned a question-and-answer session at her school. Another eight had no training, with nearly all unaware of the new policy.

About 4,000 students attend seven schools on Kadena. Like schools on many U.S. bases, Kadena's have struggled with sex assault allegations — in 2014, several high school students reported attacks.

The full scope of the latest case remains under investigation. The AP interviewed two mothers of girls who were among the first to report and a third person who helped organize families. According to one mother, investigators stopped giving updates after relating that 10 kids had alleged abuse.

That same mother was troubled by guidance she heard from base officials: Don't ask your daughter about what happened and don't engage deeply if she raises it.

Investigators warned that conversations could taint a potential case, though criminal prosecutions on overseas bases are rare . Counselors "said to just say, 'How does that make you feel?'" the mother said.

Several experts said the best approach is a forensic interview by an expert followed by the therapeutic embrace of fully engaged parents. Talking can soften feelings of stigma and shame.

"Family support is critical to the healing," said Michelle Miller, coordinator for mental health initiatives at the National Children's Alliance, which accredits children's advocacy centers that specialize in forensic interviews.

The chief of Air Force's Family Advocacy Program said that while parents shouldn't press their children, they can encourage — and even initiate — discussion.

"Attempts to avoid, shut down, or stop uncomfortable conversations could be viewed by the child as a sign that he/she has done something wrong," Col. Patrick Pohle explained in email.

Three weeks into the Kadena case, some families still felt unsupported. An investigator had earlier suggested jolting the process with a call halfway around the world from the island of Okinawa — to Capitol Hill. In early March, the mother of the 5-year-old girl reached a sympathetic staffer at the Senate Armed Service Committee.

The next day, the commander of Kadena called and asked how he could help.

Air Force officials said they have mobilized investigators and other specialists from around the globe. The 5-year-old's mother acknowledged those efforts and that some of the families may have had a different experience. In late March, counselors distributed a one-page summary encouraging parents to talk openly with their children.

"The difference from the beginning to now is that there is more communication," the mother said, "but I don't have confidence that if it happened tomorrow, the process would be successful. The policies haven't been changed."

Klug reported from Seoul, South Korea; Pritchard reported from Los Angeles. Reese Dunklin in Dallas contributed.

Contact Pritchard at <https://twitter.com/lalanewsman> .

Southern Baptists meet; endorse steps against sex abuse

By JAY REEVES and DAVID CRARY Associated Press

BIRMINGHAM, Alabama (AP) — Confronting an unprecedented sex-abuse crisis, delegates at the Southern Baptist Convention's national meeting voted Tuesday to make it easier to expel churches that mishandle abuse cases.

The Rev. J.D. Greear, president of the nation's largest Protestant denomination, said the SBC faced a "defining moment" that would shape the church for generations to come.

"This is not a distraction from the mission," Greear said of the fight against sex abuse. "Protecting God's children is the mission of the church."

The SBC's meeting comes as U.S. Catholic bishops convene in Baltimore to address a widening sex-abuse crisis in the Catholic Church. The Southern Baptist Convention says it had 14.8 million members in 2018, down about 192,000 from the previous year. The Catholic Church is the largest denomination in the U.S., with 76.3 million members as of last year — down from 81.2 million in 2005.

Sex abuse already was a high-profile issue at the SBC's 2018 national meeting in Dallas, after which Greear formed an advisory group to draft recommendations on how to confront the problem. Greear was unanimously re-elected to a second term on Tuesday.

Pressure on the SBC has intensified in recent months due in part to articles by the Houston Chronicle and San Antonio Express-News asserting that hundreds of Southern Baptist clergy and staff have been accused of sexual misconduct over the past 20 years, including dozens who returned to church duties, while leaving more than 700 victims with little in the way of justice or apologies.

Stung by the allegations, SBC leaders forwarded to the delegates meeting in Birmingham a proposed amendment to the SBC constitution making clear that an individual church could be expelled for mishandling or covering up sex-abuse cases. It was endorsed by the delegates, as was a similar proposal designating racism as grounds for expulsion.

Delegates also voted to assign the SBC's credentials committee to review claims against churches with regard to sexual abuse and racial discrimination.

Even before this week's meeting, some action had been taken on recommendations from Greear's study committee.

For example, a nine-member team developed a training curriculum to be used by churches and seminaries to improve responses to abuse. The team includes a psychologist, a former prosecutor, a detective, and attorney and abuse survivor Rachael Denhollander, the first woman to go public with charges against sports doctor Larry Nassar ahead of the prosecution that led to a lengthy prison sentence.

The study group also is considering new requirements for background checks of church leaders, and it is assessing options for a database listing credibly accused abusers, though Baptist leaders say that process has been difficult because of legal issues.

Outside the convention hall, about two dozen demonstrators handed out flyers to Southern Baptists and held up signs with messages including: "End church abuse cover-ups" and "Be like Jesus: Take abuse seriously & love victims."

Some participants at a rally said they are abuse survivors and have been attending denominational meetings for years. First-time attendee Jules Woodson spoke through tears as she described being abused sexually by a Southern Baptist minister.

"He remains in the pulpit. I've reached out to him personally and he refuses to respond. And so I'm asking the SBC to hold him accountable," said Woodson, of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Ahead of the meeting, there was a surge of debate related to the Southern Baptist Convention's doctrine of "complementarianism" that calls for male leadership in the home and the church.

Particularly contentious is a widely observed prohibition on women preaching in Southern Baptist churches. Those recently challenging that policy include Beth Moore, a prominent author and evangelist who runs a Houston-based ministry for women.

"What I want to say to my own family of Southern Baptists: Our family is sick. We need help," Moore said at a panel discussion Monday night. "We have this built-in disesteem for women and it's got to change."

A female delegate to the SBC meeting, Alex Hebert, said she was pleased with the denomination's overall effort to address sexual misconduct.

"I think there's a huge push toward repentance and looking into what we can do to prevent that from happening and to prevent people who have been participating in that" from being part of church leadership, said Hebert, holding her 1-year-old son in her arms.

Hebert, 26, said she is very comfortable in her own Southern Baptist congregation, Calvary Baptist Church in Kemp, Texas, where her husband is head pastor.

Nathan Morton, a pastor from South Carolina, said he knows sexual misconduct is a problem based on personal experience, but he trusts the SBC's current leadership to address the problem.

"I had staff members that were abused by ministers when they were younger. Ministers got shuttled from one place to the other. Now there's some positive, proactive issues and resolutions coming up that's made us a greater and stronger denomination," said Morton, 56.

Crary reported from New York.

Jon Stewart lashes out at Congress over 9/11 victims fund

By MATTHEW DALY Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Comedian Jon Stewart scolded Congress Tuesday for failing to ensure that a victims' compensation fund set up after the 9/11 attacks never runs out of money.

Stewart, a longtime advocate for 9/11 responders, angrily called out lawmakers for failing to attend a hearing on a bill to ensure the fund can pay benefits for the next 70 years. Pointing to rows of empty seats at a House Judiciary Committee hearing room, Stewart said "sick and dying" first responders and their families came to Washington for the hearing, only to face a nearly deserted dais.

The sparse attendance by lawmakers was "an embarrassment to the country and a stain on this institution," Stewart said, adding that the "disrespect" shown to first responders now suffering from respiratory ailments and other illnesses "is utterly unacceptable."

Lawmakers from both parties said they support the bill and were monitoring the hearing amid other congressional business.

Rep. Mike Johnson, R-La., predicted the bill will pass with overwhelming support and said lawmakers meant no disrespect as they moved in and out of the subcommittee hearing, a common occurrence on Capitol Hill.

Stewart was unconvinced.

Pointing to rows of uniformed firefighters and police officers behind him, he said the hearing "should be flipped," so that first responders were on the dais, with members of Congress "down here" in witness

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 34 of 59

chairs answering their questions.

First and foremost, Stewart said, families want to know, "Why this is so damn hard and takes so damn long?"

The collapse of the World Trade Center in September 2001 sent a cloud of thick dust billowing over Lower Manhattan. Fires burned for weeks. Thousands of construction workers, police officers, firefighters and others spent time working in the soot, often without proper respiratory protection.

In the years since, many have seen their health decline, some with respiratory or digestive-system ailments that appeared almost immediately, others with illnesses that developed as they aged, including cancer.

More than 40,000 people have applied to the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund, which covers illnesses potentially related to being at the World Trade Center site, the Pentagon or Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after the attacks. More than \$5 billion in benefits have been awarded out of the \$7.4 billion fund, with about 21,000 claims pending.

Stewart and other speakers lamented the fact that nearly 18 years after the attacks, first responders and their families still have no assurance the fund will not run out of money. The Justice Department said in February that the fund is being depleted and that benefit payments are being cut by up to 70 percent.

"The plain fact is that we are expending the available funds more quickly than assumed, and there are many more claims than anticipated," said Rupa Bhattacharyya, the fund's special master. A total of 835 awards have been reduced as of May 31, she said.

Stewart called that shameful.

"Your indifference is costing these men and women their most valuable commodity: time," he told lawmakers. "It's one thing they're running out of."

Firefighters, police and other first responders "did their jobs with courage, grace, tenacity and humility," Stewart added. "Eighteen years later, do yours."

House Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler, a New York Democrat whose district includes the World Trade Center site, said a 70% cut — or any cut — in compensation to victims of 9/11 "is simply intolerable, and Congress must not allow it."

Just as Americans "stood together as a nation in the days following September 11, 2001, and just as we stood together in 2010 and 2015 to authorize and fund these vital programs, we must now join forces one more time to ensure that the heroes of 9/11 are not abandoned when they need us most," Nadler said.

Ex-slugger David Ortiz had counted on fans to protect him

By **MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN** and **MARTÍN JOSÉ ADAMES ALCÁNTARA** Associated Press

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (AP) — Beloved in his hometown, David Ortiz traveled the dangerous streets of Santo Domingo with little or no security, trusting in his fans to protect him.

Big Papi's guard was down even at hotspots like the Dial Bar and Lounge, where the Dominican business and entertainment elite can cross paths with shadier figures in a country where fortunes are often made in drug smuggling and money laundering.

As the former Red Sox slugger lies in intensive care in Boston, recovering from the bullet fired into his back at the Dial on Sunday night, police are investigating what aspect of the national hero's life made him the target of what appeared to be an assassination attempt.

Ortiz was so relaxed at the open-air hotspot Sunday that he had his back to the sidewalk as a gunman — a passenger on a motorcycle — got off the bike just before 9 p.m., approached the 43-year-old retired athlete and fired a single shot at close range before escaping.

Enraged fans captured the 25-year-old motorcyclist and beat him bloody before handing him over to police, but the gunman was still at large Tuesday. Dominican authorities reported a second arrest in the case Tuesday night, but there was no public indication the man was suspected of being the shooter.

Doctors in Santo Domingo removed Ortiz's gallbladder and part of his intestines, and the former ballplayer was then flown to Boston for further treatment Monday night, undergoing two hours of exploratory surgery.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 35 of 59

Ortiz's wife, Tiffany, said in a statement that he was "stable, awake and resting comfortably" at Massachusetts General Hospital and was expected to remain there for several days.

The motorcyclist, Eddy Vladimir Félix Garcia, who had a 2017 arrest for drug possession, was one of several people in custody as of Tuesday afternoon, a law-enforcement official told The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the official was not authorized to release details of the investigation.

A police car carrying Félix Garcia drove up to a shipping container serving as a makeshift courtroom on Tuesday evening, and sat there for about a half-hour before driving off again. Court officials said the hearing had been delayed because Félix Garcia's charging documents had not arrived in time. He was brought back about 10 p.m. for charging.

A spokesman for prosecutors, Erick Montilla, said Félix Garcia was charged as an accomplice to an attempted murder.

His lawyer, Deivi Solano, said Félix Garcia had no idea who he'd picked up and what was about to happen when he stopped to take a fare.

"He didn't know what they were going to do. He's a fan of David's," Solano said.

Later, Julieta Tejada, spokeswoman for the national prosecutor's office, told reporters via WhatsApp that a second arrest had been made in the investigation. She declined to provide further details.

Ortiz has a six-bedroom, \$6 million home in the wealthy Boston suburb of Weston, Massachusetts, that he shared with his wife and three children but has put the place up for sale. He visits his father and sister in Santo Domingo about six times a year, according to a close friend who spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the situation.

Ortiz stayed at his father's apartment and was active on the social scene in the capital, hitting nightspots with a small group of friends that included TV personalities and Dominican reggaeton musicians, whom Ortiz would help by connecting them with established artists in the genre.

Ortiz couldn't avoid running across unsavory characters on the Santo Domingo social scene but kept his distance once he was warned about their shady backgrounds, the friend said.

"He may have spoken with them, but he didn't know who they were," the friend said. "He really kept away from that world."

Police are investigating, however, whether some brief relationship formed in Santo Domingo set in motion a chain of events that led to the shooting, a second law enforcement official told the AP.

The official declined to provide further details about the type of relationship or other aspects of the rapidly developing investigation.

Ortiz felt completely secure in his hometown, the friend said, with adoring fans greeting him wherever he went.

"He felt protected by the people," the friend said. "He is one of the most loved people in the Dominican Republic. He felt no fear despite the fact that there's street crime here. Even the guys in the dangerous neighborhoods respected him."

Ortiz flew from Boston to Santo Domingo on May 5 to enroll his teenage son, a promising baseball talent, in one of the island's grueling "academies" for future stars, the friend said. He also wanted to check on his foundation, which sponsors surgery for sick children, and sign a cigar-promotion deal.

On Sunday night, he went out with the reggaeton singer known as El Sujeto and baseball announcer and TV personality Jhoel Lopez to Dial, a bar and cafe that started as an arm of a luxury auto-detailing business across the street.

In recent years, Dial turned from a site where people relaxed as their cars were cleaned to a hotspot where Dominican celebrities eat and drink, often alongside people with fortunes of dubious origin.

Dial sits in a wealthy and relatively safe section of Santo Domingo, but the Dominican Republic is one of the world's most dangerous countries.

The murder rate stands at 12.5 killings per 100,000 people, placing the Dominican Republic in the top 10 to 15% of the most violent countries in the world, according to the U.S. State Department.

There were 1,353 reported killings in 2018, compared with 1,561 in 2017 and 1,616 in 2016, the department said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 36 of 59

Last year, 2,145 people were wounded with guns, a slight decrease from 2017, according to the Dominican Republic's Citizen Security Observatory.

An OSAC report said the Dominican Republic also faces serious problems with drug trafficking and money laundering, adding: "This situation is worse due to a lack of law enforcement resources, poorly paid and trained police officers and rampant corruption."

This year, the government increased the maximum penalty to 40 years for those found guilty of kidnapping someone while brandishing an illegal weapon or killing someone while committing another crime.

Associated Press writers Danica Coto in San Juan, Puerto Rico, and Jimmy Golen in Boston contributed to this story.

Openings set at Illinois trial in slaying of Chinese scholar

By MICHAEL TARM AP Legal Affairs Writer

CHICAGO (AP) — Opening statements are set for Wednesday in the death-penalty trial of a former University of Illinois graduate student charged with kidnapping, torturing and killing a visiting Chinese scholar, a case closely watched by Chinese students across the U.S.

A federal judge moved the trial to Peoria in central Illinois after Brendt Christensen's lawyers said pretrial publicity would have made it impossible for the 29-year-old former physics student to get a fair trial in the Champaign area, where the 45,000-student university is located. The university has more than 5,000 Chinese students, among the largest such enrollments in the nation.

Prosecutors were expected to call their first witnesses after opening statements, scheduled for 9 a.m. CDT.

They allege Christensen, taking advantage of Yingying Zhang's small stature and lack of English fluency, lured the 26-year-old into his car in June 9, 2017. She had just missed a bus on her way to sign an apartment lease off campus in Champaign's sister city Urbana, 140 miles (225 kilometers) southwest of Chicago.

Although prosecutors haven't indicated how they believe Christensen killed Zhang, they've said they'll introduce evidence of bloodstains in his apartment bedroom and a baseball bat recovered from the room.

The final selection of 12 jurors and six alternates happened Tuesday. Those who categorically oppose capital punishment or believe it should be imposed on someone convicted of killing without expectation can't serve as jurors in federal death-penalty trials, and weeding them out extended jury selection to more than a week.

If Christensen is convicted, there will then be a death-penalty phase where jurors would decide if Christensen should be executed.

The federal death-penalty case is the first in Illinois since the state struck capital punishment from its books on grounds death-penalty processes were too error-prone. Some Illinois anti-death penalty activists criticized what they said was the federal government's imposition of a death-penalty case on a non-death penalty state.

The disappearance of Zhang, the daughter of working-class parents in China who aspired to become a professor, prompted a massive search. Zhang's parents travelled from China to join the search.

Christensen was arrested on June 30, his birthday, after his girlfriend wore a wire for the FBI in a bid to capture incriminating statements by Christensen. He later pleaded not guilty to kidnapping resulting in death. The girlfriend is expected to be the government's star witness.

Zhang's body was never found and one challenge for prosecutors is to prove to jurors she is dead. That could include evidence of her blood in Christensen's apartment and a cadaver-sniffing dog that indicated a dead body had been there.

Zhang's parents, her brother and boyfriend are in Illinois for the trial. They watched part of the jury selection process in Peoria and some days watching via a closed-circuit TV at a federal courthouse in Urbana.

Follow Michael Tarm on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mtarm>

Businesses showing discontent with Trump's trade policies

By PAUL WISEMAN and STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump's aggressive and wildly unpredictable use of tariffs is spooking American business groups, which have long formed a potent force in his Republican Party.

Corporate America was blindsided last week when Trump threatened to impose crippling taxes on Mexican imports in a push to stop the flow of Central American migrants into the United States.

The two sides reached a truce Friday after Mexico agreed to do more to stop the migrants. But by Monday, Trump was again threatening the tariffs if Mexico didn't abide by an unspecified commitment, to "be revealed in the not too distant future."

Such whipsawing is now a hallmark of Trump's trade policy. The president repeatedly threatens tariffs, sometimes imposes them, sometimes suspends them, sometimes threatens them again. Or drops them.

Business groups, already uncomfortable with Trump's attempts to stem immigration, are struggling to figure out where to stand in the fast-shifting political climate. They have happily supported Trump's corporate tax cuts and moves to loosen environmental and other regulations. But the capriciousness of Trump's use of tariffs has proved alarming.

"Business is losing," said Rick Tyler, a Republican strategist and frequent Trump critic. "He calls himself 'Mr. Tariff man.' He's proud of it... It's bad news for the party. It's bad news for the free market."

"It was a good wakeup call for business," James Jones, chairman of Monarch Global Strategies and a former U.S. ambassador to Mexico, said of Trump's abrupt move to threaten to tax Mexican goods.

Just last week, the sprawling network led by the billionaire industrialist Charles Koch announced the creation of several political action committees focused on policy — including one devoted to free trade — to back Republicans or Democrats who break with Trump's trade policies. A powerful force in Republican politics, the network is already a year into a "multi-year multi-million dollar" campaign to promote the dangers of tariff and protectionist trade policies.

The Chamber of Commerce, too, is in the early phases of disentangling itself from the Republican Party after decades of loyalty. The Chamber, which spent at least \$29 million largely to help Republicans in the 2016 election, announced earlier this year that it would devote more time and attention to Democrats on Capitol Hill while raising the possibility of supporting Democrats in 2020.

Few expect the Chamber or business-backed groups like the Koch network to suddenly embrace Democrats in a significant way. But even a subtle shift to withhold support from vulnerable Republican candidates could make a difference in 2020.

Trump's boundless enthusiasm for tariffs has upended decades of Republican trade policy that favored free trade. It has left the party's traditional allies in the business world struggling to maintain political relevance in the Trump era.

Trump's tariffs are taxes paid by American importers and are typically passed along to their customers. They can provoke retaliatory tariffs on U.S. exports. And they can paralyze businesses, uncertain about where they should buy supplies or situate factories.

"Knowing the rules helps us plan for the future," said Jeff Schwager, president of Sartori, a cheese company that has had to contend with retaliatory tariffs in Mexico in an earlier dispute.

Trump seems unfazed.

Myron Brilliant, head of international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, went on CNBC on Monday to decry "the weaponization of tariffs" as a threat to the U.S. economy and to relations with trading partners.

Trump responded by phoning in to the network to declare "I guess he's not so brilliant" and defend his trade policies.

"Tariffs," he said, "are a beautiful thing."

Trump can afford to be confident about his grip over the party: Roughly nine in 10 rank-and-file Republicans support his performance as president, according to the latest Gallup polling. So Republicans in Congress have been reluctant to tangle with him.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 38 of 59

But last week's flareup over the Mexico tariffs may prove to be a pivotal juncture. The spat was especially alarming to businesses because it came seemingly out of nowhere. Less than two weeks earlier, Trump had lifted tariffs on Mexican and Canadian steel and aluminum — action that seemed to signal warmer commercial ties between the United States and its neighbors.

"This really came out of left field," said Daniel Ujcz, a trade lawyer at Dickinson Wright. "It was something we thought we had settled, and we hadn't."

Congress was already showing signs of wariness, especially over Trump's decision to dust off a little-used provision of trade law to slap tariffs on trading partners. Section 232 of the Trade Expansion of 1962 lets the president impose sanctions on imports that he deems a threat to national security.

Trump has deployed that provision to tax imported steel and aluminum. And he's threatening to impose Section 232 tariffs on auto imports, a chilling threat to American allies Japan and the European Union.

Congress is considering bipartisan legislation to weaken the president's authority to declare national-security tariffs. In doing so, lawmakers would be reasserting Congress' authority over trade policy, established by the Constitution but ceded over the years to the White House.

The legislation has stalled in Congress this spring. But on Tuesday, Iowa Republican Chuck Grassley, chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, said the bill would be ready "pretty soon." Given "how the president feels about tariffs," Grassley said, "he may not look favorably on this. So I want a very strong vote in my committee and then, in turn, a very strong vote on the floor of the Senate."

Congressional reluctance to challenge Trump could be tested in coming months. Lawmakers may balk if he proceeds with plans to tax \$300 billion worth of Chinese goods that he hasn't already targeted with tariffs — a move that would jack up what consumers pay for everything from bicycles to burglar.

Likewise, taxing auto imports — an idea that has virtually no support outside the White House — would likely meet furious resistance. So would any move to abandon a trade pact with Mexico and Canada. Trump has threatened to withdraw from the 25-year-old North American Free Trade Agreement if Congress won't ratify a revamped version he negotiated last year.

For all their disenchantment with Trump, the Chamber of Commerce may yet find it hard to break its ties to the party. Though the chamber says it's weighing a more bipartisan approach, it recently featured a sign on its front steps: It likened Trump to Republican icons Ronald Reagan and Dwight Eisenhower.

Peoples reported from New York. AP Business Writer Joyce M. Rosenberg in New York also contributed to this report.

Uruguay prison turns inmates into entrepreneurs

By **LEONARDO HABERKORN** Associated Press

MONTEVIDEO, Uruguay (AP) — Rolando Bustamante watches his employees turn out one concrete block after another, occasionally checking an electronic tablet that records orders from clients and that lets him communicate with suppliers.

There'd be nothing remarkable about the scene if it weren't for the fact that the block factory is located in a prison and that Bustamante, in addition to being a businessman, is on the last two years of a 21-year sentence for assault. The workers, too, are inmates and the product will be sold beyond the walls, with part of the profits going to a sort of bank run by the prisoners themselves.

Bustamante's factory is one of dozens of inmate businesses in the old Punta de Rieles prison, which has been transformed into an unusual experiment. Inmates form businesses, work for one another and offer products both to the world within the walls and to that without.

There are bakeries and barbershops, a candy store and carpenter shop along streets where inmates mix with prison officials and police. One inmate carries a begonia he bought from a prisoner-owned nursery to give to his mother when she visits. Not far away, a convict-baker carries a birthday cake to the prison entrance to hand off to a customer.

Of the 510 prisoners, who include thieves, assailants, kidnappers and killers, 382 work and 246 study

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 39 of 59

— some do both. Only a few dozen have shunned those opportunities, and if two years pass, they will be transferred to a traditional prison. To get chosen for Punta de Rieles, prisoners have to have at least a six-month period of good behavior elsewhere.

The prison director is almost as unusual as the institution itself. Luis Parodi was a member of the Tupamaro guerrilla movement that was defeated in 1972. He later spent more than a decade in exile, both in Europe and Latin America.

Asked if there are other prisons in the world of this type, he said, "I don't think so, I'm afraid to say. This is the synthesis of 30 years of work, reading, experiences and failures."

The Punta de Rieles project began in late 2012, with Parodi as deputy director, and he took over as head of the prison in 2015. The bet is that prisoners who work, study, learn a craft or start a business will have a better life and be less likely to return to crime.

"It's been demonstrated everywhere that confinement doesn't change people. Here the idea is to play at reality," Parodi said. "If something fails, it fails. Just like in the real world."

Money to start businesses comes from inmates' families or from a quasi-bank largely administered by inmates themselves.

"It's a fund so that entrepreneurs can get started, that you have the hope of change. Many of us have taken advantage of the opportunity and we're getting ahead," Bustamante said.

Ten percent of the profits go back to that fund, another 10% goes to the government for use of the facilities and 10% goes to an association of victims of crime. The rest goes into accounts for the inmates, though they can't fully access it until they are released.

Bustamante said he was skeptical when he was transferred from another prison and was dumped off at Punta de Rieles by a police van almost five years ago.

"I saw stores, businesses, and I thought, 'Where am I?' Later it clicked in my head," he said. "In common prisons, you continue in a world of violence, thinking about who is going to attack you and how to survive. You can't do anything. A 2-by-2 cell, and locked up all day," he said.

He showed off the shed where he started out making blocks from an old mold and a secondhand shovel. Now he was about to expand his business by hiring a 10th employee thanks to a loan from outside the walls.

Even more successful is a bakery started by two prisoners who have kept it going despite being released and now employ 50 to 70 people. They come back to the prison almost daily and sometimes even sleep there, voluntarily this time.

The experiment has its problems. One inmate complained that the prison mixes people sentenced for relatively minor offenses with those who've committed more serious crimes. Parodi said that's part of the idea — trying to save those considered unrecoverable.

Prison police also often have a tough time coping with prisoners as businessmen. Bustamante said guards sometimes impede the arrival of trucks carrying his supplies.

"In the end, you call Parodi. He's the only one who can solve the problems," Bustamante said.

The prisoners enjoy significant freedom within their confinement: They can largely say what they want, form groups, unions or cooperatives, have a telephone, use the internet and communicate with the outside world, even own a dog. Parodi acknowledged some have taken advantage of that freedom to commit crimes, but he insisted they are few.

Near Bustamante's block factory is the fiberglass workshop of Wilson Resio, a 45-year-old convicted of involvement in a homicide who has been locked up for 11 years. He makes kayaks and other sport equipment. "All the boats of the Uruguayan Rowing Federation are made here," he said.

"This is also a school workshop because we train others in the craft."

Music plays in the shop and the walls are covered with tools. Machinery, industrial supplies and a half-eaten piece of cake are on view. Nothing speaks of prison.

Most prisons in Latin America "are warehousing places with ... very harsh conditions for inmates and they are very unsafe for both inmates and staff, and they basically are schools of crime," said criminologist Yvon Dandurand, a fellow at the U.N.-affiliated International Center for Criminal Law Reform.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 40 of 59

With the public in most countries favoring a punitive approach to crime, "it takes courageous volunteers, politicians and others to start projects like" Punta de Rieles.

Uruguayan prison reform activist Denisse Legrand sees Punta de Rieles as "an oasis" in a deeply troubled correctional system. The small country has 11,000 inmates in crowded prisons, and it locks up more people per capita than nations such as Mexico, Colombia or Argentina, according to a study prepared for congress.

Legrand, who directs a non-governmental organization that focuses on prisons, said that in addition to its educational and labor value, Punta de Rieles "is one of the prisons with the highest levels of security because the humane treatment and coexistence replace the violence characteristic of confinement."

She said the weakness of the project is that so much depends on Parodi.

Juan Miguel Petit, who oversees prison affairs for Uruguay's congress, said he knows dozens of prisons in the Americas and Europe and has never seen anything like Punta de Rieles. "The more we can manage to reproduce the life of a neighborhood, the more we can foresee that the people who leave are going to behave in harmony with others."

Mauro Rodríguez is an example of how the system is supposed to work. He's in prison — but just for a visit this time. He came to repair a machine to make cement blocks that he'd created while spending several years as an inmate. He now has a blacksmith's shop on the outskirts of Montevideo, where he works with his brother.

He'd been part of a band of drug dealers when he was arrested, and said four of his former friends are now dead.

"If it wasn't for Punta de Rieles," he said, "I would be, too."

Associated Press video journalist Paul Byrne in Buenos Aires, Argentina, contributed to this report.

Building materials helped spread Grenfell fire, US suit says

By MARYCLAIRE DALE Associated Press

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — Faulty building materials helped spread a devastating fire at London's Grenfell Tower in 2017, turning the residential complex into a "flaming coffin" for the 72 people who died, according to a product liability suit filed Tuesday in the United States.

Nearly 250 survivors and families of victims joined the suit, which targets U.S. companies that made products used at the complex. The suit was filed in a state court in Philadelphia.

"This fire originated and spread because of decisions made in the United States by United States corporations that prioritized profits over safety," said attorney Robert Mongeluzzi, who is known for winning huge legal awards over deadly construction accidents.

The lawsuit does not seek specific monetary damages. It would be up to a jury to decide how much money to award. Mongeluzzi expects it to take more than two years for the case to go to trial.

The Grenfell blaze started two years ago June 14 in an apartment refrigerator and raced up the side of the 24-story residential building. The building's exterior cladding was made of highly flammable material that can't be used in U.S. skyscrapers, the plaintiffs' lawyers said. The insulation was similarly combustible, they said.

The suit names refrigerator maker Whirlpool, based in Benton Harbor, Michigan; Pittsburgh-based cladding manufacturer Arconic Inc.; and insulation maker Celotex, whose corporate parent, French manufacturer Saint-Gobain, has its U.S. headquarters in the Philadelphia suburbs.

The suit accused Arconic of cutting corners by using a polyethylene product instead of a more expensive, fire-resistant material — sending the message that "foreign lives are worth less than American lives."

The insulation produced by Celotex released cyanide gas that killed several of the victims and caused lasting injuries in some of the survivors, according to another plaintiffs' lawyer, Jeffrey Goodman.

Both products have since been pulled from the market, the lawyers said.

"This fire spread with incredible speed, raced its way up the tower," Mongeluzzi said. "The problem with Celotex insulation and Arconic Reynobond PE cladding is they burn like gasoline. They didn't retard the

flames, they accelerated the flames.”

All three companies issued statements Tuesday extending sympathies to victims and pledging their cooperation with the public inquiry underway in London.

Whirlpool noted that two separate investigations have found no fault with the refrigerator model. Celotex said its insulation was just one element of the cladding system used on the tower. Arconic said it would respond in court.

The lead plaintiff in the suit is the estate of Gloria Trevisan, a 26-year-old architect who ended a phone call with her mother so her mother wouldn't hear her screams before she died. Trevisan died along with boyfriend Marco Gottardi, 27, who told his father in a call the stairwell was full of smoke, trapping them inside. The couple had moved into a top-floor apartment from Italy just two months before.

Also included among the plaintiffs are 177 survivors and relatives of 69 of the dead. Dozens of survivors suffered “life-altering physical, emotional and psychological injuries,” the suit said.

The tower is in the North Kensington neighborhood, a working-class, multiethnic area next to some of the richest neighborhoods in Britain. Some observers asked whether hazards in the Grenfell complex, which had 120 apartments that housed as many as 600 people, were ignored because its residents were mainly poor.

A tenant group had complained for years about the risk of a fire in the building, owned by the local government in the borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

Some people jumped to their deaths rather than face the flames, and witnesses reported seeing small children thrown from the tower by their families in a desperate bid for survival.

The Metropolitan Police force has said it isn't likely to submit its files to prosecutors, to weigh potential criminal charges, until the latter part of 2021, after the public inquiry is completed.

The Grenfell United survivors' group this year called the delay “extremely frustrating and disheartening.”

When disaster hits, Indonesia's Islamists are first to help

By **STEPHEN WRIGHT** Associated Press

PALU, Indonesia (AP) — The flags hanging outside Anwar Ragau's house have drawn warnings from police, but the wiry 50-year-old vows he's not taking them down.

After all, the police weren't there to help when he was the sole fisherman in his village to survive the tsunami that inundated the Indonesian city of Palu at dusk on Sept. 28. Nor was the government. Nor were the aid organizations that swept into the stricken region in remote central Sulawesi.

Instead, the first people to offer him hope — and a new boat — were deployed by a hardline Islamic group notorious for vigilante violence such as storming the offices of Playboy magazine, smashing up stores selling alcohol and attacking minority Muslim sects.

When the wind picks up, it's the Islamic Defenders Front's white-and-green flag that flutters outside Ragau's house, alongside a much bigger black flag with white Arabic script. The words are a well-known declaration of Muslim faith; similar flags have become associated with violent extremists.

Since its inception two decades ago, the front has pushed for Islamic law to govern the lives of Indonesia's 230 million Muslims, aiming to correct what it sees as the errors of Indonesia's 1945 constitution that established a secular state and religious freedom.

Though often dismissed as a fringe group, it has recently scored unexpected and stunning political victories — only partly due to the growth of orthodox Middle Eastern Islam in Indonesia.

The group's success also can be traced to an effort over more than 10 years to repurpose its militia into a force that's as adept at helping the poor and searching for victims buried under earthquake rubble as it is at inspiring fear.

The front was formed in Jakarta, researchers say, by elements of Indonesia's military after the fall of dictator Suharto in 1998 as a tool for confronting pro-democracy activists and liberalism.

Able to act with impunity, it became infamous for running protection rackets and violent vigilantism. It

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 42 of 59

now has chapters in 23 of Indonesia's 34 provinces and a military-like command structure cascading down to village levels.

Maman Suryadi Abdurrahman, the head of the front's Islamic Defender Troops militia, said the organization has a million members. Researchers have said its membership is much smaller, estimating that its numbers are in the tens of thousands.

Walking a fine line, the front doesn't propose that Indonesia become a caliphate, which would put it in direct confrontation with Indonesia's civil law-based constitution. Rather it says it wants Islamic law to apply to the 9 out of 10 citizens who are Muslim. Senior figures display the red-and-white Indonesian flag on their uniforms and often ally with ultra-nationalistic causes.

"Our goal is to make Indonesia, in which Islam is the majority religion of the people, to be religious and clean from immorality," said Abdurrahman. "We want an Islamist country, not an Islamic state, because a religious country will prevent the nation from suffering social injustice."

The group says it has moderated its methods but it still aggressively takes on what it calls "community diseases" such as prostitution, homosexuality and celebration of Western holidays. It does so, it says, at the request of local communities.

"We've tried to improve our image," Abdurrahman said. "We've changed the ways of our demonstrations to be more persuasive and peaceful."

In so doing, it has followed the same path as other deeply conservative groups in Indonesia, including Hizbut Tahrir, which seeks a caliphate and was banned last year. All have embraced charitable work, filling a void left by the government and mainstream Muslim organizations.

Alexander Arifianto, an Indonesian politics expert at the S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies in Singapore, said Indonesian groups copied Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood which pioneered Islamic charities in the 1970s and '80s and became immensely popular.

Hamas (in Palestine) and Hezbollah (in Lebanon) have also emphasized social services as a way of winning hearts and minds.

The turning point for the Islamic Defenders Front was its response to the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, which killed more than 100,000 people in Indonesia's Aceh, Abdurrahman said.

Even in Aceh, one of Indonesia's most conservative provinces, they weren't welcome, Abdurrahman said, but they persisted and won over Acehnese by setting up their command posts at mass graves and recovering and burying thousands of bodies.

The front, he said, "is now increasingly accepted by people."

The front's humanitarian arm — known as Red Crescent Indonesia, but not part of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies — was very busy last year. Besides the Palu earthquake and tsunami that claimed more than 4,000 lives, earthquakes killed hundreds and destroyed thousands of homes on Lombok. A tsunami wreaked havoc on the Sunda Strait coastlines of Java and Sumatra.

The front was right there at each disaster, searching for victims, distributing aid and building temporary housing and new mosques. Its regular social services such as free health care have become a lifeline for urban poor.

Indonesia is a far-flung archipelago of 17,000 islands; its central government has often been accused of neglecting remote regions far from the center of political and economic power in Java.

In places such as Central Sulawesi, which has a history of sectarian violence, those failings have provided an opening for hard-liners and their message that religion, not government, is the answer.

While the 350 tons of aid the Islamic Defenders Front says it provided in Palu is a fraction of what eventually poured into the region, its delivery was rapid and grassroots.

As officials struggled to get a handle on what had happened, truckloads of rice and other aid had already been dispatched by the front's chapter in Poso to the southeast of Palu.

The militia's search-and-rescue team scoured two neighborhoods swallowed by the quake, recovering bodies before the government's National Search and Rescue Agency turned up.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 43 of 59

When the agency did arrive, grieving family members turned on them angrily, demanding to know why they hadn't come sooner. Part of the reason: Official search efforts first focused on hotels.

"The eighth day was the worst; the rotten bodies were very smelly and the soil had begun to harden," said Mahmud Khaemudin, secretary of the front's chapter in Central Sulawesi.

The government's response to images of the front at work was ham-handed — the Information Ministry called them a hoax. It was apparently unaware that the search-and-rescue agency has provided training to front members.

The front did not curtail its efforts in Palu after the catastrophe's first days.

Anwar Ragaua was skeptical when, three months after the disaster, two men from the front arrived at his house and offered new fishing boats to him and two others.

"All this time I had often been offered similar assistance from various organizations, government and non-government, but they only made promises," he said.

A day later, the men came back and ordered several boats from a boat maker, paying in cash.

"I almost cried," Ragaua said. "I wanted to bow down in gratitude."

Police have visited his house several times, suspicious he may be spreading radicalism, but Ragaua was unfazed. He flies the front's flag, proudly.

The front's rising political clout was evident in 2016-17, when it mobilized hundreds of thousands to protest the Christian governor of the capital, Jakarta. The governor, an ally of President Joko Widodo, was defeated and imprisoned for blasphemy.

In April's presidential election, the front backed former general Prabowo Subianto. He overwhelmingly won in religiously conservative provinces. Widodo, however, was re-elected by winning over a coalition of moderate and minority voters.

There have been other setbacks. Front leader Rizieq Shihab fled to Saudi Arabia in 2017 to avoid arrest on what he said were fabricated pornography charges. An online petition calling for the government to deny legal status to the front has half a million signatures.

Interior Ministry spokesman Bahtiar, who uses a single name, described the front as involved in "dirty practices." Under law, organizations involved in social or humanitarian work should not be a guise for political activities, he said.

"Indonesians are now smart," he said. "There is no more room to hide in this era of openness."

AP analysis: Legal pot for all takes a toll on medical users

By GILLIAN FLACCUS and ANGELIKI KASTANIS Associated Press

PORTLAND, Ore. (AP) — When states legalize pot for all adults, long-standing medical marijuana programs take a big hit, in some cases losing more than half their registered patients in just a few years, according to a data analysis by The Associated Press.

Much of the decline comes from consumers who, ill or not, got medical cards in their states because it was the only way to buy marijuana legally and then discarded them when broader legalization arrived. But for people who truly rely on marijuana to control ailments such as nausea or cancer pain, the arrival of so-called recreational cannabis can mean fewer and more expensive options.

Robin Beverett, a 47-year-old disabled Army veteran, said she resumed taking a powerful prescription mood stabilizer to control her anxiety and PTSD when the cost of her medical marijuana nearly tripled after California began general sales. Before last year, an eighth of an ounce of dry marijuana flower cost her \$35. Now it's approaching \$100, Beverett said.

"It's ridiculous. The prices are astronomical," said Beverett, who moved to Sacramento from Texas because medical marijuana is illegal there. "Going to the dispensary is just out of the question if you're on any kind of fixed income."

It's a paradox playing out nationwide as more states take the leap from care-centered medical programs to recreational models aligned with a multibillion-dollar global industry.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 44 of 59

States see a “massive exodus” of medical patients when they legalize marijuana for all adults — and then, in many cases, the remaining ones struggle, said David Mangone, director of government affairs for Americans for Safe Access.

“Some of the products that these patients have relied on for consistency — and have used over and over for years — are disappearing off the shelves to market products that have a wider appeal,” he said.

Cost also rises, a problem that’s compounded because many of those who stay in medical programs are low-income and rely on Social Security disability, he said.

In Oregon, where the medical program shrank the most following recreational legalization, nearly two-thirds of patients gave up their medical cards, the AP found. As patients exited, the market followed: The number of medical-only retail shops fell from 400 to two, and hundreds of growers who contracted with individual patients to grow specific strains walked away.

Now, some of the roughly 28,000 medical patients left are struggling to find affordable medical marijuana products they’ve relied on for years. While the state is awash in dry marijuana flower that’s dirt cheap, the specialized oils, tinctures and potent edibles used to alleviate severe illnesses can be harder to find and more expensive to buy.

“Lots of people have started trying to figure out how to make these concentrates and edibles themselves in their kitchen,” said Travis MacKenzie, who runs TJ’s Gardens, which provides free medical cannabis to children with epilepsy. “There are things that we don’t really want people to do at home, but the market conditions are such that people are trying to do more at home.”

The numbers compiled by the AP through public records requests and publicly available documents provide a snapshot of the evolution of marijuana as more states — Michigan was last in the door, and Illinois is about to follow — legalize pot for all adults.

Ten states have both medical and recreational markets. Four of them — Oregon, Nevada, Colorado, Alaska — have the combination of an established recreational marketplace and data on medical patients. The AP analysis found all four saw a drop in medical patients after broader legalization.

In Alaska, the state with the second-biggest decline, medical cardholders dropped by 63% after recreational sales began in 2016, followed by Nevada with nearly 40% since 2017 and Colorado with 19% since 2014.

The largest of all the legal markets, California, doesn’t keep data on medical patients, but those who use it say their community has been in turmoil since recreational pot debuted last year. That’s partly because the state ended unlicensed cannabis cooperatives where patients shared their homegrown pot for free.

There is limited scientific data backing many of the health claims made by medical marijuana advocates, and the U.S. government still classifies cannabis in any form as a controlled substance like LSD and cocaine.

Still, the popularity of medical pot is rising as more states legalize it. There are 33 such states, including the politically conservative recent additions of Oklahoma and Utah. Oklahoma has among the more liberal guidelines for use and has approved more than 100,000 patient licenses since voters backed legalization last June.

Getting a precise nationwide count of medical patients is impossible because California, Washington and Maine don’t keep data. However, absent those states, the AP found at the end of last year nearly 1.4 million people were active patients in a medical marijuana program. The AP estimates if those states were added the number would increase by about 1 million.

As more states legalize marijuana for all adults, some who have been using it medically are feeling disenfranchised.

In Michigan, where medical marijuana has been legal for over a decade, the creation of a new licensing system for medical dispensaries has sparked court challenges as the state prepares for the advent of general marijuana sales later this year. A cancer patient there filed a federal lawsuit this month, alleging the slow licensing pace has created a shortage of the products she needs to maintain her weight and control pain.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 45 of 59

In Washington, medical patients feel they were pushed aside when that state merged its medical and general-use markets, which also is what's happening in California.

Los Angeles dispensary owner Jerred Kiloh sells medical and recreational marijuana and said those markets are quickly becoming one, since few companies are going to produce products for a vanishing group of customers. He said his medical business has dipped to 7% of overall sales and is dropping month to month.

"It's going to be gone," said Kiloh, president of the LA trade group United Cannabis Business Association.

In Oregon, regulators are struggling to find a path that preserves the state's trailblazing low-cost medical pot program while tamping down on a still-thriving black market. A special state commission formed to oversee the market transition put out a report earlier this year that found affordability and lack of access are major hurdles for Oregon's patients.

"Patients have needs. Consumers have wants," said Anthony Taylor, a medical marijuana advocate who sits on the Oregon Cannabis Commission. "Patients are in crisis right now."

General legalization has "indelibly changed the medical market," and regulators want to identify the patients most affected by the transition, said Steve Marks, executive director of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, which oversees Oregon's recreational marijuana program.

Lawmakers just passed a bill that includes language that will allow the commission to explore a pilot program for home delivery of medical cannabis to patients in underserved areas, he said.

Meanwhile, Oregon U.S. Attorney Billy Williams has demanded lawmakers get control of excess weed being trafficked out of state and cited the medical industry as a potential source of illicit cannabis.

As a result, lawmakers are "paring the medical program back to what it probably should have been from the outset," said Ben Pirie, a cannabis law attorney in Portland.

"There are patients with legitimate needs, but there are many more growing way more cannabis than needed to address those needs — and what do you do with that?" Pirie said, adding "there is this sweet spot in the middle that's difficult to hit."

Oregon law allows medical patients to shop tax-free at general-use stores, and recreational stores can sell medical pot, although those products comprise just 8.5% of their sales.

Meanwhile, the rules that came with general legalization put lower caps on the potency of edibles. That means medical customers often pay more for the same dose they got before broad legalization.

Medical cardholders, for example, used to buy gummies or chocolate bars infused with 400 mg of THC, marijuana's high-inducing element. Now, edibles are capped at 100 mg for medical patients but cost the same or more.

"Who, with any medical condition, needs to be eating 20 pieces of candy a day?" asked Erich Berkovitz, Oregon's last remaining state-licensed medical marijuana processor.

Patients can also grow a small number of plants, but that doesn't address the needs of the many medical patients who don't smoke and instead rely on marijuana-infused edibles or tinctures.

Bill Blazina, a Navy veteran, used the state's medical program in 2013 when he was diagnosed with esophageal cancer. But the 73-year-old grandfather found the landscape had changed dramatically when he was diagnosed last year with a new cancer in his lung.

The highly concentrated marijuana oil he took before — and wanted to take again — was selling for \$60 a gram, his daily dose. A two-month supply would cost thousands at a retail pot shop, so Blazina connected with what he calls a "compassionate grower" who sold him the same amount at cost for \$750, a transaction that fell in a legal gray area.

"I didn't even know his name," said Blazina, sitting in a rocking chair in his home in the tiny coastal town of Waldport. "I met him ... and he'd bring it to me and smile, and I'd give him money and say, 'Thank you,' and I'd be on my way."

After surgery and chemo, his cancer is in remission, but he still swallows a tiny drop of the oil on a piece of tortilla twice a day. He's learned how to make it himself: He and his neighbor combine their eight legal

plants, pulverize a pound (0.45 kilograms) of marijuana flower, steep it in grain alcohol, strain it and then simmer the resulting mix of alcohol and plant juice in a rice cooker until only dark black oil is left.

A pound of that flower at a retail store would be about \$2,000, Blazina said.

"I think the regulations should go toward more access and how do we get more access, realistically, for the people who need it medically," he said, before taking his afternoon dose. "It prohibits people who don't have the ability to grow from getting the medicine they need because it drives the price up — and I don't see that as being helpful at all."

Kastanis is an AP data reporter in Los Angeles. Associated Press writers David Eggert in Lansing, Michigan, and Michael R. Blood in Los Angeles contributed to this report. Flaccus, Kastanis and Blood are members of AP's marijuana beat team. Follow Flaccus on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/gflaccus>. Follow AP's complete marijuana coverage: <https://apnews.com/Marijuana>.

Holocaust Museum digitizing letters from Anne Frank's father

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

YARMOUTH, Mass. (AP) — Ryan Cooper was a 20-something Californian unsure of his place in the world when he struck up a pen pal correspondence in the 1970s with Otto Frank, the father of the young Holocaust victim Anne Frank.

Through dozens of letters and several face-to-face meetings, the two forged a friendship that lasted until Frank died in 1980 at the age of 91.

Now 73 years old, Cooper, an antiques dealer and artist in Massachusetts, has donated a trove of letters and mementos he received from Frank to the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington ahead of the 90th anniversary Wednesday of Anne Frank's birth on June 12, 1929.

He wants the letters to be shared so that people can have a deeper understanding of the man who introduced the world to Anne Frank, whose famous World War II diary is considered one of the most important works of the 20th century.

"He was a lot like Anne in that he was an optimist," Cooper said of Otto Frank at his house on Cape Cod recently. "He always believed the world would be right in the end, and he based that hope on the young people."

As the German army occupied the Netherlands, the Franks hid in the attic of Otto Frank's office in Amsterdam. But they were eventually discovered and sent to concentration camps, where 15-year-old Anne, her elder sister and her mother died — among an estimated 6 million Jews killed by the Nazis.

Otto Frank was the only family member to survive, living to see the Soviet army liberate the notorious Auschwitz camp in Nazi-occupied Poland in 1945. He had his daughter's diary published two years later and dedicated his days to speaking about the atrocities of the Holocaust.

But in his letters and conversations in person, Frank focused less on his family's ordeal and chose instead to counsel Cooper through his own everyday struggles. For Cooper, those ranged from losing his mother, to questioning his Jehovah's Witness upbringing to worrying about his career and romantic relationships.

"Some of the letters really have nothing to do with Anne," Cooper said. "In a lot of ways, I feel like I was adopted by Otto. He made me feel like I had a family during a period of real isolation."

In one letter, Frank urged Cooper to draw inspiration from Anne's optimism under vastly more dire circumstances.

"I want to remind you of her ardent wish 'to work for mankind' in case she would survive," Frank wrote on Jan. 9, 1972. "I can see from your letter that you are an intelligent person and that you have self criticism and so I can only hope that Anne will inspire you to find a positive outlook on life."

The letters also show the toll Otto Frank's life work had on his physical and mental health, said Edna Friedberg, a historian at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

In one of the later letters to Cooper, Frank's second wife, Elfriede "Fritzi" Frank, wrote about how her husband struggled to maintain his health during a series of public appearances and interviews ahead of

the 50th anniversary of Anne Frank's birth.

"You can surely imagine that all this is very emotional for him and takes a lot of his strength," she wrote on March 21, 1979. "But you cannot prevent him for doing what he thinks is his duty."

Otto Frank died the following summer.

As Anne Frank's 90th birthday approaches, Friedberg said it's important to remember the sacrifices Otto and others made to keep her legacy alive. Her writings were preserved by Miep Gies, Otto Frank's secretary who helped the family while they were in hiding. She returned the documents to him after the war.

"Otto Frank never had to publish that diary. As a parent in mourning, he could have kept this to himself," she said. "But he gave it as a gift to humanity because he saw that it spoke to something bigger. He took that charge and ran with it for the rest of his life."

The museum will digitize and eventually make Cooper's collection available online. It totals more than 80 letters, including his correspondence with Gies and others who aided the Frank family during the war, and a number of modest family keepsakes. Those include Otto Frank's coin purse and a photo of Anne.

Associated Press investigative researcher Randy Herschaft contributed to this report.

US gift to China questions enforcement of N. Korea sanctions

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The meeting between acting Defense Secretary Patrick Shanahan and his Chinese counterpart began with all the hallmarks of a routine staged and scripted session between two uneasy rivals.

First came the posed photo, as the two men shook hands with broad smiles in front of their nations' flags, and then they moved quickly into the hotel conference room, surrounded by staff. There, Shanahan presented Chinese Defense Minister Wei Fenghe with a gift.

But what at first glance looked like a coffee table book was actually 32 pages of photographs and satellite images of North Korean ships getting and delivering shipments of oil. Many of the photos are stamped with dates, times, locations and descriptions, and, according to officials, represent proof that Pyongyang is violating punishing economic sanctions right off China's coast.

"I gave him this beautiful book," Shanahan said a day after his meeting with Wei and his top staff at a national security conference in Singapore. "I said this is an area where you and I can cooperate."

The pointed message from the acting Pentagon chief comes as the Trump administration is at odds with China over a wide range of issues, including trade, Chinese theft of American technology, the possible sale of U.S. weapons to Taiwan and how to pressure North Korea into giving up its nuclear weapons program.

China agreed to the U.N. sanctions against its ally and neighbor North Korea, but, as the photo book illustrates, appears to be allowing violations to take place.

On one page of the book viewed by The Associated Press, a photo shows the North Korean-flagged oil tanker Kum Un San 3 next to the M/V New Regent, a Panama-flagged tanker, and a number of lines and hoses are draped between the two ships. The photo is dated June 7, 2018.

The U.N., in an October 2018 press release, said the June 7 ship-to-ship transfer was a violation and said it likely involved oil. The U.N. sanctioned the two ships and said they are subject to de-flagging and prohibited from entering U.N. member ports.

Another photo in the book shows the North Korean tanker An San 1, and says it is "offloading refined petroleum" through an undersea pipeline at the terminal in Nampo, near Pyongyang.

Lt. Col. Joe Buccino, a Pentagon spokesman, said Shanahan devised the book to show that enforcement of U.N. sanctions off the Chinese coast is "an area for potential coordination and collaboration" with the Chinese military.

A U.S. defense official said Shanahan had the photographs and information in the book declassified and bound. Shanahan presented the book to Wei at the start of their meeting, saying he had a gift for the minister, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a private meeting. The official said Wei initially appeared taken aback at receiving a gift, but when he realized what it was he quickly

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 48 of 59

turned it over to his staff.

During the meeting, Shanahan told Wei that the U.S. and Chinese navies could work together to prevent such violations of the U.N. sanctions, said the official.

"It's actually very clever," said Bonnie Glaser, director of the China power project at the Washington-based Center for Strategic and International Studies. "It's really calling out China. This is a way of telling them that we know what's going on, we have quite a bit of evidence, and here's an opportunity for you to expand cooperation with the United States."

Glaser, who also attended the Singapore conference, said she spoke with members of the China delegation and they described the meeting between Shanahan and Wei as positive and upbeat. No one, she said, mentioned the book.

"I think it was probably embarrassing," she said. "They probably thought they were getting something wonderful, that would highlight something positive, not something calling out China for their failure to step up and crack down on North Korea."

The oil and trade sanctions against North Korea have hurt its already struggling economy, and both Russia and China have called for easing them. China isn't likely to want to openly evade the sanctions and face diplomatic friction with the United States, but more than 90% of North Korea's foreign trade has gone through China.

The U.N. Security Council in March said North Korea was continuing to defy its resolutions through a "massive" increase in ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum products and coal. The U.S. Navy has been working with a number of countries, including South Korea, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and France, to catch sanctions violations such as ship-to-ship transfers.

Shanahan's meeting with Wei at the Shangri-La Dialogue security conference earlier this month came just the evening before he delivered a speech that denounced China's efforts to steal technology from other nations and militarize man-made outposts in the South China Sea as a "toolkit of coercion." But he also made clear the U.S. wants to work with China on other international issues.

In a brief mention of the book during questions after his conference speech, Shanahan said the two countries must work through their differences.

"Trust is built over time," he said. "Trust is built by working on projects and being shoulder to shoulder. It isn't done by conferences or by policies or by speeches. We need to find areas in which we can grow."

Alex Morgan has 5 goals as US routs Thailand 13-0

By ANNE M. PETERSON AP Sports Writer

REIMS, France (AP) — Thailand was never a real threat to the U.S. national team. Even so, the three-time Women's World Cup champions had no desire to go easy on a lesser opponent in their opening game.

Goals matter in the group stage.

And statements matter in soccer's biggest tournament.

"Obviously we have the utmost respect for everyone we play, but it's the World Cup," said captain Megan Rapinoe.

Alex Morgan tied the tournament record with five goals and the United States opened with a historic 13-0 rout of Thailand on Tuesday night. Samantha Mewis and Rose Lavelle each added a pair of goals for the United States, which broke the record for goals and margin of victory in a World Cup game.

Rapinoe, Lindsey Horan, Mallory Pugh and Carli Lloyd also scored. The previous record margin was Germany's 11-0 victory over Argentina in 2007.

Morgan tied Michelle Akers' record for World Cup goals, set in the quarterfinals against Taiwan in 1991. The team's seven different scorers also set a tournament record.

Lloyd, 36, became the oldest American woman to score at a World Cup and joined Germany's Birgit Prinz as the only players to score in five straight World Cup games.

The United States faced criticism over its relentless attack. The Americans led 3-0 at the break and then broke the match open in the second half, with the players celebrating goal after goal.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 49 of 59

The Americans meant no disrespect, said Morgan, but they simply wanted to position themselves for a run at a second consecutive title.

"We really just came into the game really wanting to showcase ourselves," Morgan said. "Every goal matters in this tournament and that's what we were working on."

Asked about the lopsided score, U.S. coach Jill Ellis wondered if a 10-0 victory in a men's World Cup would elicit the same questions.

"This is a world championship, so every team here has been fantastic to get to this point. And I think that to be respectful to opponents is to play hard against opponents, and as Alex said, it's a tournament where goal differential is important," Ellis said.

The two teams were the last to kick off in the group stage for the monthlong tournament. Host France opened the World Cup before a sellout crowd in Paris on Friday night with a 4-0 victory over South Korea.

Ranked No. 1 in the world, the Americans had dropped only one match in their previous 38, a loss to France in Le Havre in January. The team was 7-1-2 overall this year, with six straight wins going into the World Cup.

The last time the Americans played in the sport's top tournament, Lloyd had a hat trick in the first 16 minutes and the United States beat Japan 5-2 in Canada for the trophy.

The U.S. pounced early against Thailand, too, on Morgan's header in the 13th minute off Kelley O'Hara's precisely placed cross. Mewis, Lavelle and Horan were all making their World Cup debuts.

"When you get a deluge of goals like that, it's a good feeling," Ellis said. "It builds confidence."

Thailand, ranked No. 34 in the world, was clearly outmatched even though the team has shown progress on the world stage. Making its World Cup debut in 2015 four years ago, Thailand finished third in its group but earned its first win, a 3-2 victory over Ivory Coast.

At the final whistle, Lloyd and Christen Press were seen consoling the Thailand goalkeeper. Morgan put her arm around Thailand's Miranda Nild, who was wiping away tears on the field. Nild and Morgan both played college soccer for the California Golden Bears.

"They were disappointed of course, they intended to make an impression in this first match and they were disappointed," coach Nuengrutai Srathongvian said through a translator. "Yes, they are all athletes and they will be resilient. We've got two more games to play and we need to bounce back."

Srathongvian said soccer in Thailand is still growing and there is a limited pool of players to draw from.

The World Cup comes at a time when female players across the globe are seeking better treatment, conditions and pay. The U.S. national team has long championed equal rights, and players collectively filed a lawsuit earlier this year that alleges discrimination by the U.S. Soccer Federation and are seeking pay equitable with that of the men's national team.

The players say the lawsuit is on hold while they're in France. But a pair of prominent well-wishers on Twitter referenced the team's pursuit of equality.

"The @USWNT is something to smile about. It was great to celebrate with them back in 2015 and I'm excited to root them on in their drive to earn their fourth star. Best of luck to these champions for equality, on and off the field," wrote former President Barack Obama.

Tennis legend Billie Jean King weighed in: "The pursuit of a record 4th World Cup trophy for the #USWNT officially begins today, but the journey has been years in the making. You have the support of a nation behind you. Get that win, and then get the equal pay you deserve!"

Ellis made some lineup moves for the match in the absence of defender Becky Sauerbrunn, whom the team said was held out as a precaution with a minor quad injury. Julie Ertz was moved to the backline and Mewis got the start in the midfield.

Morgan, U.S. Soccer's 2018 Player of the Year, now has 106 international goals. Playing in her third World Cup, she was named player of the match.

It came close to the team's biggest rout ever. The U.S. beat the Dominican Republic 14-0 in a 2012 Olympic qualifier in Vancouver, British Columbia.

Up next for the U.S. is World Cup newcomer Chile on Sunday in Paris. In the final group match before

the knockout round, the Americans will travel to Le Havre to face nemesis Sweden, who they've been grouped with six times in World Cup play.

In the last meeting between the teams, Sweden ousted the United States in the quarterfinals at the 2016 Olympics. Afterward, former U.S. goalkeeper Hole Solo called Sweden "cowards" for bunkering on defense. Alyssa Naehar has since replaced Solo, who was dismissed from the team.

Sweden defeated Chile 2-0 earlier on Tuesday in Rennes, a match that featured a 40-minute weather delay.

More AP soccer: <https://apnews.com/apf-Soccer> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Pelosi says Dems 'not even close' to starting impeachment

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Brushing back calls for impeachment, Speaker Nancy Pelosi said Tuesday "it's not even close" to having enough support in the House, while Democrats pushed forward on other fronts to investigate President Donald Trump.

The House voted 229-191 to approve a resolution that will allow Democrats to accelerate their legal battles with the Trump administration over access to information from the Russia investigation.

At the same time, they're convening hearings this week on special counsel Robert Mueller's report in an effort to boost public interest in the findings of the Trump-Russia probe while digging into a legal strategy aimed at forcing Attorney General William Barr, former White House counsel Don McGahn and others into compliance with congressional oversight.

"We need answers to the questions left unanswered by the Mueller report," Pelosi said on the House floor ahead of voting.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy countered that the Democratic maneuvers are all "just a desperate attempt to relitigate the Mueller investigation." He called it "an impeachment effort in everything but name."

Earlier in the day, Pelosi all but ignored questions about impeachment during a policy conference, saying the Democrats' strategy is "legislating, investigating, litigating" — in that order.

Pressed about Trump, she said: "I'm done with him. I don't even want to talk about him."

The House's far-reaching resolution approved Tuesday empowers committee chairs to sue top Trump administration officials to force compliance with congressional subpoenas, including those for Mueller's full report and his underlying evidence. They now no longer need a vote of the full House.

The Judiciary Committee chairman, Rep. Jerry Nadler of New York, urged his colleagues to support the legislation "so we can get into court and break the stonewall without delay."

After the vote, Nadler said he would go to court "as quickly as possible" against McGahn, who at the behest of the White House has defied subpoenas for documents and his testimony.

The chairman also said he is prepared to go to court to enforce subpoenas against former White House communications director Hope Hicks and Annie Donaldson, a former McGahn aide, if they don't show up for scheduled interviews this month.

And Nadler added new names to the list, saying he is also interested in hearing from Assistant Attorney General Jody Hunt, who served as former Attorney General Jeff Sessions' chief of staff, and former White House aide Rick Dearborn. Both are mentioned frequently in the Mueller report.

"Either work with us and comply with subpoenas or we'll see you in court," said Rep. James McGovern, D-Mass., the chairman of the Rules Committee.

House leaders have signaled they will hold off on suing Barr, for now, after the committee struck a deal with the Justice Department to receive some underlying materials from Mueller's report. Nadler has called these some of Mueller's "most important files" and said all members of the committee will be able to view them. They include redacted portions of the report pertaining to obstruction of justice. Some staff have already started viewing the files.

However, Nadler said the committee will likely sue for access to the report's secret grand jury information.

The chairmen of several oversight committees said after the vote that Tuesday's action extends beyond

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 51 of 59

the Russia investigation into other aspects of Trump's administration, including their subpoena for the president's tax returns.

"This is not just about Russia, this is a broad, coordinated campaign to stall more investigations across the board," said Rep. Elijah Cummings, D-Md., the chairman of the Oversight Committee. "We are here in a fight for the soul of our democracy and we will use every single tool that is available to us to hold this administration accountable."

It's not clear if that will be enough, though, for the dozens of House Democrats who say it's beyond time to start impeachment proceedings.

Pelosi has resisted those efforts so far, preferring to build the case in the courts, and in the court of public opinion.

The No. 2 Democrat, Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland, downplayed the tensions, saying Tuesday he doesn't get the impression the caucus is "embroiled by this issue and divided by this issue. We have differences of opinion, but I don't think that we are divided."

The ramped-up actions this week are intended to mollify some of the impatient members, while also seeking to deepen the public's understanding of Mueller's findings.

Mueller wrote in his 448-page report released last month that there was not enough evidence to establish that there was a criminal conspiracy between Trump's 2016 campaign and Russia, but he also said he could not exonerate Trump on obstruction of justice. The report examined several episodes in which Trump attempted to influence or curtail Mueller's investigation.

On Monday, the Judiciary panel heard testimony from John Dean, a White House counsel under Richard Nixon who helped bring down his presidency. Dean testified that Mueller has provided Congress with a "road map" for investigating Trump.

The focus on Mueller will continue Wednesday, when the House Intelligence Committee is scheduled to review the counterintelligence implications of Russia's election interference, as detailed in Mueller's report. The president's eldest son, Donald Trump, Jr., is scheduled to testify before the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Also Wednesday, the Oversight Committee will consider new contempt citations against Barr and Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross over the administration's pursuit of citizenship questions on the U.S. Census.

Republicans have criticized the hearings as a waste of time and have called for Democrats to move on.

Associated Press writer Laurie Kellman in Washington contributed to this report.

US submits extradition request for WikiLeaks founder Assange

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The United States government has formally submitted an extradition request to the United Kingdom for WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange, a Justice Department official said Tuesday.

Assange faces an 18-count indictment that accuses him of soliciting and publishing classified information and of conspiring with former Army private Chelsea Manning to crack a Defense Department computer password. That indictment, which includes Espionage Act charges, was issued by the Justice Department last month and is pending in federal court in Alexandria, Virginia.

The extradition request had been expected ever since U.S. authorities first announced a criminal case against Assange. Justice Department spokesman Marc Raimondi said it was submitted to the United Kingdom.

The 47-year-old Assange was evicted on April 11 from the Ecuadorian Embassy in London, where he had been holed up since 2012 after Ecuador granted him political asylum. He was arrested by British police and is currently serving a 50-week sentence for jumping bail. Sweden also seeks him for questioning about an alleged rape, which Assange has denied.

Assange was initially charged with a single computer crime violation on allegations that he worked with Manning to crack a government password. Some legal experts have said the additional Espionage Act

charges might slow or complicate the extradition process to the extent the United Kingdom views them as political offenses and therefore exempt from extradition.

Manning, who spent seven years in a military prison for delivering a trove of classified information to Assange before having her sentence commuted by then-President Barack Obama, has been jailed for civil contempt in Virginia after refusing to testify before a grand jury investigating WikiLeaks.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Tech on trial: House mulls antitrust help for news industry

By MARCY GORDON AP Business Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Members of both parties on Tuesday suggested legislation may be necessary for the financially-struggling U.S. news industry as lawmakers began a bipartisan investigation into the market dominance of Silicon Valley companies.

At a hearing of the House Judiciary Committee's antitrust panel, news media associations accused the tech companies of jeopardizing the industry's economic survival by putting news content on their platforms without fairly compensating them.

"This is the first significant antitrust investigation undertaken by Congress in decades," Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., the subcommittee's chairman, said at the start of the hearing. The investigation is long overdue, he said, and Congress must determine whether the antitrust laws "are equipped for the competition problems of our modern economy."

Cicilline noted the steep layoffs in the news industry in recent years, saying the dominant position of the online platforms in the advertising market has created "an economic catastrophe for news publishers, forcing them to cut back on their investments in quality journalism." At the same time, he said, tech platforms that are gateways to news online "have operated with virtual immunity from the antitrust laws."

As a partial solution, Cicilline proposed legislation to establish an antitrust exemption that would allow news companies to band together to negotiate revenue rates with big tech platforms. He called it "a life support measure, not the remedy for long-term health" of the news business.

The senior Republican on the full committee, Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia, said he backs Cicilline's proposal. Addressing the broader question of antitrust, however, he said, "Big is not necessarily bad," adding that lawmakers need to proceed cautiously.

The head of an association that represents technology and telecom companies said the government scrutiny of successful companies is appropriate. However, an antitrust exemption for the news industry wouldn't solve the problem, said Matt Schruer, vice president of the Computer and Communications Industry Association.

Before the internet, "news publishers received an exemption to deal with previous competitors like radio and TV news (and they) have not worked," Schruer said. "The results were fewer choices for readers and less competition among news outlets."

But David Chavern, president of the News Media Alliance representing some 2,000 news organizations of all sizes and types, called an antitrust exemption "the lightest-touch option on the table."

"There's a real urgency in the industry. We're at crisis point now," Chavern said.

Stepping ahead of the criticism, Google's vice president of news Richard Gringas said the company has "worked for many years to be a collaborative and supportive technology and advertising partner to the news industry."

"Every month, Google News and Google Search drive over 10 billion clicks to publishers' websites, which drive subscriptions and significant ad revenue," he said in a statement Tuesday.

In a Capitol steeped in partisanship, inflamed by special counsel Robert Mueller's report and Democrats' intensifying probes of President Donald Trump, Congress' new investigation of tech market power stands out. Not only is it bipartisan, but it's also the first such review by Congress of a sector that for more than a decade has enjoyed halved status and a light touch from federal regulators.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 53 of 59

With regulators at the Justice Department and Federal Trade Commission apparently pursuing antitrust investigations of Facebook, Google, Apple and Amazon, and several state attorneys general exploring bipartisan action of their own, the tech industry finds itself in a precarious moment — with the dreaded M-word increasingly used to describe their way of doing business. Cicilline has flatly called them monopolies.

The Justice Department's antitrust chief suggested in a speech Tuesday that he may take a broad view of harm to competition, and take into account quality factors such as the threat to privacy, not only whether a company's dominant market position results in higher prices.

"Price effects alone do not provide a complete picture of market dynamics, especially in digital markets in which the profit-maximizing price is zero," Assistant Attorney General Makan Delrahim said, according to a transcript of his speech in Tel Aviv, Israel, provided by the department.

Politicians on the left and right have differing gripes about the tech giants. Some complain of aggressive conduct that squashes competition. Others perceive a political bias or tolerance of extremist content. Still others are upset by the industry's harvesting of personal data.

Several Democratic presidential candidates think they have the solution: breaking up the companies on antitrust grounds. Cicilline has called that "a last resort," but the idea has currency with both major political parties, including at the White House.

Trump noted the huge fines imposed by European regulators on the biggest tech companies.

"We are going to be looking at them differently," he said in an interview Monday on CNBC.

"We should be doing what (the Europeans) are doing," Trump said. "Obviously, there is something going on in terms of monopoly."

The tech giants have mostly declined to comment on the antitrust investigations.

Google has said that scrutiny from lawmakers and regulators "often improves our products and the policies that govern them," and that in some areas, such as data protection, laws need to be updated.

Facebook executives have been calling broadly for regulation while explicitly rejecting the idea of breaking up "a successful American company." CEO Mark Zuckerberg has called for new rules in four areas: harmful content, election integrity, privacy and data portability.

When Democratic presidential contender Sen. Elizabeth Warren tweeted in April that tech giants like Amazon should be broken up, Amazon tweeted back, "Walmart is much larger."

And Apple has countered a legal challenge to its management of the App Store by saying it "will prevail when the facts are presented and the App Store is not a monopoly by any metric."

As bishops gather, prosecutors step up scrutiny of church

By **JULIET LINDERMAN, GARANCE BURKE and MARTHA MENDOZA Associated Press**

DETROIT (AP) — Hundreds of boxes. Millions of records. From Michigan to New Mexico this month, attorneys general are sifting through files on clergy sex abuse, seized through search warrants and subpoenas at dozens of archdioceses.

They're looking to prosecute, and not just priests. If the boxes lining the hallways of Michigan Attorney General Dana Nessel's offices contain enough evidence, she said, she is considering using state racketeering laws usually reserved for organized crime. Prosecutors in Michigan are even volunteering on weekends to get through all the documents as quickly as possible.

For decades, leaders of the Roman Catholic Church were largely left to police their own. But now, as American bishops gather for a conference to confront the reignited sex-abuse crisis this week, they're facing the most scrutiny ever from secular law enforcement.

A nationwide Associated Press query of more than 20 state and federal prosecutors last week found they are looking for legal means to hold higher ups in the church accountable for sex abuse. They have raided diocesan offices, subpoenaed files, set up victim tip lines and launched sweeping investigations into decades-old allegations. Thousands of people have called hotlines nationwide, and five priests have recently been arrested.

"Some of the things I've seen in the files makes your blood boil, to be honest with you," Nessel said.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 54 of 59

"When you're investigating gangs or the Mafia, we would call some of this conduct a criminal enterprise."

If a prosecutor applies racketeering laws, also known as RICO, against church leaders, bishops and other church officials could face criminal consequences for enabling predator priests, experts say. Such a move by Michigan or one of the other law enforcement agencies would mark the first known time that actions by a diocese or church leader were branded a criminal enterprise akin to organized crime.

"That would be an important step because it would set the standard for pursuing justice in these cases," said Marci Hamilton, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania and CEO of CHILD USA, a Philadelphia-based think tank that tracks statute of limitations reforms.

Monsignor G. Michael Bugarin, who handles sex abuse accusations for the Detroit Archdiocese, said they too are committed to ending abuse and cover-ups. Bugarin said they cooperate with law enforcement, and that won't change if the attorney general is considering organized crime charges.

"The law is the law, so I think we just have to respect what the current law is," he said.

Some defenders of the church bristle at the notion of increased legal action, saying the Catholic institution is being singled out by overzealous prosecutors. A spokesperson for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops refused to comment on law enforcement investigations into specific dioceses across the country, instead referring all such inquiries to the dioceses themselves.

Seventeen years after U.S. bishops passed a "zero tolerance" policy against sexually abusive priests, they too are considering new measures for accountability over abuse. And last month Pope Francis issued a global order requiring all Catholic priests and nuns to report clergy sexual abuse and cover-ups to church authorities.

At the conference on Tuesday, Archbishop of Miami Thomas Wenski asked if a greater emphasis should be placed on swiftly reporting allegations to civil authorities.

"If this is something that's criminal, isn't the first response to the alleged victim to tell them, 'this is a crime, call the authorities?'" Wenski asked. "Where we got into trouble before was, before reporting crimes we wanted to take it upon ourselves to determine whether there was a crime to report, and that's not what we should be doing."

In response, Cardinal Joseph W. Tobin, chair of the Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations Committee, said all bishops should follow the law in reporting crimes to authorities.

The meeting follows a grand jury report that documented decades of clergy abuse and cover-ups in Pennsylvania, which thrust the Catholic Church's sex assault scandal back into the mainstream last fall and spurred prosecutors across the U.S. to launch investigations of their hometown dioceses.

Since then, many states have launched telephone hotlines or online questionnaires for confidential complaints including Virginia, Nebraska and California.

Pennsylvania has been flooded with calls, some 1,800 from victims and families over the last three years. In Iowa, 11 people who identified themselves as victims and their relatives came forward in the hotline and questionnaire's first three days. New Jersey and Michigan's tip lines have received about 500 calls each, while Illinois has received nearly 400 calls and emails, including 160 from survivors.

In contrast, Delaware's attorney general tip line has had four calls since November, 2018, a spokesperson said. Officials in Vermont say they cannot comment because the investigation is ongoing, but that they are aware of dozens of victims of alleged criminal misconduct.

While priests have been prosecuted in the past, top law enforcement scrutiny of church authorities has been relatively rare. In 2012, Bishop Robert Finn of the Kansas City-St. Joseph diocese in Missouri was the first and only American prelate convicted for his role in aiding a priest, when he was found guilty of failing to report child pornography on a cleric's laptop to authorities.

AP reached out to attorneys general in 18 states, federal prosecutors in three jurisdictions and the U.S. Justice Department to learn more about the new round of investigations. Some of the accused priests in Pennsylvania had ties to other states, prompting those attorneys general, such as New Mexico, for example, to take a fresh look.

Before Pennsylvania's attorney general got involved, cases against predator priests were largely the purview of local police and prosecutors, or private attorneys bringing lawsuits and civil claims. Although

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 55 of 59

Pennsylvania's attorney general office says prosecutors have spoken with their counterparts from almost every state, most attorneys general in the U.S. have not taken public action.

In Kentucky, Attorney General Andy Beshear wanted to investigate but lacked jurisdiction. He worked to change state law, but the bill failed to make it through the legislature.

Attorneys general who are investigating are using a range of tools. Michigan executed search warrants, which means police show up and raid the offices. Delaware, West Virginia and Nebraska have issued subpoenas, which is a less assertive approach, making a legal request for the records. New Jersey officials have started to make arrests, while Washington D.C.'s attorney general is weighing civil charges.

Asked whether the office would consider charges under Iowa's far-reaching RICO statute, Attorney General spokesman Lynn Hicks said that nothing is off the table but that it's premature to say. And in Virginia, spokesman Michael K. Kelly said they are using "every tool, authority, and resource" to investigate not only priests, but also "whether leadership in the dioceses may have covered up or abetted any such crimes."

Iowa's Attorney General Tom Miller said that he took action late last month after his office met with abuse survivors, including some whose stories have never become public.

Tim Lennon, who grew up in Sioux City, Iowa, said he was among the survivors who corresponded with Miller's office and in recent months sent over new material about priests accused of abuse.

"The priest who had raped and abused me when I was 12 had gotten caught at three parishes before they moved him to my parish. The bishop knew and kept moving him along," said Lennon, the president of the board of directors for the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests, who now lives in Arizona.

Statute of limitation rules differ, and are being tested, in different states. In Michigan, for example, the clock stops if a priest moved out of state for a period.

New York, California and Florida refused to comment, citing ongoing investigations.

In recent years, civil lawsuits have used racketeering laws leading to large settlements. Delaware-based attorney Stephen Neuberger, who has successfully sued the church on behalf of clergy abuse victims, said questions inevitably arise about church authorities covering up and facilitating for accused priests. He said organized crime statutes seem appropriate.

"It's not piling on," he said. "In fact I think it's long overdue."

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker in Washington; Reese Dunklin in Dallas; Maryclaire Dale in Philadelphia; Lisa Rathke in Burlington, Vermont; Grant Schulte in Lincoln, Nebraska; Ryan Foley in Iowa City, Iowa; Anthony Izaguirre in Charleston, West Virginia; Matt Sedensky in New York; Alan Suderman in Richmond, Virginia; Jim Salter in St. Louis; Claudia Lauer in Philadelphia and Justin Pritchard in Los Angeles contributed to this report.

Investors should guard against tunnel vision on trade wars

By STAN CHOE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Once this trade-war cloud gets lifted, investors should have little to worry about, right? Monday's market action makes it seem that way: Stocks around the world climbed after President Donald Trump withdrew a threat to impose tariffs on Mexico, at least for now. That leaves investors hoping for a deal to soothe the more contentious and complex trade dispute with China, which helped sink stocks last month.

But there are other concerns that shouldn't be overlooked.

Economic trends were already signaling trouble before the latest round of tariff-induced fear. Friday's surprisingly weak jobs report, where employers added far fewer jobs than economists expected, gave extra pause. Corporate profits are also under pressure.

"If the administration fixes the problem it created, I'm sure there will be a short-term pop in the stock market," said Rich Weiss, chief investment officer of multi-asset strategies at American Century Investments. "However, I believe it's only short-term because ultimately that will not remedy the underlying fundamentals, which are just not strong."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 56 of 59

Of course, many along Wall Street are still forecasting gains for stocks this year. Much of the optimism rides on analyst forecasts for profit growth to accelerate later this year. Plus, stock prices are looking like better values following their tumble in recent weeks. Perhaps most importantly, the Federal Reserve has intimated it may come to the market's rescue again and cut interest rates if the trade war swamps the economy.

But skeptics say optimists aren't looking closely enough at all the troubles getting overshadowed by trade disputes. Among the concerns:

— SLOWING ECONOMIC GROWTH, EVEN BEFORE THE LATEST TRADE SKIRMISHES

The bright spots for the U.S. economy are still clear: The job market is solid, as long as Friday's disappointing report doesn't herald something more lasting. The unemployment rate at 3.6% is at its lowest since 1969, and consumers are feeling relatively confident. That's key when consumer spending accounts for two thirds of the economy.

But skeptics point to other recent economic reports that showed weakness in April, before this latest round of trade worries flared up. Among them: another drop in North American freight shipments, slower manufacturing growth than economists expected and weaker business spending on equipment.

Michael Wilson, equity strategist at Morgan Stanley, sees a warning flag in falling profits for many retailers. While the industry's overall figures for the first quarter may look decent due to big gains for Amazon, Nordstrom and other retailers saw big declines. That could be an early sign that U.S. consumers, whose spending is such a key part of the economy, may be less willing to spend in coming months.

"Get ready for more potential growth disappointments even with a trade deal," Wilson wrote in a recent research report.

— LACKLUSTER PROFIT GROWTH

Companies across the S&P 500 reported roughly flat earnings for the first three months of 2019, as they're no longer getting the big boost of the first year of lower tax rates. But analysts are more optimistic about trends later this year and are forecasting growth to accelerate to 7% in the fourth quarter, according to FactSet. That's key because stock prices tend to track the path of corporate profits over the long term.

But skeptics say those projections are too high.

Barry Bannister, a strategist at Stifel who was among the first voices on Wall Street to turn cautious on stocks last year, expects earnings in the second half of 2019 to fall short of analysts' projections, particularly in the technology, health care and energy industries.

With the dollar's value strong and U.S. manufacturing slowing, he's looking for CEOs to give profit forecasts for the second half of 2019 that fall short of analysts' expectations, with announcements coming as soon as next month, when companies begin reporting their second-quarter results.

Companies are also paying higher wages to their workers, and average hourly earnings rose 3.1% in May, which raises their costs. Compare that against the consumer price index, which gives a window into how easily companies can pass along price increases to their customers, notes Chun Wang, senior analyst at Leuthold. CPI inflation hasn't been that high since 2011, and it was at 2% in April.

All those pressures could bring down profit margins for companies, which have recently been at record highs. If companies aren't able to extract as much profit from each \$1 in revenue, they'll need to make up for it by delivering more in sales. A slowing economy would make that tough.

— POLITICS ARE ALWAYS LOOMING

Even beyond trade talks, politics can sway markets.

In Washington, regulators may be setting the stage for antitrust probes into some of the biggest tech companies. Amazon, Apple, Google's parent and other mega-tech companies have been some of the market's best-performing stocks in recent years, and losses for them have outsized effects on S&P 500 index funds. Consider June 3, when nearly three quarters of all the stocks in the S&P 500 rose, but the overall index fell 0.3% because big technology companies had a bad day.

In the Middle East, the Trump administration has pledged "maximum pressure" on Iran. Beyond the possibility of violence, the increasing tensions could send the price of oil soaring, as well as inflation, which has long been dormant. In Europe, Britain is still negotiating its exit from the European Union, and investors

are worried about signs of increasing tension between the bloc and Italy.

"So, fixing the China situation does not fix the rest of the world," said American Century's Weiss. "Is it a positive? Sure. It's positive in the short term, but it doesn't remedy all the other things we have going on."

Asian stocks mostly lower after retreat on Wall Street

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) — Shares were mostly lower in Asia on Wednesday and Hong Kong's Seng index tumbled 1.7% as thousands continued protests against proposed legislation that many city residents fear could further erode the territory's legal autonomy.

Renewed jitters over the trade war between the U.S. and China were weighing on sentiment, pulling shares slightly lower on Wall Street, where benchmarks fell for the first time in six days.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index lost 0.2% to 21,154.28 and the Kospi in Seoul shed 0.2% to 2,1087.60. The Shanghai Composite index declined 0.5% to 2,910.82. Australia's S&P ASX 200 edged 0.1% higher 6,550.40. Shares rose in Taiwan but fell in Jakarta and Thailand.

On Wall Street, defense contractors suffered steep declines and technology stocks gave up most of their early gains, taking the steam out of a morning rally. The Dow Jones Industrial Average closed with a loss of 14 points after rising as many as 186 points just after trading began.

The market had rallied for five straight days since the Federal Reserve signaled it is open to cutting interest rates if needed to stabilize the economy rattled by trade disputes. The gains had erased much of the S&P 500's 6.6% decline in May. But Tuesday, concerns that the U.S. trade spat with China could be prolonged and hurt growth in the world's two biggest economies dimmed investor enthusiasm.

Trump told reporters Tuesday he was prepared to expand 25% tariffs already imposed on \$250 billion of Chinese exports to cover another \$300 billion if a deal with Beijing falls through.

"It's me, right now, that's holding up the deal," Trump said in comments carried by CNBC. "And we're either going to do a great deal with China or we're not doing a deal at all."

Katie Nixon, chief investment officer at Northern Trust Wealth Management, said there is no clear resolution in sight to the trade war and investors will have to get accustomed to uncertainty hanging over the market.

"The market's going to be really sensitive to trade news," she said. "This is going to be very hard to resolve neatly and quickly."

President Donald Trump has said he plans to meet with Chinese President Xi Jinping at the Group of 20 summit late this month in Osaka, Japan. But Trump reiterated Tuesday that if the two can't reach an agreement on trade, he'll proceed with tariffs on \$300 billion goods from China that aren't already subject to import taxes.

Defense companies were the biggest decliners in the S&P 500. The market on Monday welcomed news of a megamerger between Raytheon and United Technologies, but the stocks dropped sharply Tuesday. Raytheon lost 5.1% and United Technologies shed 4%. L3 Technologies fell 4.4% and Harris Corp. dropped 4.3%. On Monday, Trump expressed some reservations about the Raytheon-United Technologies tie-up.

Technology stocks also gave up some early gains. Adobe fell 1.6% and Advanced Micro Devices fell 2.5%. The tech sector is still up nearly 24% so far this year, the best performer among the 11 sectors in the S&P 500.

Consumer-focused stocks and internet companies were among the gainers. Facebook rose 1.9% and Verizon gained 1.2%. Walgreens rose 1.1% and Dollar Tree rose 2.7%.

The S&P 500 slipped 1.01 point, or 0.03%, to 2,885.72. The Dow fell 14.17 points, or 0.1%, to 26,048.51. The Nasdaq composite slipped 0.60 of a point to end at 7,822.57. The Russell 2000 index of small companies fell 4.45 points, or 0.3%, to 1,519.11.

The yield on the 10-year Treasury has dropped from around 2.50% in early May to 2.13% Wednesday.

In other trading, benchmark U.S. crude lost 98 cents to \$52.29 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 1 cent to \$53.27 a barrel on Tuesday. Brent crude oil, the international

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 58 of 59

standard, fell \$1.03 to \$61.26 a barrel.

The dollar fell to 108.36 Japanese yen from 108.52 yen on Friday. The euro rose to \$1.1338 from \$1.1330.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, June 12, the 163rd day of 2019. There are 202 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On June 12, 2016, an American-born Muslim opened fire at the Pulse nightclub, a gay establishment in Orlando, Florida, leaving 49 people dead and 53 wounded before being shot dead by police.

On this date:

In 1665, England installed a municipal government in New York, formerly the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, and appointed its first mayor, Thomas Willett.

In 1776, Virginia's colonial legislature adopted a Declaration of Rights.

In 1939, the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum was dedicated in Cooperstown, New York.

In 1942, Anne Frank, a German-born Jewish girl living in Amsterdam, received a diary for her 13th birthday, less than a month before she and her family went into hiding from the Nazis.

In 1963, civil rights leader Medgar Evers, 37, was shot and killed outside his home in Jackson, Mississippi. (In 1994, Byron De La Beckwith was convicted of murdering Evers and sentenced to life in prison; he died in 2001.)

In 1964, South African black nationalist Nelson Mandela was sentenced to life in prison along with seven other people, including Walter Sisulu, for committing sabotage against the apartheid regime (all were eventually released, Mandela in 1990).

In 1967, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Loving v. Virginia*, unanimously struck down state laws prohibiting interracial marriages.

In 1978, David Berkowitz was sentenced to 25 years to life in prison for each of the six "Son of Sam" .44-caliber killings that terrified New Yorkers.

In 1981, major league baseball players began a 49-day strike over the issue of free-agent compensation. (The season did not resume until Aug. 10.) "Raiders of the Lost Ark," directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Harrison Ford as Indiana Jones, was first released.

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan, during a visit to the divided German city of Berlin, exhorted Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev to "tear down this wall."

In 1994, Nicole Brown Simpson and Ronald Goldman were slashed to death outside her Los Angeles home. (O.J. Simpson was later acquitted of the killings in a criminal trial, but was eventually held liable in a civil action.) Boeing's new 777 jetliner went on its first test flight.

In 2004, former President Ronald Reagan's body was sealed inside a tomb at his presidential library in Simi Valley, California, following a week of mourning and remembrance by world leaders and regular Americans.

Ten years ago: U.S. television stations ended analog broadcasts in favor of digital transmission. Congress approved legislation banning "light" or candy-flavored cigarettes and requiring tobacco companies to make bigger warning labels and run fewer ads. The U.N. Security Council imposed sanctions on North Korea for its second nuclear test. The Pittsburgh Penguins defeated the Detroit Red Wings 2-1 to win the Stanley Cup in Game 7.

Five years ago: During a tightly controlled tour of a converted warehouse at Port Hueneme, California, a government official said the number of migrant children housed at the facility after they were caught entering the country illegally could more than triple to 575 by the following week. The World Cup opened in Brazil with the home team beating Croatia, 3-1, after a funky opening ceremony featuring Jennifer Lopez and dancers dressed as trees.

One year ago: After a five-hour summit in Singapore, President Donald Trump and North Korean leader Kim Jong Un signed a joint statement agreeing to work toward a denuclearized Korean Peninsula, although

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, June 12, 2019 ~ Vol. 27 - No. 337 ~ 59 of 59

the timeline and tactics were left unclear; Trump declared that he and Kim had developed "a very special bond." Republican Rep. Mark Sanford, a vocal critic of Donald Trump, lost his South Carolina congressional seat in a primary, hours after Trump tweeted that Sanford was "very unhelpful" and "nothing but trouble." Throngs of Golden State Warriors fans turned out for a second straight year to honor the NBA champions in a parade in downtown Oakland, California; in Washington, DC, the Stanley Cup champion Capitals were cheered by fans along Constitution Ave.

Today's Birthdays: Songwriter Richard M. Sherman is 91. Jazz musician Chick Corea is 78. Sportscaster Marv Albert is 78. Singer Roy Harper is 78. Pop singer Len Barry is 77. Actor Roger Aaron Brown is 70. Actress Sonia Manzano is 69. Rock musician Bun E. Carlos (Cheap Trick) is 68. Country singer-musician Junior Brown is 67. Singer-songwriter Rocky Burnette is 66. Actor Timothy Busfield is 62. Singer Meredith Brooks is 61. Actress Jenilee Harrison is 61. Rock musician John Linnell (They Might Be Giants) is 60. Actor John Enos is 57. Rapper Grandmaster Dee (Whodini) is 57. Actor Paul Schulze is 57. Actor Eamonn Walker is 57. Actress Paula Marshall is 55. Actress Frances O'Connor is 52. Rock musician Bardi Martin is 50. Actor Rick Hoffman is 49. Actor-comedian Finesse Mitchell is 47. Actor Mel Rodriguez is 46. Actor Jason Mewes is 45. Actor Michael Muhney is 44. Blues musician Kenny Wayne Shepherd is 42. Actor Timothy Simons is 41. Actor Wil Horneff is 40. Singer Robyn is 40. Rock singer-musician John Gourley (Portugal. The Man) is 38. Actor Dave Franco is 34. Country singer Chris Young is 34. Actor Luke Youngblood is 33. Actor Ryan Malgarini is 27.

Thought for Today: "Adventure is not outside man; it is within." — George Eliot, English novelist (1819-1880).