

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 1 of 52

- [2- City Council Agenda](#)
- [3- Houghton Teen to Compete at International Bible Quizzing Finals](#)
- [4- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [5- First Human West Nile Virus Detection of 2019 Reported](#)
- [6- Mosquito Control Last Night](#)
- [7- Weather Pages](#)
- [10- Daily Devotional](#)
- [11- 2019 Groton Events](#)
- [12- 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

Tuesday, July 2

- 6:00 p.m.: Junior Legion at Claremont, (DH)
- 6:00 p.m.: Junior Teeners at Selby, (DH)
- 6:00 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees at Sisseton, (DH) (R,B)
- 6:00 p.m.: T-Ball hosts Andover, Falk Field (Black)
- 7:00 p.m.: U10 Pee Wees host Andover (R,B)
- Softball U12 hosts Ipswich, (DH), 6 p.m.
- Softball U14 at Frankfort, (DH), 6 p.m.
- Olive Grove: Bridge – Noon; 6 pm Ladies League
- 7 p.m.: City Council Meeting at Groton Community Center

Wednesday, July 3

Olive Grove: Kids Lessons; No Men's League

Thursday, July 4

Olive Grove: 10 am Couples Firecracker Tournament, Shotgun start, 18 holes
Pool hours: 1 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Sunday, July 7

2:00 p.m.: Legion at Redfield, (DH)
2:00 p.m.: U12 Midgets vs. Backous & Pierre at Manor Park

Groton City Council Meeting Agenda
July 2, 2019 – 7:00pm
Groton Community Center

1. Public Comments - pursuant to SDCL 1-25-1
(Public Comments will offer the opportunity for anyone not listed on the agenda to speak to the council. Speaking time will be limited to 3 minutes. No action will be taken on questions or items not on the agenda.)
2. Minutes
3. Bills
4. Pool moonlight swim request
5. Department reports
Cemetery flooding (Reder)
6. Revisit Resolution 2019-5 Stop signs North and South bound on Washington Street and 5th Avenue
7. Governor Noem declared state government offices closed July 5th and granting eight hours of admin leave to state employees
8. Groton Leadership Institute event in Chicago
9. SD Presidential Disaster Declaration for 2019 spring flooding – Meeting for applicants July 8 in Aberdeen
10. Appoint newspapers and banks
11. Executive session personnel & legal 1-25-2 (1) & (3)
12. Adjournment



L-R: Coach Pat Stiemke, Noah Stiemke, Lauren Junker-LaDoux, Sierra Tunby, Carsyn How, Luke Wiest, Coach Gretchen Hyink. (Courtesy photo)

Houghton Teen to Compete at International Bible Quizzing Finals

The top Bible Quizzers from the U.S. and Canada will descend on the Johnson University campus in Orlando, Florida July 6-10 for the Christian & Missionary Alliance (C&MA) International Bible Quizzing Finals. This annual tournament, which is the culmination of the C&MA Bible Quizzing season, has a local connection this year. In April, Houghton native Sierra Tunby qualified for one of the spots on the five-person team representing the North Central District (NCD), which is comprised of Minnesota and Eastern North and South Dakota. She joins teammates Lauren Junker-LaDoux and Carsyn How from Grand Rapids, MN, Luke Wiest from Le Sueur, MN, and Noah Stiemke from Belle Plaine, MN.

Each Bible Quizzing season a different book or books of the New Testament are studied, and all of the questions and answers come directly from the text of the Scripture being studied that year. "Bible Quizzing is basically a fun way to motivate young people to memorize God's word," said Josh Jetto, Pastor of the Groton C&MA Church and the Bible Quizzing Zone Coordinator for the NCD West Zone, which covers Eastern South Dakota. "Any young person, if they are willing to put in the time to study the book of Scripture being covered that year, can be successful at it – even if they have never read the Bible before in their life," Jetto said.

It certainly helped motivate Tunby who, over the course of the regular season, memorized the entire Gospel of John – all 878 verses – and helped to lead the Groton C&MA Bible Quiz team to a first place regular season finish in the NCD West Zone. "It was challenging," she said, "but a great experience. The added discipline was good for me, and I had a lot of fun." When asked how she was able to memorize the entire Gospel of John over the nine-month season, she said, "Setting apart time each day to memorize. It was one little bite at a time, adding new verses and reviewing what I'd already memorized." "It has been very beneficial for us as a family," said her parents, Lars and Darinda Tunby, "It is great to have your young person really digging deeper in God's word, which is life-changing. We enjoyed the times of study together and the discussion it stimulated for us as a family."

This was Tunby's first year of Bible Quizzing, and she has seen a couple different levels of competition to this point. "This will be a whole other level for me," she said, "I've quizzed with just our South Dakota teams [at the monthly quiz meets], and then I quizzed at the Invitational in January [with teams from Minnesota and Wisconsin]. Internationals is the next step up. I'm looking forward to talking to the other kids who will be there and seeing how there are so many other kids like me who have been studying hard for this."

The preliminary round of the tournament will be held July 6-7, and depending on how well the team does in the 12 preliminary quizzes, they will qualify for either the championship bracket or a consolation bracket. Each quiz is 20 questions long and pits three teams directly against one another in a game of

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 4 of 52

speed, strategy, and Scripture recall. The championship and consolation rounds will be held July 9-10.

The event will be live-streamed and can be viewed at live.cmabiblequizzing.org. The North Central District Team's preliminary round quizzes are scheduled for Saturday, July 6 at 8:30am, 9:30am, 10am, 1:30pm, 2:00pm, 3:00pm, and 3:30pm, and Sunday, July 7 at 9:00am, 9:30am, 1:00pm, 1:30pm, and 3:00pm.

C&MA Bible Quizzing is open to both C&MA and non-C&MA churches and is for young people ages 10-18. If you'd like to know more about Bible Quizzing or are interested in starting Bible Quizzing in your church, contact Josh Jetto at joshjetto@gmail.com or 605-290-8258. You can also visit the North Central District web-site (www.ncdquiz.org) or the C&MA Quizzing web-site (www.cmabiblequizzing.org).

Weekly Vikings Roundup By Jordan Wright

The Vikings' defense is one of the best in the NFL. Since head coach Mike Zimmer got to Minnesota, he has accumulated talent at every level of the defense, ensuring the team will be stacked at every position, but also ensuring there will be some good players who have to be cut or traded when it comes time to trim the roster to 53 players.

Let's continue our look at the Vikings roster and our way-too-early prediction of the 53-man roster. Last week, the offense was whittled down to 25 players, leaving us with 28 spots left for the defense and special teams.

Defensive tackle

Starters: Linval Joseph, Shamar Stephen

Backups: Jalyn Holmes, Jaleel Johnson

The Vikings lost Sheldon Richardson in free agency this year, but they brought back Shamar Stephen to fill the vacated roll. There is always a chance one of the young guys impresses enough to overtake Stephen, but he was brought back to be a starter and Zimmer always prefers to use veterans if possible.

Defensive end

Starters: Everson Griffen, Danielle Hunter

Backups: Stephen Weatherly, Ifeadi Odenigbo, Tashawn Bower

Last season, the Vikings kept nine defensive linemen, so we'll stick with that total number. Griffen and Hunter are one of the best defensive end duos in the league, and if Griffen can regain his usual form, they will be dynamic once again. Behind them, the Vikings have three young, versatile defensive ends who can play on either side of the line or even slide inside to play defensive tackle on passing downs.

Linebacker

Starters: Anthony Barr, Eric Kendricks, Ben Gedeon

Backups: Eric Wilson, Kentrell Brothers, Cameron Smith

This might have been the toughest position to predict this year. The Vikings only kept five linebackers to open the 2018 season, but part of that is because Brothers was suspended for the first four games of the season. This year, I predict the Vikings will be going with six linebackers right out of the gate. Ben Gedeon is technically listed as a starter, but the Vikings usually play more nickel defense, taking a linebacker off the field in favor of a defensive back.

Cornerback

Starters: Xavier Rhodes, Trae Waynes, Mackensie Alexander

Backups: Mike Hughes, Holton Hill, Kris Boyd

Cornerback is one of Mike Zimmer's favorite positions, and because of that the Vikings are stacked in the secondary. Mike Hughes will begin the season as a backup because of the injury he is recovering from, but if he can pick it up where he left off last season, Zimmer will find a way to get him on the field as soon as possible. Every year, the Vikings have a late-round rookie who plays so well in preseason that the Vikings don't dare risk trying to sneak them onto the practice squad. This year, I believe that player will be Kris

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 5 of 52

Boyd, the cornerback from Texas. Holton Hill was Pro Football Focus' 40th ranked cornerback last season, but the Vikings have so much depth he is fifth on the depth chart.

Safety

Starters: Harrison Smith, Anthony Harris

Backups: Jayron Kearse, Derron Smith

After Andrew Sendejo's injury last season, Anthony Harris became the starter and he wasn't going to let the opportunity to slip through his fingers. Harris was given a grade of 89.0 by PFF, ranking him as the third best safety in the NFL last season (even better than Harrison Smith). If he can continue his play, the Vikings might have the best safety duo in the NFL. Behind them, Kearse is an incredibly versatile player who can play safety, linebacker, or even slot corner. Derron Smith was brought in from the now-defunct AAFL, where he was one of the best safeties.

Special Teams

Place kicker: Dan Bailey

Punter: Matt Wile

Long snapper: Kevin McDermott

The Vikings didn't bring in any competition for Bailey or Wile, so their jobs are secure. The Vikings drafted a long snapper from the Air Force, but he still has his service commitment, so McDermott will be back in 2018.

Do you agree with my final roster prediction? Let me know on Twitter (@JordanWrightNFL). SKo!!

First Human West Nile Virus Detection of 2019 Reported

PIERRE, S.D. – A Turner County resident is South Dakota's first human West Nile virus (WNV) detection of the season, the state Health Department reported today. The person is in the 30 to 39 age group.

"Active transmission of West Nile virus is occurring in South Dakota and people need to protect themselves, especially during evening outdoor activities, such as 4th of July fireworks shows," said Dr. Joshua Clayton, State Epidemiologist for the department.

Clayton said South Dakota has historically had a disproportionately high number of WNV cases compared to other states and he encouraged residents to reduce their risk by taking the following actions:

Apply mosquito repellents (DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon eucalyptus, para-menthane-diol, 2-undecanone or IR3535) to clothes and exposed skin.

Reduce mosquito exposure by wearing pants and long sleeves when outdoors.

Limit time outdoors from dusk to dawn when Culex mosquitoes, the primary carrier of WNV in South Dakota, are most active.

Get rid of standing water that gives mosquitoes a place to breed.

Regularly change water in bird baths, ornamental fountains and pet dishes.

Drain water from flower pots and garden containers.

Discard old tires, buckets, cans or other containers that can hold water.

Clean rain gutters to allow water to flow freely.

Support local mosquito control efforts.

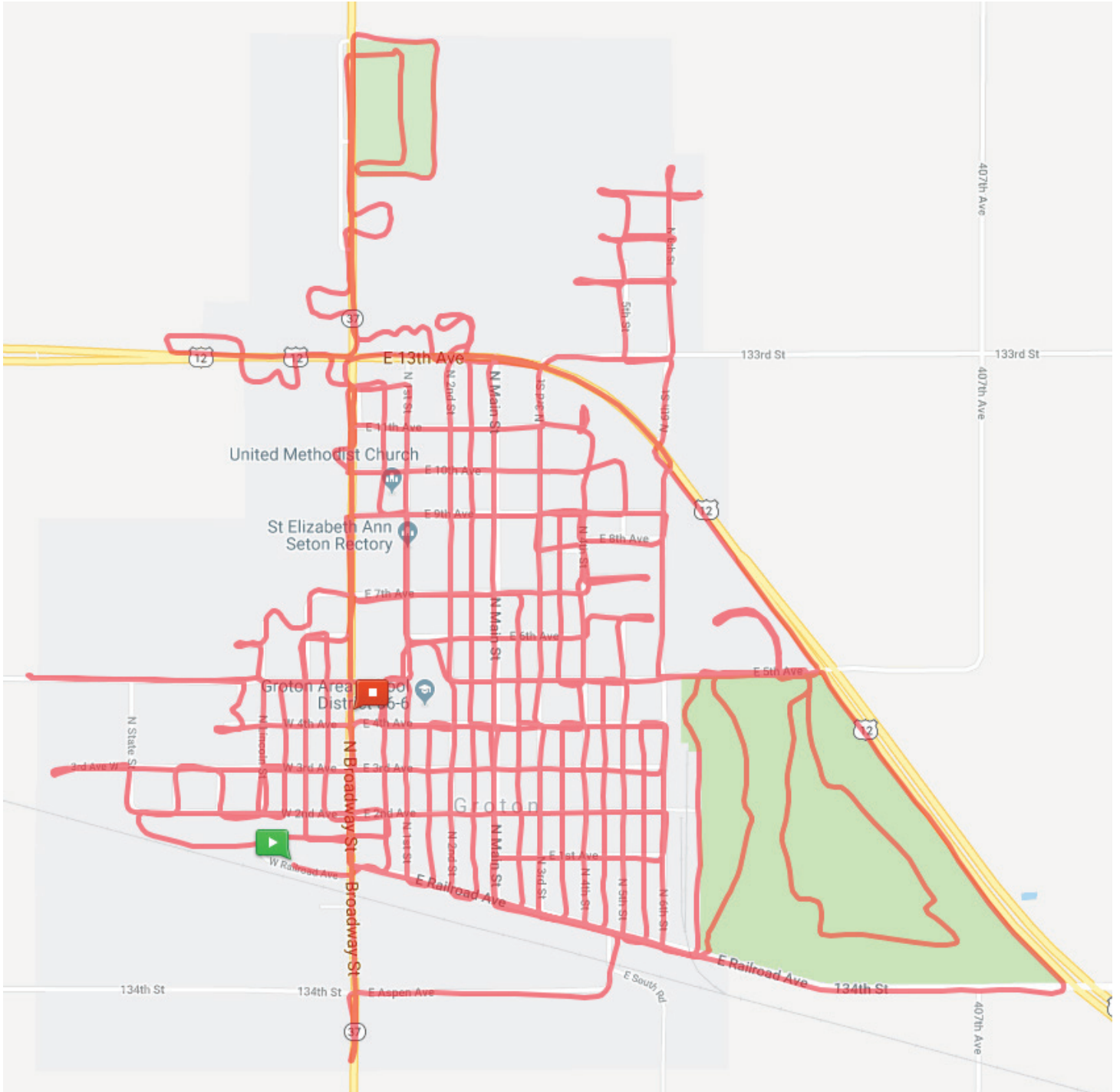
These precautions are especially important for people at high risk for WNV, including individuals over 50, pregnant women, organ transplant patients, individuals with cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure or kidney disease, and those with a history of alcohol abuse. People with severe or unusual headaches should see their physicians.

Visit the department's website at westnile.sd.gov for more information about WNV.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 6 of 52






Mosquito Control Last Night



The City of Groton did an adult mosquito control Monday evening. The wind was ESE about 2mph with an evening temperature of 72 degrees. Ten gallons of Evolver 4x4 was used. About 36 miles was covered.

Broton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 7 of 52

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Independence Day
				
Sunny	Partly Cloudy then Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms
High: 87 °F	Low: 66 °F	High: 83 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 80 °F

SLIGHT RISK of Severe Storms

WHAT

Scattered severe thunderstorms possible. The storms could produce wind gusts up to around 60 mph, and large hail up to around the size of golf balls.

WHERE

Northwest and north central South Dakota, including Faith and Mobridge.

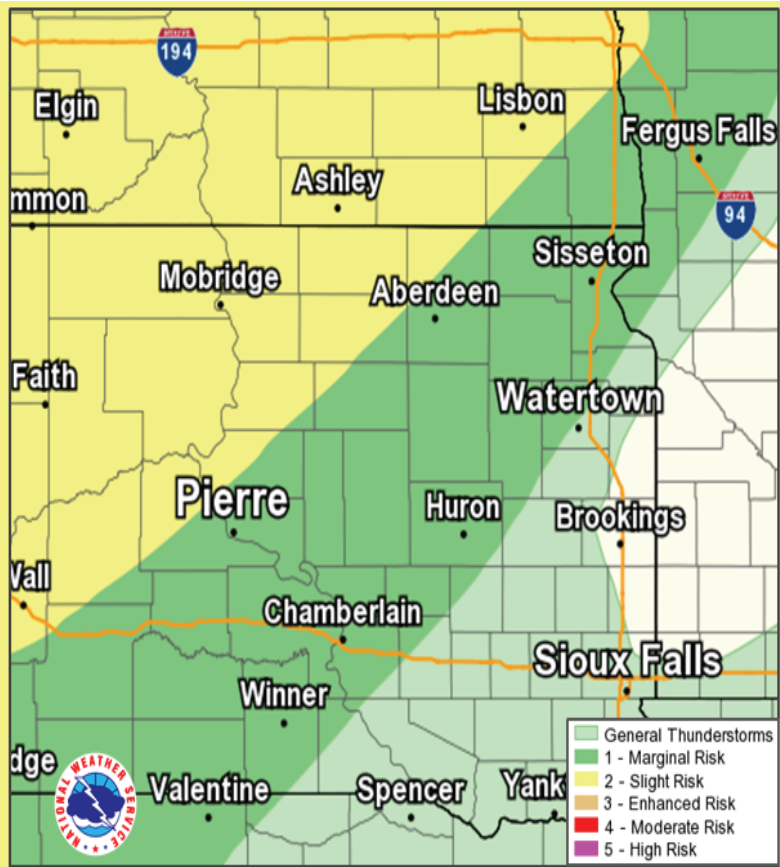
WHEN

Later this afternoon into tonight. The highest risk period will be from around 4 pm to 11 pm CDT.

ACTION

Monitor the weather and have a plan of action if severe weather approaches your area.

ISSUED: 4:36 AM - Tuesday, July 02, 2019



Published on: 07/02/2019 at 12:41AM

There is a Slight Risk for severe thunderstorms later this afternoon into tonight across portions northwest and north central South Dakota. The highest risk period will be from around 4 pm until around 11 pm, CDT. Heavy rain, damaging winds and large hail are the main threats with any strong storms that develop.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 8 of 52

Today in Weather History

July 2, 1921: Barns were destroyed on two farms near Frederick in Brown County. A boy who could not make it to the cellar was killed in the open near a barn. This death is one of the earliest known from a significant, estimated F2 tornado in Brown County.

July 2, 1960: Hail shredded corn flattened grain and hay and pounded soybeans into the ground in a strip extending from Clinton to Montevideo in Minnesota. Leaves and bark were stripped from trees. Hailstones were reported to pile up to a depth of four feet in low spots. One farmer lost 2000 turkeys. Twelve barns demolished, many outbuildings destroyed and several homes damaged by winds. Near Appleton, 45 cars of a moving 174 car freight train derailed by the wind, one hanger destroyed, and two planes were damaged. In Big Stone County alone, the cost to repair power lines and poles estimated to be near 10,000 dollars. Total crop acreage affected was near 64,000 acres. The three counties of Big Stone, Swift, and Chippewa Counties, was designated a disaster area.

July 2, 2005: A line of severe thunderstorms with powerful straight-line winds moved from northeast Wyoming and southeast Montana across northwest South Dakota during the evening. Widespread wind gusts of 60 to 80 mph affected northwestern South Dakota; breaking tree limbs, downing trees, and knocking down snow fences. The high winds capsized a boat on the Belle Fourche Reservoir near Orman Dam. Five people, including an infant, were rescued by emergency personnel with no one injured. The strongest winds were reported north of Newell, near Castle Rock, where gusts estimated at 100 mph damaged a barn roof and ripped a chimney off a house. Hail to the size of quarters was also reported across parts of the area, and combined with the wind, caused some minor damage.

1833: The following is from the "History and Description of New England" published in 1860: "On the 2nd of July, 1833, this town (Holland, Vermont) was visited by a violent tornado, which commenced on Salem Pond in Salem, and passed over this place in a northeasterly direction. It was from half to three-quarters of a mile wide and prostrated and scattered nearly all the trees, fences, and buildings in its course. It crossed the outlet of Norton Pond and passed into Canada, and its path could be traced through the forests nearly to Connecticut River."

1843: An alligator reportedly fell from the sky onto Anson Street in Charleston, SC during a thunderstorm.

1987 - Thunderstorms in Colorado produced hail as large as golf balls northwest of Kiowa, which accumulated to a depth of twelve inches. Hail two and a half inches in diameter was reported at Black Forest. Hail damaged 900 acres of crops south of the town of Wiggins. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Twenty-six cities in the eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. The morning low of 47 degrees at Roanoke, VA, broke the July record set the previous day. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in the south central U.S., with 158 reports of large hail and damaging winds through the day. Evening thunderstorms in northeastern Texas produced softball size hail which caused more than five million dollars damage at Allen, and wind gusts to 90 mph at Dallas, which injured eight persons and caused seven million dollars damage. Winnfield LA reported 29.52 inches of rain in six days, for a total of 62.50 inches for the first six months of the year. Midland, TX, reported an all-time record high of 112 degrees. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

2001: In Michigan, frost and freezing temperatures were observed in some locations with Grant dropping to 29 degrees. Muskegon reported their coldest July temperature on record with 39 degrees. Other daily record lows included: Lansing: 38, Muskegon: 39, Flint: 40, Youngstown, Ohio: 40, and Grand Rapids, Michigan: 43 degrees.

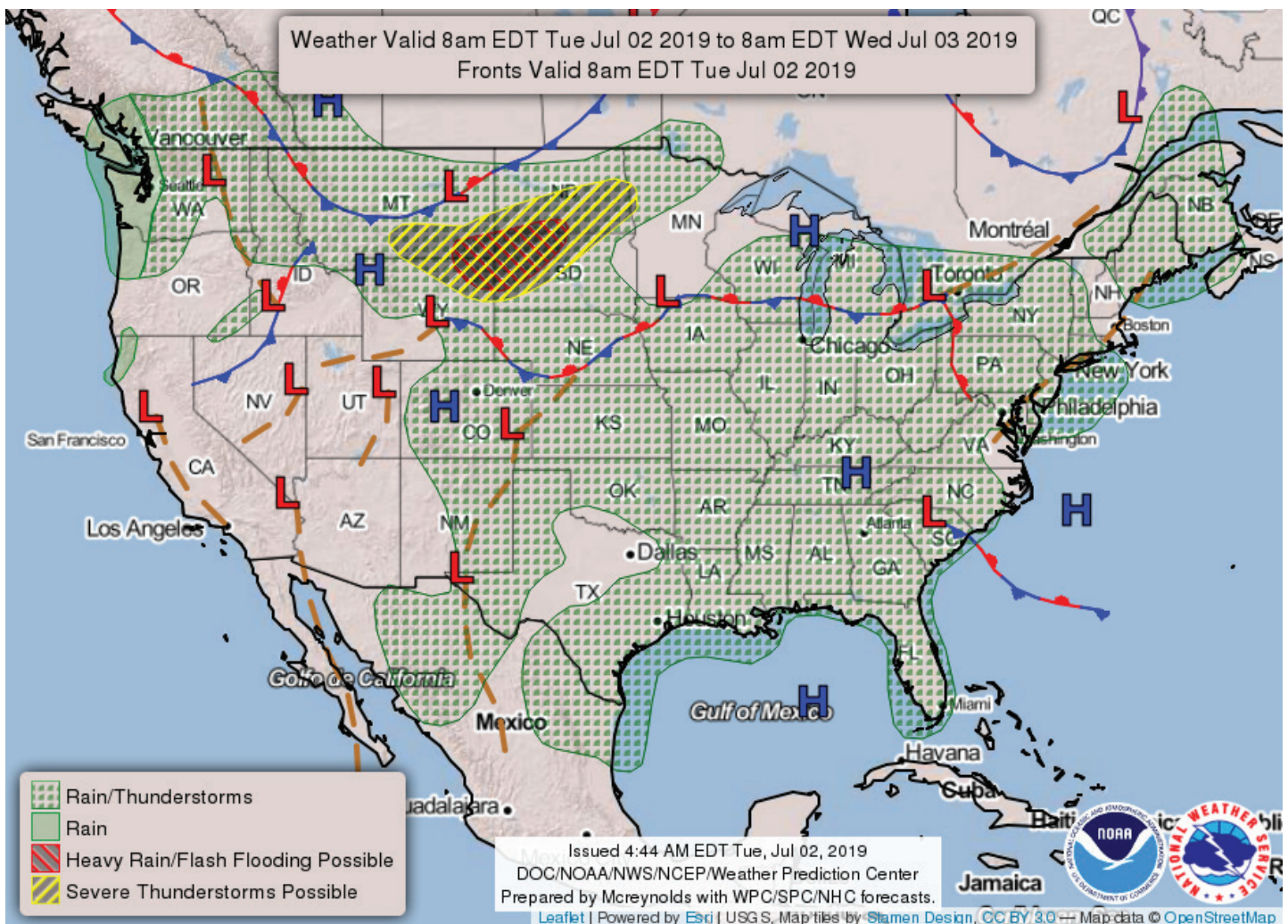
Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 9 of 52

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 78 °F at 7:18 PM
Low Temp: 67 °F at 3:52 AM
Wind: 15 mph at 1:09 AM
Day Rain: 0.06

Record High: 103° in 1949
Record Low: 37° in 1945
Average High: 82°F
Average Low: 58°F
Average Precip in July.: 0.10
Precip to date in June.: 4.95
Average Precip to date: 10.94
Precip Year to Date: 12.72
Sunset Tonight: 9:26 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:50 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 10 of 52



NO EXCUSES

Years ago Mary and I had a beautiful boat. Each time we went to board the boat, we would see her name written in beautiful script across the stern: No Excuses. Those provocative words made us pause and think whether or not we had completed all of our tasks and responsibilities before enjoying the pleasure of a trip around the lake. It also reminded us of the fact that to be honorable Christians: If we failed our Lord or denied Him for any reason, we had No Excuses.

A mans own folly ruins his life, are a few great words to think about often. Heres why: Our outward behaviors are always a reflection of the values that we store deep within our hearts. And here Solomon emphasizes an important, often overlooked fact: unless our decision-making and problem-solving skills are God-centered, we will lack sound judgment. Why? Because the knowledge or wisdom or understanding does not come from God. When we go our own way without comparing or contrasting what we are doing in light of Gods published directions, there may be problems and serious consequences. And if there are, unfortunately, we have No Excuses.

Here is a proverb that reinforces another proverb: There is a way that seems right to a man, but in the end, it leads to death. Our folly - trusting our distorted instincts rather than the wisdom of our God - does not make sense if we are His followers. We have access to Him and His promises. Fools, by choice, destroy whatever opportunity God gives them by looking within for their guidance rather to Him.

Fools become their own undoing because they refuse to take any responsibility for their behavior and follow Gods wisdom. Their heart rages against the Lord. Their lives become frustrated or mangled when their best-laid plans end up in disaster because they are contrary to His will. The result? Fools respond by raging like an angry, caged lion who cannot escape.

Prayer: Lord, we have no excuse to offer You when we refuse to accept Your wisdom. We have whatever guidance we need in Your Word. Open our heads and hearts. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 19:3 A mans own folly ruins his life yet his heart rages against the Lord.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 11 of 52

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

Online ruling boosts South Dakota's sales tax revenue

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota has seen an uptick in sales tax revenue following a Supreme Court decision that allows it to collect money from online retailers.

The June 2018 ruling required out-of-state online businesses to pay sales taxes if they conduct at least \$100,000 in gross sales in at least 200 transactions in the state. The 5-4 ruling was made in a case between South Dakota and several online retailers, including the home goods company Wayfair.

Before the ruling, many sellers that have a physical presence in only a single state or a few states had been able to avoid charging sales taxes when they shipped to addresses outside those states.

After the law went into effect Nov. 1, the state issued 3,382 business tax licenses, which helped generate nearly \$16 million in tax revenue, said Jim Terwilliger, secretary of the state Department of Revenue.

"The Wayfair decision is really a landmark decision in the tax administration world, and that really helps the state of South Dakota," Terwilliger told the Argus Leader. He said the move will help the state preserve its strong sales tax system in the long term as consumers increasingly make online purchases.

The ruling also allowed states to pass laws requiring out-of-state sellers to collect the state's sales tax from customers and send it to the state. Thirty-one states have since enacted legislation allowing them to collect sales taxes from online businesses.

A South Dakota law that went into effect March 1 requires companies that provide a platform for sellers, such as E-Bay and Amazon, to pay online sales taxes.

But even with these laws in place, it's too early to determine if the state's tax revenue will level off or how it'll affect the state's bottom line, Terwilliger said.

He expects to see a tax revenue bump for the first or second year because the state is still piling up tax revenue from businesses that weren't previously licensed.

Sioux Falls has had strong growth in sales tax this year and is seeing an upward trend in its 12-month average, according to the city's finance director, Shawn Pritchett.

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

Keystone XL pipeline opponents pursue new legal challenge

By **MATTHEW BROWN** Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Environmentalists asked a federal judge on Monday to cancel approvals issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada, opening another front in the legal fight over a long-delayed energy project that President Donald Trump has tried to push through to completion.

Attorneys for the Northern Plains Resource Council, Sierra Club and other groups filed the latest lawsuit against the \$8 billion tar sands pipeline in Montana, where they've previously won favorable rulings in related cases.

First proposed in 2008, Keystone XL was rejected by President Barack Obama but revived under Trump. An appeals court last month lifted an injunction that had blocked construction.

That came after Trump issued a new permit for the project, in a bid to nullify a legal challenge that had been based on a previous permit from his administration.

A separate lawsuit challenging the president's actions on the permit is pending in federal court. Monday's lawsuit gives pipeline opponents another avenue to delay or stop it should Trump's permit be upheld.

Both cases are assigned to Judge Brian Morris in Great Falls — the same judge who issued the injunction recently overturned by the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

The environmentalists claim the Army Corps did not examine the potential for oil spills and other envi-

ronmental damages when it approved plans submitted by pipeline developer TC Energy. The line would cross hundreds of waterways along a 1,184-mile path from Canada to Nebraska.

Almost all the crossings fall under an Army Corps program that gives blanket approval to individual pieces of a bigger project without considering the potential cumulative impacts, according to the lawsuit. That means no analysis was done of the possibility that the line would break and cause an oil spill or of its potential contributions to climate change, the lawsuit says.

The U.S. Army Corps public affairs office said in response to queries from The Associated Press that it was not commenting because the matter is under litigation.

Montana Gov. Steve Bullock on Monday criticized the Trump administration for approving the pipeline without consulting more with the Native Americans whose land it would pass through, but he said he is open to supporting the project itself.

"I've said from the beginning that, look, if it's done right we can't take it off the table," Bullock said during an online meeting about climate change held from the Montana Capitol.

U.S. Justice Department attorneys defended the Trump administration's handling of the pipeline in legal papers filed Friday in the presidential permit lawsuit.

Referring to Obama's decision to block the project over climate change concerns, Deputy Assistant Attorney General Lawrence VanDyke said Trump enjoys "broad authority to revisit, reverse and undo prior decisions." He asked the judge to dismiss the case.

TC Energy, until recently known as TransCanada, said prior to the injunction being lifted that it was too late in the construction season to begin work on the line this year. The company did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

In yet another attempt to thwart the project, the environmental groups behind Monday's lawsuit also filed notice that they intend to sue Trump over the pipeline's potential harm to imperiled species. They say building the line would kill birds such as the whooping crane and piping plover and an endangered fish, the pallid sturgeon.

Associated Press writer Matt Volz in Helena contributed to this report.

Legacy Healthcare to Invest in Quality Care, Specialized Services and Amenities in Three South Dakota Regions

SKOKIE, Ill.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Jul 1, 2019--

On July 1, Legacy Healthcare officially begins operating a portfolio of 16 skilled nursing facilities in South Dakota. Stretching from Rapid City to Sioux Falls, this transaction enables Legacy to create a second regional hub, in addition to its existing hub in the Chicago market. Over the last 10 years Legacy has had the opportunity to revitalize many facilities through implementing clinical best practices, advanced medical technology, and robust customer service.

Legacy's mission statement speaks of investing in people – employees and residents first – which will be our primary focus during this transition. "It is an honor to be a part of the South Dakota community," said Connie Ortega, VP of Operations for Legacy Healthcare. "Our Legacy team is excited to partner with the current facility staff who have already demonstrated a strong passion of providing high quality of care."

Legacy Healthcare will continue to be in constant contact with the state of South Dakota, regional hospitals, and local healthcare providers which will help facilitate new, advanced and needed specialty programs to enable residents to remain closer to their homes and families.

Ortega continues, "This kind of regional presence will allow us to dedicate significant resources in clinical best practices, staffing, and community initiatives. Plans are already underway to invest substantial capital into the facilities through cosmetic and structural improvements and innovative programming. This has been our approach in our existing portfolios and is why we are confident we can make a positive impact in these communities."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 14 of 52

Avantara Arlington
Avantara Ipswich
Avantara Pierre
Avantara Armour
Avantara Lake Norden
Avantara Salem
Avantara Arrowhead, Rapid City, SD
Avantara Milbank
Avantara St. Cloud, Rapid City, SD
Avantara Clark
Avantara Mountain View, Rapid City, SD
Avantara Redfield
Avantara Groton
Avantara North, Rapid City, SD
Avantara Watertown

SD man loses hunting privileges for wasting bear meat

GREELEY, Colo. (AP) — A South Dakota man has lost his hunting and fishing privileges for 12 years, was fined \$3,400 and had to forfeit his rifle for wasting the meat of a black bear he killed in Colorado in 2017.

The Greeley Tribune reports a Colorado Parks and Wildlife hearing officer sentenced 58-year-old Robert Stalley of Pierre, South Dakota on June 25 after considering the violation and Stalley's efforts to mislead investigators.

Investigators say Stalley had valid hunting licenses and killed a deer and a bear near Steamboat Springs, Colorado.

Wildlife Officer Jack Taylor says Stalley took the venison home but only took the head and hide of the bear.

Colorado law requires hunters to prepare all harvested big game for human consumption. Abandoning the meat can bring felony charges. Stalley pleaded guilty to three misdemeanor counts.

Information from: The Tribune of Greeley, Co, <http://greeleytribune.com>

1st-term Rep. Borglum launches Senate run against Rounds

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — State Rep. Scyller (SKY'-ler) Borglum says she's challenging U.S. Sen. Mike Rounds in a Republican primary.

Borglum, who was elected to her first term in the Legislature in November, portrayed herself as a "common sense conservative" as she kicked off her campaign Monday on her home turf in Rapid City. She said she would be a strong ally for President Donald Trump.

Rob Skjonsberg, a spokesman for Rounds, said in a statement that Rounds has stood with Trump more than 90% of the time.

Rounds, a former two-term governor, was elected to the Senate in 2014. He announced earlier this month that his wife Jean was beginning treatment for cancer.

Midwest economy: June state-by-state glance

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — The Institute for Supply Management, formerly the Purchasing Management Association, began formally surveying its membership in 1931 to gauge business conditions.

The Creighton Economic Forecasting Group uses the same methodology as the national survey to consult supply managers and business leaders. Creighton University economics professor Ernie Goss oversees the report.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 15 of 52

The overall index ranges between 0 and 100. Growth neutral is 50, and a figure greater than 50 indicates growth in that factor over the next three to six months.

Here are the state-by-state results for June:

Arkansas: The overall index for Arkansas rose last month to 60.1 from May's 55.9. Index components were new orders at 57.0, production or sales at 58.2, delivery lead time at 60.7, inventories at 61.0 and employment at 63.7. "Recent surveys indicate that both durable- and nondurable-goods producers in the state are experiencing solid gains in economic activity. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data (shows) workers in the state have experienced a strong 4.9% gain in hourly wages over the past 12 months, well above the national gain of 3.1%," said Goss.

Iowa: Iowa's overall index rose above growth neutral in June, hitting 50.4 compared with 47.0 in May. Index components were new orders at 53.5, production or sales at 47.7, delivery lead time at 49.8, employment at 51.0 and inventories at 50.0. Manufacturers in Iowa are experiencing positive gains in economic activity. "U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data (shows) that workers in the state have experienced a solid 3.6% increase in hourly wages over the past 12 months, above the national gain of 3.1% over the same period of time," he said.

Kansas: The state's overall index rose last month to a regional high of 62.9 from 55.9 in May. Index components were new orders at 59.2, production or sales at 66.4, delivery lead time at 63.7, employment at 61.1 and inventories at 64.0. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows Kansas workers have experienced a 4.9% gain in hourly wages over the past 12 months, well above the national gain of 3.1% over the same period. Goss also reported gains in economic activity by Iowa manufacturers.

Minnesota: The June overall index for Minnesota fell to 53.4 from 55.0 in May. Index components were new orders at 51.8, production or sales at 51.2, delivery lead time at 56.9, inventories at 53.7 and employment at 53.4. Recent surveys indicate that durable-goods manufacturers are experiencing slight positive gains in economic activity, Goss said. But nondurable-goods producers experienced slightly negative economic conditions in recent months. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows hourly wages have risen 3.4% over the past 12 months, compared with the national gain of 3.1%.

Missouri: Missouri's overall index climbed to 59.9 from May's 57.1. Index components were new orders at 63.5, production or sales at 58.0, delivery lead time at 60.5, inventories at 60.8 and employment at 56.9. Missouri manufacturers are reporting solid gains in economic activity, Goss said. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows Missouri workers have experienced a 2.4% gain in hourly wages over the past 12 months, well below the national gain of 3.1%, he said.

Nebraska: Nebraska's overall index soared above the growth neutral threshold of 50.0 to hit 55.9 in June, compared with 48.9 in May. Index components were new orders at 53.0, production or sales at 52.9, delivery lead time at 55.1, inventories at 55.4 and employment at 58.5. Recent surveys indicate that durable-goods producers experienced slight declines in economic activity, Goss said. "On the other hand, nondurable-goods producers, including food manufacturers, in the state are experiencing solid gains in economic activity," he said. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that Nebraska workers have experienced a 3.3% increase in hourly wages over the past 12 months, slightly above the national gain of 3.1%.

North Dakota: The overall index jumped to 55.0 last month from 49.0 in May. North Dakota's index components were new orders at 51.6, production or sales at 50.9, delivery lead time at 53.1, employment at 56.6 and inventories at 53.4. Recent surveys show North Dakota manufacturers are experiencing solid gains in economic activity. Goss said U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that hourly wages have risen 4.7% over the past 12 months, well above the national gain of 3.1%.

Oklahoma: Oklahoma's overall index also moved above growth neutral 50.0, hitting 54.9 in June, compared with 48.9 in May. Index components were new orders at 53.0, production or sales at 52.8, delivery lead time at 55.1, inventories at 55.3 and employment at 58.4. "Except for June, recent surveys indicate that both durable- and nondurable-goods producers in the state experienced business pullbacks in economic activity," Goss said. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows that hourly wages in Oklahoma have risen 6.7% over the past 12 months, more than twice the national gain of 3.1%.

South Dakota: The state's overall index dipped to 54.1 last month from 55.0 in May. Index components were new orders at 53.4, production or sales at 58.9, delivery lead time at 49.2, inventories at 55.9 and employment at 53.3. South Dakota manufacturers reported solid gains in economic activity in recent surveys. U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows a 2.4% gain in hourly wages over the past 12 months, well below the national gain of 3.1%. Goss said manufacturers reported economic growth slowed in June.

Border Patrol head condemns agents' offensive Facebook posts

By CEDAR ATTANASIO and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

CLINT, Texas (AP) — The head of the U.S. Border Patrol on Monday slammed as “completely inappropriate” sexually explicit posts about U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and comments questioning the authenticity of a photo of a drowned man and his young daughter in a secret Facebook group for agents.

The existence of the group was reported by ProPublica as roughly a dozen members of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus, including Democrats Ocasio-Cortez of New York and Veronica Escobar of Texas, toured border facilities where attorneys said they had found migrant children living in fetid, filthy conditions.

Some of the posts were graphic, doctored images of Ocasio-Cortez, including one that shows a smiling President Donald Trump forcing her head toward his crotch. Other comments refer to Ocasio-Cortez and Escobar as “hoes,” and one member encouraged agents to throw a “burrito at these bitches.”

Ocasio-Cortez said she wasn't surprised by the posts, especially after the treatment of migrants she said she witnessed at the facility.

“It's just indicative of the violent culture that we saw,” she said.

The revelation about the Facebook posts only added to the vitriolic atmosphere surrounding immigration and the treatment of tens of thousands of migrants who have crossed the border, vastly straining the system that has been struggling to keep up amid Trump's hardline rhetoric.

The Democrats delivered an emotional denunciation of what they saw inside the border facilities as protesters shouted that they didn't believe them.

“When we went into the cell, it was clear that the water was not running ... in fact, one of the women said that she was told by an agent to drink from the toilet,” said Rep. Joaquin Castro, a Democrat from Texas and twin brother of presidential candidate Julian Castro.

The Texas visit came the same day as Trump signed a \$4.6 billion emergency aid package that Congress passed on Friday. The Democratic-led House had pushed for more restrictions on how the money could be used and stricter oversight, but ultimately lost the battle.

Trump said he hadn't seen the postings, but claimed Border Patrol agents were not happy with Congress.

“So the Border Patrol, they're patriots, they're great people. They love our country. They know who's coming in,” said Trump.

Lawmakers who toured the facilities shared their experiences widely on social media. Rep. Joe Kennedy of Massachusetts called them “jail-like. No way to keep a child or innocent human being.” The head of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus, California Rep. Judy Chu said “what we saw was appalling and disgusting.”

Castro said there would likely be a Congressional investigation into the Facebook posts.

Billed as “fun, serious and just work related,” the group of about 9,500 members of current and former Border Patrol employees states: “We are family, first and foremost,” according to ProPublica.

Another thread involved the image published last week by The Associated Press of a migrant father and his toddler, drowned on the banks of the Rio Grande. One commenter suggested the image was doctored because the bodies were too clean.

“We've all seen the dems and liberal parties do some pretty sick things,” the comment read.

They marked a sharp contrast to accounts of Border Patrol officers spending their own money on food for migrants in their care, or rescuing migrants from the Rio Grande, or from a bombing range in Arizona. U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the parent agency of Border Patrol, said an investigation into “disturbing social media activity” was underway.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 17 of 52

"These posts are completely inappropriate and contrary to the honor and integrity I see — and expect — from our agents day in and day out," Border Patrol chief Carla Provost said. "Any employees found to have violated our standards of conduct will be held accountable."

Ocasio-Cortez raised hackles last month when she tweeted: "This administration has established concentration camps on the southern border of the United States for immigrants, where they are being brutalized with dehumanizing conditions and dying."

Her tweet set off a firestorm of criticism from GOP lawmakers and others over her use of "concentration camps," with some saying she was unfairly comparing the southern border to the Holocaust. The Border Patrol's union, while condemning the Facebook posts, also took a swipe at her.

"Whether one agrees with the politics of Rep. Ocasio-Cortez and Rep. Escobar, they both must be treated with dignity and respect," according to a statement from the union. "Similarly, when Rep. Ocasio-Cortez refers to CBP facilities as concentration camps ... she does nothing to improve the political discourse."

Long reported from Washington. Associated Press Writer Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report from Washington.

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. BORDER PATROL CHIEF CONDEMNS AGENTS' OFFENSIVE FACEBOOK POSTS

Carla Provost says sexist posts about U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez and comments questioning the authenticity of a photo of drowned migrants are "completely inappropriate."

2. BEIJING ENDS SILENCE ON HONG KONG PROTESTS

China's government expresses strong backing for the chief executive's administration, condemning the occupation and vandalization of Hong Kong's legislature.

3. TRUMP TAKES DIFFERENT TACTS IN NUCLEAR DIPLOMACY

Nuclear weapons are at the heart of the difficult U.S. relations with both North Korea and Iran, but Pyongyang perhaps gives Trump a greater chance of striking a deal.

4. MACRON CALLS OUT IRAN ON NUKES

The French president urges Tehran to immediately reduce its stocks of low-enriched uranium and stick to the terms of the 2015 accord curbing its nuclear activity.

5. TRUMP TO HAVE TANKS AT 4TH OF JULY CELEBRATION

An AP photographer saw at least two M1A1 Abrams tanks and two Bradley Fighting Vehicles on flatcars in a Washington railyard.

6. WORLD BANK UNIT IMPLICATED IN LATIN AMERICA GRAFT SCANDAL

An investment officer responsible for the bidding on a highway project is married to a top executive of a company that won part of the contract she helped to oversee, AP learns.

7. STATE MAPMAKER BRINGS CREATIVITY, WHIMSY TO ROAD MAPS

Bruce Hull has been injecting visual flare, handy information and a hidden bit of his own family history into Ohio's maps for almost 20 years.

8. WHERE THEY'RE FLOCKING FOR SOLAR ECLIPSE

Tens of thousands of tourists are heading to northern Chile to stake out spots in one of the world's best locations to witness the cosmic spectacle.

9. LAPD OPENS INTERNAL AFFAIRS INQUIRY IN NIPSEY HUSSLE CASE

Police are looking into why the woman who drove the getaway car in the aftermath of the rapper's killing was sent home when she tried to turn herself in during the manhunt for the shooter.

10. BASEBALL MOURNS PITCHER'S DEATH

Tyler Skaggs of the Los Angeles Angels died after being found unresponsive in his hotel room in Texas before the team's scheduled series opener against the Rangers.

State mapmaker brings creativity, whimsy to Ohio road maps

By JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) — If your summer travel plans involve traveling through Ohio and you're still a fan of paper maps, it's time you meet Bruce Hull.

He's the guy who's been injecting visual flare, handy information and a hidden bit of his own family history into Ohio's road maps for almost two decades. Hull's artistry has appeared on millions of maps helping drivers navigate the state, which has the nation's busiest highway system after California, Texas and Florida.

As a layout design artist with the Ohio Department of Transportation since 1989, Hull has creative control over the map's look and feel. He selects the images, the design, the paper, even the type of fold that's used.

"Initially, my goal was to go to either New York, Chicago or San Francisco, because those were the big advertising meccas at the time," said Hull, 60, who studied advertising at the Columbus College of Art & Design. "Then life happened."

Hull fell in love, got married and had a daughter.

He also happened to like the variety of his job in communications at the Transportation Department, putting together posters, newsletters, in-house publications and visual panels for road, rail and motorcycle maps that, back then, were assembled by an outside consultant.

In those early days, photos were black-and-white, film was developed in labs, layouts were by hand and color was added using sheets of film cut to fit. Anything resembling desktop publishing was a thing of the future.

"Nothing was ever too technical because it was just impossible to do at the time," said Hull.

The first map he designed on his own came in 2001-2002. That's also when Hull began what would become an inside joke on the maps: including a photo of his daughter.

"Because we had seat belt laws, I was looking for a stock picture of a kid in a car seat. I found one, but it was \$160," he said, with an easy laugh. The department balked at the expense. "So I thought, well, I've got a 6-year-old. I'll just throw her in the back of the van and take her picture."

Ashley Hull has appeared in every state map since. Unbeknownst to most of the general public, they've been watching her grow up — in photos while camping, biking, driving or laughing with high school friends.

"She's the most famous person you've never heard of," said department spokesman Matt Bruning.

Hull acknowledges that his daughter's generation — she's 25 now — has largely abandoned printed maps. In the 1990s, Ohio printed 5.25 million maps on average during each four-year gubernatorial term. By last year, that figure had fallen to 2.25 million.

But, with a Dad who's the state mapmaker, abandoning paper wasn't an option for Ashley.

"When she first got her car, she wanted a GPS. So I said, well, you learn to read this first," he said, brandishing one of his paper road maps. "I showed her these are the interchanges, these little numbers are the distances between interchanges, things like that. In case your power dies, you won't get lost."

And those who know Ashley do recognize her from the map, she said.

"It's not like my picture's in Time magazine or something," she said. "But it's just, it's cute to have people point out like, 'Hey I found you in this information center at this park because you're on the map.'"

If you work anywhere near Hull's heavily adorned cubicle, you also might be co-opted into helping out. To determine the fold he'll use, for example, Hull said he slaps a piece of blank paper folded in an accordion or trifold into a co-worker's hand then watches them try to unfold it. The least cumbersome fold prevails.

The process of creating a new map begins with state cartographers, who produce the actual road map. Then a host of other state departments provide content, such as lists of Highway Patrol posts or state campgrounds, and a message from the governor.

Once all that material is in hand, Hull has free rein over the remaining spaces. One year, his design resembled the front of a refrigerator packed with photos of Ohio attractions. He always works to make featured venues reflect the diversity of the state's racial and ethnic groups, its rural, urban and natural landscapes and its cultural and recreational offerings.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 19 of 52

Another of Hull's maps featured Ohio emblems, such as the state mammal, bird, insect and flower. Other versions have featured Ohio's scenic byways and Ohio's Native American tribes.

During the state's bicentennial year, in 2003, Hull adorned the map with a timeline of Ohio history. That included another sly family reference: A photo of his great-grandmother, Sophia Mitchell, the first black woman to serve as a mayor in the state.

Follow Julie Carr Smyth at <https://www.twitter.com/jcarrsmyth>.

AP analysis: Trump smiles with North Korea, threatens Iran

By DEB RIECHMANN and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — With North Korea, President Donald Trump puts on the charm. But with Iran, he cranks up the pressure with economic sanctions and a stronger military presence in the Persian Gulf. He has warned its leaders they are "playing with fire."

Nuclear weapons are at the heart of the difficult U.S. relations with both Pyongyang and Tehran. But it's in North Korea where Trump has more leeway and perhaps a greater chance of striking a deal.

Kim Jong Un has seemed as willing to meet with Trump as the U.S. president has been to talk and shake hands for the cameras with him. The North Korean leader jumped at the chance to meet Trump at the Demilitarized Zone between the Koreas last weekend.

Trump has made repeated overtures to Iranian leaders, too, but without the same results.

"I think Trump would be equally on a charm offensive with the Iranians if he had a dance partner," said Mark Dubowitz, an Iran nuclear deal skeptic with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Also, Israel, which views Iran as its archenemy, is pressuring Trump to take a hard-line approach to Tehran, which has threatened to wipe Israel off the map. There is no big anti-North Korea lobby in the United States pressuring the White House to shun Kim's repressive government.

Trump inherited heavy U.S. sanctions on North Korea and then for months traded fiery rhetoric with Kim, saber rattling that caused jitters across the world. That has given way to flowery correspondence, meetings between the two and this weekend's historic visit when Trump became the first U.S. president to step into North Korea while in office.

Not that Pyongyang has taken big steps in return. Critics point out that North Korea has not moved to "denuclearize" as Trump has demanded. But the country has refrained from conducting nuclear tests or test-firing long-range missiles.

Trump tweeted late Monday that "our teams will be meeting to work on some solutions to very long term and persistent problems. No rush, but I am sure we will ultimately get there.

Not so smooth with Iran.

Trump campaigned on pulling the United States out of the nuclear agreement that Tehran signed with the U.S. and other world powers in 2015. He complained that the deal, which eased economic sanctions in exchange for Iran curbing its nuclear program, didn't address Iranian ballistic missile capabilities or its support of militant groups.

After failing to adjust what Trump condemned as a fatally flawed deal, the U.S. exited the agreement last year and re-imposed sanctions that had been eased when the deal was finalized under the Obama administration.

The pressure campaign evolved not like the Trump-Kim lovefest, but to what seemed like the brink of war.

With its economy diving, Iran lashed out by shooting down a \$100 million, unmanned U.S. surveillance drone and attacking shipping vessels in the Persian Gulf region. Trump said he was "cocked and loaded" to retaliate with limited missile strikes but changed his mind when he learned 150 Iranians could have been killed.

He tweeted last week, "Any attack by Iran on anything American will be met with great and overwhelming force. In some areas, overwhelming will mean obliteration."

On Monday, Iran announced it now has a stockpile of more than 660 pounds (300 kilograms) of low-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 20 of 52

enriched uranium in violation of the 2015 deal. The U.S. is partly to blame because it failed to renew waivers that allowed Iran to swap its excess to other countries.

But officials say the administration is less concerned about Monday's breach than possible further violations that could reduce the time Iran would need to produce a nuclear weapon. The deal aimed to keep that "breakout time" at one year.

Iran's deputy foreign minister has warned the White House that it's naive to think Iran will wilt under pressure, or that the Iranian people will revolt and throw out its government. He said Iran will not be forced to negotiate by having a knife put to its throat.

As for North Korea, administration officials caution that Trump's charm offensive with Kim does not foreshadow a softening of its insistence that his country must not have nuclear weapons. The New York Times reported Monday that the administration might agree to a nuclear freeze as a first step toward denuclearization.

Under that scenario, which was quickly disputed by U.S. officials, North Korea would not make any new nuclear material, meaning it couldn't expand its arsenal of 20 to 60 nuclear weapons. Under such a deal, North Korea would remain a nuclear power and would still have short and long-term missiles that could threaten U.S. allies like Japan and South Korea as well as the United States.

Stephen Biegun, U.S. special envoy to North Korea, said the report was "far from accurate."

"What is accurate is not new, and what is new is not accurate. No one on our team who knows anything would speak right now anyway," he said in a statement distributed by the State Department.

Trump's hawkish national security adviser John Bolton, who has advocated a tough stance against both North Korea and Iran, also said the administration was not considering a softer approach.

However, Richard Haas, president of the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, said the fact that Bolton was in Mongolia when Trump met Kim at the DMZ suggested there is a "significant split" within the Trump administration.

Democrats have been quick to criticize Trump for his strategy with both Iran and North Korea.

"After three made-for-TV summits, we still don't have a single concrete commitment from North Korea," said former Vice President Joe Biden, who is seeking the Democratic presidential nomination. "Not one missile or nuclear weapon has been destroyed, not one inspector is on the ground. ... North Korea has continued to churn out fissile material and is no longer an isolated pariah on the world stage."

On Iran, Biden said Trump walked away from a deal that was temporarily keeping it from developing a first nuclear bomb and applied economic pressure that has led Tehran to restart its nuclear program and become more, not less aggressive.

"Trump's Iran policy has alienated us from our allies and taken us to the brink of another war in the Middle East," he said.

In its first year, the administration tried to work with European allies to mend what Trump identified as flaws in the nuclear deal, such as its silence on ballistic missiles and Iran's support for destabilizing proxies around the Middle East. The effort to create a separate agreement without Iran's participation ultimately failed.

Michael McFaul, a U.S. ambassador to Russia under President Barack Obama, says that while Trump has said he's open to talks with Iran, he sees little evidence that's the case. He wonders whether complete and verifiable denuclearization is not the goal in Iran or North Korea.

"In Iran, it may be that the real objective is regime change, including the option of U.S. military action," he says.

"In North Korea, it could be that the goal is not complete denuclearization, but an outcome that allows Kim to maintain part of his nuclear arsenal while perhaps dismantling his intercontinental ballistic missile program to reduce the direct threat to U.S. national security.

"This lesser goal could help to explain why Trump is so oddly accommodating toward North Korea."

EDITOR'S NOTE — Riechmann and Lee report on national security for The Associated Press.

Trump says tanks will be part of his July Fourth celebration

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump isn't taking "no tanks" for an answer on the Fourth of July. He said Monday that a display of U.S. military tanks will be part of a special event he's headlining July 4 in Washington, and an Associated Press photographer saw at least two M1A1 Abrams tanks and two Bradley Fighting Vehicles on flatcars in a railyard at the southeastern edge of Washington.

Military police were guarding the vehicles, which were visible to passers-by on nearby paths.

A U.S. official told the AP that the military vehicles to be used in the July 4 event were being stored at the railyard.

Trump had wanted a military parade of tanks and other equipment in the District of Columbia after he witnessed a similar parade on Bastille Day in Paris in 2017. That plan eventually was scuttled, partly because of cost, though Trump apparently held on to the idea.

Local officials also had objected because of the damage the heavy armored tanks could do to city streets. "We're going to have some tanks stationed outside," Trump said Monday from the Oval Office, appearing to acknowledge local officials' earlier concerns.

He offered no specifics on where the vehicles would be located.

"You've got to be pretty careful with the tanks because the roads have a tendency not to like to carry heavy tanks," he said. "So we have to put them in certain areas, but we have the brand new Sherman tanks and we have the brand new Abrams tanks."

Sherman tanks were the tank most widely used by the U.S. during World War II, but they have been out of service for decades. The M1A1 Abrams tank is currently the main U.S. battle tank.

Two M1A1 Abrams tanks and two Bradley Fighting Vehicles will be on display as part of Trump's "Salute to America" event, according to a U.S. official who spoke on condition of anonymity because details of the exhibits have not been made public.

The Abrams tanks weigh more than 60 tons apiece and were been shipped on railroad freight cars, from Fort Stewart, Georgia, the nearest Army base that has them. The White House declined to release more specific information.

Trump recalled his visit earlier this year to a plant in Lima, Ohio, where M1A1 Abrams tanks are refurbished. The plant had been at risk for closure but remained online due to Trump's investments in defense spending.

"We have some incredible equipment, military equipment on display — brand new," Trump said. "And we're very proud of it. You know we're making a lot of new tanks right now. We're building a lot of new tanks in Lima, Ohio — our great tank factory that people wanted to close down until I got elected and I stopped it from being closed down, and now it's a very productive facility."

Thursday's events are also expected to include a military demonstration by the U.S. Navy Blue Angels and other aircraft.

"We're going to have a great Fourth of July in Washington, D.C. It'll be like no other," Trump said. "It'll be special and I hope a lot of people come. And it's going to be about this country and it's a salute to America."

"I'm going to say a few words and we're going to have planes going overhead, the best fighter jets in the world and other planes, too," he said.

Trump plans to deliver a speech at the Lincoln Memorial during his "Salute to America," which has been added to the regular schedule of Independence Day events in the nation's capital. The annual fireworks display will go off closer to the Lincoln Memorial instead of the Washington Monument, as has been the long-standing tradition.

The event is open to the public and free of charge, but a ticket-only area in front of the memorial is being set aside for VIPs, including members of Trump's family, friends and members of the military, the White House said.

Last year, Trump and his wife, first lady Melania Trump, hosted service members and their families at a picnic on the White House lawn and the president addressed guests from the balcony. No similar event is being planned this year.

Federal lawmakers, local officials and others have voiced concerns that Trump could alter the tone of what traditionally is a nonpartisan celebration of America's independence from the British by delivering a political speech. Trump formally announced his bid for re-election in June.

Interior Secretary David Bernhardt, who oversees the National Mall and has helped orchestrate the president's vision, and other officials have said Trump's remarks will be patriotic.

Associated Press writer Lolita C. Baldor and Associated Press photographer Patrick Semansky in Washington contributed to this report.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

China backs Hong Kong chief, slams protesters for violence

By JOHNSON LAI Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — China's government strongly backed Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam's embattled administration on Tuesday, saying the occupation and vandalizing of the city's legislature by pro-democracy protesters amounted to "serious illegal acts" that endangered the social order.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Geng Shuang said Beijing condemned the acts that saw several hundred demonstrators break through glass and steel barriers to enter the building on Monday night.

Geng said China's central government strongly supported Hong Kong's government and its police force in dealing with the incident in accordance with law.

"The violent attacks ... are serious illegal acts that trample on the rule of law and endanger social order. We strongly condemn it," Geng told reporters at a daily briefing.

Geng also reiterated China's rejection of any foreign nation commenting on or intervening in protest actions in Hong Kong, saying such matters were a purely Chinese affair and other countries "must not support any violent criminals in any form, and not send any misleading signals or take any erroneous actions."

The Cabinet's Hong Kong affairs office issued virtually an identical statement under the name of an unidentified spokesman.

Geng's comments follow the publication of an editorial by a ruling Chinese Communist Party newspaper that said the demonstrators who broke into the local legislature showed their "arrogance" and had no regard for the rule of law.

Chinese state media ran footage of police in Hong Kong clearing protesters from streets in the early hours of Tuesday in a break with their silence over days of pro-democracy demonstrations that have challenged Beijing's authority over the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Beijing has largely sought to downplay the demonstrations that have highlighted doubts about the validity of its "one country, two systems" formula for governing the former British colony. Its coverage of the protests and the publication of a harsh editorial in the official Communist Party newspaper Global Times may indicate it is prepared to take a tougher line against the demonstrators following days of forbearance.

"These violent assailants in their arrogance pay no heed to Hong Kong's law, no doubt arousing the anger and sadness of all people of the city of Hong Kong," the editorial said.

Veteran opposition figure Joshua Wong acknowledged that the damage to the legislative offices has drawn criticism from some sectors in the Asian financial hub. But he said mass participation in marches and rallies over previous weeks showed there was a groundswell of support for the demonstrators' goals of demanding more accountability from Lam's administration.

"I understand people in Hong Kong and around the world might not 100% agree or disagree on all of the behavior of protesters ... but all of the requests have been ignored. So is there any way out?" Wong said.

Lam is "not capable as leader anymore" and should resign, Wong said, echoing the demand of many

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 23 of 52

protesters. Having been elected by a Beijing-approved committee, Lam is reliant on continuing support from Beijing, which has shown no outward signs of abandoning her so far.

Wong also alleged that police officers had "double standards" in enforcing the law, saying pro-Beijing legislators and their staff members have benefited by better treatment than their opposition counterparts throughout the weeks of protest outside the legislature.

On the mainland, Beijing had sought to suppress news of the protests, which roughly coincided with celebrations of the 22nd anniversary of Hong Kong's handover from British to Chinese rule. The demonstrations reflect mounting frustration with Lam and her government for not responding to demands from opposition figures that were originally sparked by a government attempt to change extradition laws to allow suspects to be sent to China for trial. Lam has shelved the bills but not agreed to scrap them altogether as opponents insist she does.

Hundreds of protesters swarmed into Hong Kong's legislature Monday night, defacing portraits of lawmakers and spray-painting pro-democracy slogans in the chamber before vacating it as riot police cleared surrounding streets with tear gas and then moved inside.

Protesters whacked away at thick glass windows until they shattered and then pried open steel security gates. Police initially retreated as the protesters entered, avoiding a confrontation and giving them the run of the building, during which they spray painted slogans calling for a democratic election of Hong Kong's leader and denouncing the extradition legislation. Many wore yellow and white helmets, face masks and the black T-shirts that have become their uniform.

The actions prompted organizers of a separate peaceful march against the extradition bill to change the endpoint of their protest from the legislature to a nearby park, after police asked them to call it off or change the route. Police wanted the march to end earlier in Hong Kong's Wan Chai district, but organizers said that would leave out many people who planned to join the march along the way.

Police estimated that 190,000 people joined the peaceful march, the third major one in as many weeks. Organizers put the turnout at 550,000.

The extradition proposal has heightened fears of eroding freedoms in Hong Kong, which Britain returned to China on July 1, 1997. Debate on the measure has been suspended indefinitely. Protesters want the bills formally withdrawn and Lam to resign.

Lam, who has come under withering criticism for trying to push the legislation through, called a rare pre-dawn news conference with security officials Tuesday at police headquarters. She noted that two different protests happened Monday — one a generally orderly march that reflected Hong Kong's inclusiveness, the other using vandalism and violence.

"This is something we should seriously condemn," she said.

Lam disputed protesters' complaints that officials had not responded to them, saying the government explained that by suspending the bill with no timetable or plan to revisit it, the legislation would die at the end of the current legislative session in July 2020.

For the other demands, she said releasing arrested protesters without an investigation would not uphold the rule of law.

The extradition bill controversy has given fresh momentum to Hong Kong's pro-democracy opposition movement, awakening broader concerns that China is chipping away at the rights guaranteed to Hong Kong for 50 years under the "one country, two systems" framework. The two marches in June drew more than a million people, according to organizer estimates.

Surveying damage to the building on Tuesday morning, Legislative Council President Andrew Leung said the previous night's violence had undermined "the core values of Hong Kong." He said police were collecting evidence of criminal wrongdoing.

"I believe many Hong Kong people will share the same feeling with me that we are saddened by what happened last night. For the best interest of Hong Kong, I hope that all of us can find the way forward professionally," Leung said.

While the extradition bills and police use of tear gas and rubber bullets against protesters have drawn

expressions of concern from professional groups and foreign governments, the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong said Tuesday that it supported Lam's government in condemning the violence at the legislature.

"We believe the violent protests of recent days do not reflect how the majority of people in this dynamic and advanced economy would choose to be heard," the chamber said in an emailed statement.

Associated Press writer Christopher Bodeen in Beijing contributed to this report.

Girl recalls poor care in Texas border station

By DENISE LAVOIE, MARTHA MENDOZA and GARANCE BURKE Associated Press

For almost two weeks, a 12-year-old migrant girl said she and her 6-year-old sister were held inside a Border Patrol station in Texas where they slept on the floor and some children were locked away when they cried for their parents.

She was one of hundreds of migrant children who have been held this year in holding cells at a U.S. Customs and Border Protection station near El Paso that has come under fire for holding children in squalid and unsanitary conditions.

In a video obtained by The Associated Press, the girl — speaking in Spanish — tells her Minnesota-based attorney Alison Griffith children were "treated badly" and were not allowed to play or bathe. The girl's face is not visible on the video to protect her privacy and not jeopardize her immigration case.

El Paso, Texas, attorney Taylor Levy, who worked with the girl's family, said she and her sister were separated from their aunt when they arrived in the U.S. on May 23. The children, from Central America, were put in the Border Patrol station in Clint, Texas, Levy said. Their aunt is still being detained.

Levy said the girls' mother fled an abusive husband and arrived in the U.S. four years ago. She has applied for asylum. The girls stayed behind with their aunt, but the three headed north in May after the girls' father threatened them, Levy said.

In the video, the girl says that inside the Clint station, she was given pudding, juice and a burrito she could not eat "because it tasted very bad."

"There are some children, like the age of my sister, they cried for their mother or their father. They cried for their aunt. They missed them," she said. "They cried and they were locked up."

The attorneys discussed the case on the condition that the AP not release the girl's name or her country of origin out of concern for her family's safety.

Lawyers who visited the Clint facility last month after the girls had already been released said the conditions were perilous, with more than 250 children trying to take care of each other, passing toddlers between them, with inadequate food, water and sanitation.

Customs and Border Protection officials have repeatedly said the agency is "in a crisis mode" with too many immigrants and not enough resources.

Customs gave journalists a tour of the Clint Border Station on June 26, and a congressional delegation visited Monday.

In a facility designed to temporarily hold 100 adults, there were 117 children when AP visited, well below the 700 children Border Patrol said were detained there at one point earlier this year.

On Friday, a federal judge ordered that an independent monitor appointed last year move "post haste" to improve conditions at Border Patrol stations, where children are supposed to be held just 72 hours. In the Clint station, some had been held almost a month.

Levy said she helped reunite the 12-year-old girl and her sister with their mother. The mother flew to Texas from Minnesota to pick them up on June 3 after a Border Patrol official told her the girls had been repeatedly hospitalized with the flu.

"It was an incredibly difficult reunification. The kids were just highly, highly traumatized," Levy said.

Angels, MLB mourn Skaggs after pitcher dies in hotel room

By STEPHEN HAWKINS AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) — Tyler Skaggs grew up rooting for the Los Angeles Angels, and got to pitch for his favorite team.

The left-hander's next start for the Angels was supposed to be on the Fourth of July holiday, during a weeklong trip to Texas that began with Skaggs and his teammates proudly posing in cowboy hats and Western attire by their plane.

Skaggs died Monday, when the 27-year-old pitcher was found unresponsive in his Texas hotel room. The scheduled series opener against the Rangers was postponed.

"Words cannot express the deep sadness we feel right now. Our thoughts and prayers are with (wife) Carli and their families. Remembering him as a great teammate, friend, and person who will forever remain in our hearts... we love you, 45," All-Star center fielder Mike Trout wrote on Twitter.

Angels general manager Billy Eppler described himself as being "in utter shock and disbelief."

The team, in a statement, called Skaggs "an important part of the Angels Family" and said its thoughts and prayers were with his wife and entire family "during this devastating time."

Police in Southlake, Texas, said they were investigating but no foul play was suspected. Skaggs was pronounced dead at the scene after police responded to a call at the hotel Monday afternoon.

Eppler, manager Brad Ausmus and team president John Carpino planned to address the media Tuesday afternoon, before the Angels were scheduled to play that night against the Rangers.

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said he was "deeply saddened" by Skaggs' death.

"We will support the Angels' organization through this most difficult period, and we will make a variety of resources available to Tyler's teammates and other members of the baseball family," Manfred said in a statement.

With the team out of town, dozens of fans went to Angel Stadium and gathered out front in the hours after Skaggs' death was announced. They left flowers, hats, baseballs, signs, photos and other memorabilia in a makeshift memorial mound.

Sadly, the poignant display strongly resembled the fan-created memorial for Nick Adenhart in 2009 after the rookie pitcher was killed by a drunk driver. That tribute stayed out front of the Big A through the summer.

Near the entrance of the team's hotel in Texas, a fan with an Angels jersey sat on a rock wall with a bouquet of flowers attached to a balloon that read "thank you."

Skaggs, who got married last December and would have turned 28 on July 13, had been a regular in the Angels' starting rotation since late 2016, when he returned from Tommy John surgery. He struggled with injuries repeatedly in that time but was 7-7 with a 4.29 ERA in 15 starts this season to help an injury-plagued rotation.

In his cowboy-themed Instagram post on Sunday, Skaggs captioned the team photo with "Howdy y'all." The Angels go to Houston this weekend after their series against the Rangers.

"Some guys that didn't even know him were visibly shaken," Texas manager Chris Woodward said, describing the team meeting when his players were told about Skaggs as "one of those moments where you're just kind of numb."

Skaggs was in the same draft class with Trout in 2009, the year the 22-year-old Adenhart was killed. Adenhart was coming off his first start that season, his fourth big league game.

Jose Fernandez, a two-time All-Star pitcher for the Miami Marlins, was killed in a boating crash near Miami Beach, Florida, in September 2016. He was 24.

Darryl Kile, who pitched in the majors for 12 seasons, was on the road with the St. Louis Cardinals when he died in his Chicago hotel room at age 33 in June 2002. Albert Pujols, now a member of the Angels, was Kile's teammate then.

The Rangers said Monday's game wouldn't be made up this week. The Angels return to Texas for another series in mid-August.

Skaggs grew up in Santa Monica, on the west side of the sprawling Los Angeles metroplex, as a fan

of the Angels instead of the closer Dodgers. He was drafted 40th overall after he graduated from Santa Monica High School, where his mother, Debbie, was the longtime softball coach.

The Angels traded Skaggs in 2010 to Arizona, where he started his big league career with 13 appearances over two seasons before Los Angeles reacquired him in December 2013. He made a career-high 24 starts last year, but missed time in April this season because of a sprained ankle before coming back strong.

Before he was traded to Arizona, Skaggs roomed in the low minors with Trout when they were on the same team in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 2010.

Cleveland Indians pitcher Trevor Bauer, who played with Skaggs in the Diamondbacks organization, tweeted: "We came up together. We won together. We laughed and celebrated together. Today, we all lose and mourn together."

AP Sports Writers Greg Beacham, Jay Cohen and Schuyler Dixon, and AP writer Terry Wallace in Dallas contributed to this report.

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/MLB> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Father of 2, deported to El Salvador, allowed return to US

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — A 33-year-old father of two American-born children was allowed to return to the U.S. on Monday, two years after being deported to El Salvador during the first months of the Trump administration.

Jose Escobar was welcomed at Houston's Bush Intercontinental Airport by a group of supporters. He was accompanied by his wife, Rose, and their two children, Walter and Carmen, who had flown to El Salvador in June to visit him. They were in El Salvador when they got word that U.S. immigration authorities had approved waivers that would allow him to return to the U.S. legally.

Escobar was a teenager when his family settled in the U.S. in 2001 with temporary protected status, which was granted to Salvadorans who were victims of earthquakes that year. He married Rose in 2006, the same year he learned that his family hadn't filed the paperwork necessary for him to renew his visa.

He was living in the U.S. without authorization, and an immigration judge ordered his deportation that year. His wife and children are all U.S. citizens.

Escobar was arrested in 2011 — during the administration of former President Barack Obama — and detained for several months. After an intense lobbying campaign, the local field office director for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement released Escobar in January 2012 "so he could get his affairs in order," the agency said last year.

In February 2017, shortly after Trump took office and widened the priorities for detaining and deporting immigrants without authorization, Escobar was arrested during what was supposed to be a routine ICE check-in.

The next month, he was deported to El Salvador. He called his wife from the San Salvador airport to tell her what had happened.

Escobar moved to a town that's about three hours from San Salvador, living with relatives and working intermittently as a laborer.

He had video calls with his family at night, but he was often scared and worried about leaving the family home, as the gangs roaming the streets were known to target people who had come back from America and once held him up. He would watch the video from his home's security cameras remotely.

His children, meanwhile, struggled with the pain of losing their father. And with Jose having trouble making money in El Salvador, Rose Escobar supported the family on her own as a hospital receptionist and relied on savings that were quickly dwindling.

Among the people who pressed his case was U.S. Rep. Al Green, a Houston Democrat. The Escobar family lives in Green's district and the congressman took his case to heart, continuing to identify Escobar as his constituent even after he was deported.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 27 of 52

Green flew to El Salvador to meet with Escobar and later to press his case with consular officials. He presented Escobar with an American flag.

"He's always going to be my constituent," Green said Monday.

The Houston-based advocacy group FIEL contacted local attorney Raed Gonzalez, who took up Escobar's case. He filed paperwork with U.S. Immigration and Citizenship Services requesting waivers that would allow Escobar to return to the U.S., citing the hardship his deportation had placed on Rose.

Those waivers were granted last month.

Gonzalez said people in his office celebrated and cried with joy when the word came. But he also felt disappointed that Escobar was deported in the first place when he could have pursued the same waivers without having left his family.

"This could have been avoided," he said. "It could have been more humane. It could have been more decent."

On Monday, Green flew to El Salvador again — this time to greet the Escobar family and accompany them to Houston. Escobar carried with him the American flag that Green had brought him earlier.

Sitting in an airport waiting room, Escobar held his daughter in his arms and recounted all the things he had missed while in El Salvador: birthdays, holidays, anniversaries. He already had plans to take the family to the nearby bayside town of Galveston for the Fourth of July holiday on Thursday to eat crawfish and watch fireworks.

He looked at his son, Walter, and recounted how he had made him the man of the house while he was gone.

"I'm back at home, so you get a break," he said.

Rose Escobar, who had called public attention to her husband's case for more than two years, had tears in her eyes.

"We're whole again," she said. "We're a family."

World Bank unit implicated in Latin America graft scandal

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — María Victoria Guarín was a key adviser on Colombia's biggest-ever transportation project: a 1,000-kilometer (620-mile) highway across mountainous terrain connecting the capital to busy Caribbean ports.

As an investment officer for a World Bank unit, it was her job to help the government set the terms for competitive bidding by contractors. It turns out she was also married to a senior executive of a company that won part of the very contract she helped to oversee.

That apparent conflict of interest has now dragged the bank into the edges of Latin America's biggest corruption scandal, as revealed in a little-noticed report issued last year by Colombia's anti-trust agency.

The Grupo Aval conglomerate that employed Guarín's husband was partnered with Odebrecht, the Brazilian construction giant that has admitted to paying \$6.5 million in bribes to seal the deal — one of dozens of projects it now acknowledges winning through illegal payments.

The scandal upended the region's politics, leading to the jailing of dozens of senior politicians. But the role played by the World Bank in advising governments during the graft-ridden infrastructure boom of the past decade has received far less attention.

The private-sector arm of the World Bank, known as the International Finance Corporation, or IFC, is supposed to reduce poverty in the developing world by promoting private investment.

In an antitrust administrative complaint filed in September against Guarín and several others, the IFC is accused of failing to act on Guarín's potential conflict of interest for nearly two years, even as she allegedly tilted the bidding process for part of the \$2.6 billion contract in favor of her husband's employer.

Her husband, Diego Solano, who was also implicated, is now the chief financial officer of the New York Stock Exchange-traded company.

If the civil charges of taking advantage of a conflict of interest and improper contacts are sustained,

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 28 of 52

Guarín faces a fine of up to \$1 million. Aval and its subsidiaries are on the hook for \$150 million.

"There's no doubt that the IFC conspired against free competition and transparency," Pablo Robledo, the former antitrust regulator who led the probe, said in an interview.

No one has been criminally charged, nor are there any indications that Guarín and Solano financially benefited. But a judge in April asked Colombia's attorney general to investigate the couple in handing down an 11-year sentence against José Melo, the CEO of the Aval unit in the consortium.

During Melo's trial, a former deputy transportation minister jailed for accepting bribes testified that he was led to believe by Odebrecht's country manager that the company had already influenced the structuring of the bidding terms through Guarín.

In a 2016 plea agreement with the U.S. Justice Department, Odebrecht admitted to paying almost \$800 million in bribes to win contracts in 12 mostly Latin American countries.

At the time of the highway project, multinational companies were recovering from the global financial crisis and wary of investing in a country where an armed conflict with leftist rebels was still raging. The IFC's mission was to help the government attract as much interest as possible.

The IFC allegedly stood by as the husband's employer actively sought to take advantage of the conflict of interest, according to the antitrust agency's findings. Among other alleged improprieties was the organizing of a lunch between Guarín, her husband and Melo. The meeting was to take place in January 2009 — weeks before the bidding conditions were made public.

The contacts continued after the monthslong tender process officially got underway. That's when, according to the antitrust regulator, strict rules were in place to make sure communications with the government or its advisers were transparent and all bidders had equal access to information.

It was during this period that Guarín in an email urged the government to lower the collateral requirements for bidders. She argued that she was informed privately by an Odebrecht executive that the high amounts represented a "deal breaker."

A month later, the requirements were changed.

"The gold standard that should characterize the IFC's behavior in accordance with the World Bank's code of ethics clearly was not followed," said Camilo Enciso, a criminal lawyer and director of the International Anti-Corruption Institute, who reviewed the documents in the case at the AP's request. "The couple had a clear stake for their careers in the success or failure of this project."

Potential conflicts of interest "were everywhere," he added, citing the use of confidential information, influence peddling and favoritism, among others. "The IFC should have known better."

Guarín and Solano declined to comment. But in case filings both rejected the allegations of a conflict of interest. While Solano argued that he took steps to insulate himself from the bidding process, Guarín said the lowering of the financial guarantees benefited all bidders and reflected longstanding concerns across the sector.

Aval said it was cooperating with authorities but declined to comment further.

The IFC also rejected the accusations, saying that Guarín was hired before it was known who the bidders would be and because of her expertise in the infrastructure sector. She was member of an extensive team and did not have a managerial role.

The IFC also said it notified the government and put in place safeguards to prevent any conflict of interest once news reports in July 2009 indicated Aval would take part in the bidding process. That was more than 20 months after the IFC started advising the government.

"As it is the norm in these projects, IFC only served in an advisory capacity while the ultimate decisions regarding the project structure and the awarding of the concession contract rested exclusively with the Colombian government," the IFC said in a statement.

The safeguards included preventing Guarín from playing any role in the bid evaluation process.

But in a September 2009 public hearing, Colombia's then-Transportation Minister expressed surprise upon hearing of Guarín's marriage to an Aval executive in an anonymously written complaint that described the relationship as a "perfectly camouflaged conflict of interest."

Richard Cabello, head of the IFC's advisory services in Latin America, said the organization had taken

unspecified steps from the outset to mitigate any possible negative effects arising from Guarin's marriage, according to a transcript of the hearing.

He also vowed to answer the "innuendo" in writing — although there's no record the IFC did so publicly until almost eight years later, in response to a magazine column. In the 2017 statement, the IFC said it flagged the issue to the government a month before the hearing in coordination with an IFC department charged with managing potential conflicts.

Cabello, like the IFC, "downplayed what took place and provided impertinent excuses that didn't address the heart of the complaint," the antitrust agency said in the 168-page report issued in September.

The antitrust agency said the IFC refused to cooperate with its investigation, citing its immunity from judicial processes as an international organization. As such, it concluded that no action was taken to address the conflict.

The IFC claims it volunteered to work with the government to clarify circumstances related to the project. Meanwhile, an attorney for Aval has accused the regulator of abusing its authority by accessing company emails without a court order and questioning Solano without a lawyer present. Colombia's ombudsman has launched an investigation against Robledo in response.

Two days after the hearing, Aval sent a letter to the government stating that Solano, then a senior executive, did not play any role in the process, despite emails suggesting he had had.

Solano in a filing said his involvement was limited to helping structure a memorandum of understanding with Odebrecht and measuring the potential impact of a winning bid on Aval's finances. He also said the antitrust regulator ignored an August 2009 email in which he explicitly asked Melo to refrain from sending him confidential information about the offer.

Nonetheless emails show that Aval's president, Luis Sarmiento, the son of Colombia's wealthiest man, was aware of the issue and urged caution so that a winning bid would not be undone by a lawsuit.

Despite the risks, the lobbying effort appeared to pay off, according to the antitrust regulator.

When the results of the bidding were announced Dec. 14, 2009, the only two other competitors were disqualified on technical grounds. The Odebrecht-Aval consortium was awarded the contract for about \$1 billion, just below the maximum allowed, suggesting it did not fear being outbid.

Years later when Melo retired, he sent a farewell email to his colleague Solano. "Please send my regards to Maria Victoria," he wrote, "she's secretly always been our booster."

Joshua Goodman on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/apjoshgoodman>

Taliban bombing in Afghan capital kills 6, wounds scores

By AMIR SHAH and KATHY GANNON Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The Taliban set off a powerful bomb in downtown Kabul on Monday, killing at least six people and wounding more than a hundred, and sending a cloud of smoke billowing over the Afghan capital.

At least 26 children were among the wounded, many of whom were cut by shards of glass when the bomb shattered nearby windows, government spokesman Feroz Bashari said. He said a total of 105 people were hurt.

An education ministry spokeswoman, Nooria Nazhat, later raised the number of students who were slightly wounded to 51, from two schools.

The Taliban claimed the attack, which came as the insurgents were holding their latest round of talks with U.S. envoy Zalmay Khalilzad in the Gulf state of Qatar, where they have a political office.

The attack ended nearly 10 hours after it began with all five attackers dead, according to Interior Ministry spokesman Nasrat Rahimi.

Two police, a child, a private security guard and two passers-by were killed in the attack that began with a powerful car bomb, followed by a series of smaller explosions and a daylong gun battle, said Rahimi.

The Italian-run Emergency Hospital in Kabul — one of the largest hospitals in the Afghan capital treating

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 30 of 52

war victims — said in a statement that it had received two bodies, including a child. Dozens more injured were treated, many of them later released.

The insurgents struck during the morning commute, and ambulance sirens wailed across the downtown area.

Mohammad Karim, a police official in the area of the attack, said a car bomb exploded outside a Defense Ministry building. Militants then ran into a nearby high-rise located in a crowded market and began firing down on the ministry. Police and special Afghan security forces poured into the area and cordoned it off.

Mohammad Farooq, the owner of a nearby restaurant, said the explosion blew out the windows of a private school, wounding several students.

The capital has been relatively quiet in recent months following a spate of bombings, many claimed by the local Islamic State affiliate. The Taliban have carried out scores of attacks in Kabul in recent years, mostly targeting Afghan and U.S. military installations or convoys.

The U.S. condemned the attack. The statement from press secretary Stephanie Grisham said the “brazen attack demonstrates the Taliban’s callous disregard for their fellow Afghans, who have repeatedly voiced the urgency of finding a peaceful resolution to the conflict.”

Pakistan also condemned Monday’s attack, saying “such attacks are detrimental to the cause of peace, security and stability in Afghanistan.” Pakistan and Afghanistan routinely exchange accusations of harboring the other’s militant enemies.

Pakistan has reportedly pressed the Taliban ___ many of whom have homes in Pakistan ___ into talks. Last week it hosted Afghan President Ashraf Ghani for the first time as the two countries sought to reset their troubled relationship.

The latest talks between the United States and the Taliban meanwhile stretched into a third day. The Taliban said their focus is on getting an announcement of a timetable for the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO troops from Afghanistan. The announcement is likely to be accompanied by a Taliban promise to hold intra-Afghan talks and agree to an eventual cease-fire.

Suhail Shaheen, spokesman for the Taliban’s political office in Doha, told The Associated Press on Monday that “our main concern is to make sure a timeline for troop pullout is announced.”

Taliban officials have previously told the AP they want all foreign troops withdrawn within six months, while Washington has pushed for a longer timeline of a year to 18 months.

The Taliban have refused to hold talks with the Afghan government, calling it a U.S. puppet, and have continued to carry out daily attacks on Afghan forces. They say Washington is the final arbiter on the troop withdrawal, which the insurgents see as the central issue.

In a tweet on Monday, Shaheen said an intra-Afghan dialogue will begin only after a timeframe for the withdrawal of troops is announced “in the presence of international guarantors.” He did not identify the guarantors. He also said regardless of an announcement the Taliban were not prepared for talks with Afghan government members in their official capacity.

Washington accelerated attempts to find a negotiated end to America’s longest war with the appointment last September of Khalilzad, who was a special presidential representative to Afghanistan and later U.S. ambassador in Kabul in the years immediately following the 2001 U.S.-led invasion that ousted the Taliban.

During a visit last week to the Afghan capital, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Washington would like to see an agreement before Sept. 1, considered an ambitious deadline by analysts but likely linked to Afghan presidential polls scheduled for later that month. Washington has expressed concern the elections could hamper a peace deal and has quietly advocated for an interim administration for up to two years following an agreement.

Gannon reported from Islamabad.

Riot police clear away protesters from Hong Kong legislature

By KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hundreds of protesters swarmed into Hong Kong's legislature Monday night, defacing portraits of lawmakers and spray-painting pro-democracy slogans in the chamber before vacating it as riot police cleared surrounding streets with tear gas and then moved inside.

The three-hour occupation, which ended early Tuesday, came on the 22nd anniversary of the former British colony's return to China, a city holiday, and reflected mounting frustration with Hong Kong's leader for not responding to protesters' demands after several weeks of demonstrations. The protests were sparked by a government attempt to change extradition laws to allow suspects to be sent to China for trial.

Protesters whacked away at thick glass windows until they shattered and then pried open steel security gates. Police initially retreated as the protesters entered, avoiding a confrontation and giving them the run of the building.

Demonstrators stood on lawmakers' desks and painted over the territory's emblem on a wall. The crowd also wrote slogans calling for a democratic election of the city's leader and denouncing the extradition legislation. Many wore yellow and white helmets, face masks and the black T-shirts that have become their uniform.

Police then announced that they would soon move in. A spokesman had earlier broadcast a warning that "appropriate force" would be used. Officers approached shortly after midnight and entered the legislative chambers after protesters had already left. There was no immediate word on any arrests or injuries.

The actions prompted organizers of a separate peaceful march against the extradition bill to change the endpoint of their protest from the legislature to a nearby park, after police asked them to call it off or change the route. Police wanted the march to end earlier in the Wan Chai district, but organizers said that would leave out many people who planned to join the march along the way.

Police estimated 190,000 people joined the peaceful march, the third major one in as many weeks. Organizers estimated the number at 550,000.

The extradition proposal has heightened fears of eroding freedoms in the territory, which Britain returned to China on July 1, 1997. Debate on the measure has been suspended indefinitely. Protesters want the bills formally withdrawn and Hong Kong's embattled leader, Carrie Lam, to resign.

Lam, who has come under withering criticism for trying to push the legislation through, called a rare pre-dawn news conference with security officials at police headquarters. She noted that two different protests happened Monday — one a generally orderly march that reflected Hong Kong's inclusiveness, the other using vandalism and violence.

"This is something we should seriously condemn," she said.

She disputed protesters' complaints that officials had not responded to them, saying the government explained that by suspending the bill with no timetable or plan to revisit it, the legislation would die at the end of the current legislative session in July 2020.

For the other demands, she said releasing arrested protesters without an investigation would not uphold the rule of law.

Lam's first public comments came Monday at the handover anniversary ceremony, where she said the protests had taught her that she needs to listen better to young people and others. She insisted her government has good intentions and pledged that future work would be "closer and more responsive to the aspirations, sentiments and opinions of the community."

Mainland China's entirely state-controlled media made no mention of Monday's protests. The main evening news broadcast carried video of the flag-raising ceremony, along with parts of Lam's address and shots of Hong Kong residents praising displays put on by the People's Liberation Army garrison in the territory.

Chinese media outlets have barely reported on the protests since they began last month, other than to blame foreign forces for stirring up unrest.

The extradition bill controversy has given fresh momentum to Hong Kong's pro-democracy opposition movement, awakening broader concerns that China is chipping away at the rights guaranteed to Hong

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 32 of 52

Kong for 50 years under a "one country, two systems" framework. The two marches in June drew more than a million people, according to organizer estimates.

Jimmy Sham, a leader of the pro-democracy group that organized Monday's march, told the crowd that Lam had not responded to their demands because she is not democratically elected. The leader of Hong Kong is chosen by a committee dominated by pro-China elites.

"We know that Carrie Lam can be so arrogant," Sham said, rallying the crowd under a blazing sun before the start of the march at Victoria Park. "She is protected by our flawed system."

The protesters are also demanding an independent inquiry into police actions during a June 12 protest, when officers used tear gas and rubber bullets to disperse a demonstration that blocked the legislature on the day that debate on the bill had been scheduled to resume.

The police say the use of force was justified, but since then have largely adopted softer tactics, even as protesters besieged police headquarters in recent days, pelting it with eggs and spray-painting slogans on its outer walls.

The area around Golden Bauhinia Square, where the flag-raising ceremony took place, was blocked off from Saturday to prevent protesters from gathering to disrupt it. Before the morning ceremony, protesters trying to force their way to the square were driven back by officers with plastic shields and batons, the retreating protesters pointing open umbrellas to ward off pepper spray.

The extradition legislation has also drawn opposition from the legal profession, commercial groups and foreign nations, reflecting Hong Kong's status as an international business center with a strong independent judiciary and high degree of transparency.

During a brief visit to Mongolia on Monday, U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton said Washington expects "China like every other country to adhere to its international obligations" regarding Hong Kong.

China rejects all such statements as foreign interference. In Beijing, Chinese foreign ministry spokesman Geng Shuang told reporters at a daily briefing that "Hong Kong affairs are purely China's internal affairs, and no foreign country has the right to intervene."

Associated Press writers Raf Wober, Alice Fung, Johnson Lai and Dake Kang in Hong Kong and Christopher Bodeen in Beijing contributed to this report.

Iran breaches uranium stockpile limit set by nuclear deal

By JON GAMBRELL and AMIR VAHDAT Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran has broken the limit set on its stockpile of low-enriched uranium by its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, international inspectors and Tehran said Monday, marking its first major departure from the unraveling agreement a year after the U.S. unilaterally withdrew from the accord.

The announcement by Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif and later confirmation by the U.N. nuclear watchdog puts new pressure on European nations trying to save the deal amid President Donald Trump's maximalist campaign targeting Tehran. Iran separately threatened to raise its uranium enrichment closer to weapons-grade levels on July 7 if Europe fails to offer it a new deal.

It also further heightens tensions across the wider Middle East in the wake of Iran recently shooting down a U.S. military surveillance drone, mysterious attacks on oil tankers that America and the Israelis blame on Tehran, and bomb-laden drone assaults by Yemen's Iranian-backed rebels targeting Saudi Arabia. Those rebels claimed a new attack late Monday on Saudi Arabia's Abha airport that the kingdom said wounded nine people, including one Indian.

The European Union urged Iran to reverse course and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the action "a significant step toward making a nuclear weapon." Iran long has insisted its nuclear program is for peaceful purposes, despite Western fears about it.

At the White House, Trump told reporters Iran was "playing with fire," and U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called on the international community to require Iran to suspend all enrichment, even at levels allowed under the nuclear deal.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 33 of 52

"The Iranian regime, armed with nuclear weapons, would pose an even greater danger to the region and to the world," Pompeo said in a statement.

Though Trump pulled back from airstrikes targeting Iran after the U.S. drone was shot down, Washington has rushed an aircraft carrier strike group, nuclear-capable B-52 bombers and thousands of additional troops to the region. That's raised fears that a miscalculation or further incidents could push the two sides into an armed conflict, some 40 years after the Islamic Revolution and the takeover of the U.S. Embassy in Tehran.

Speaking to journalists in Tehran, Zarif acknowledged Iran that broken through the limit set by the accord. "We had previously announced this and we have said it transparently what we are going to do," Zarif said. "We are going to act according to what we have announced and we consider it our right reserved in the nuclear deal."

The U.N. nuclear watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency, later said its director general had informed officials that it verified Iran had broken through the limit.

Under terms of the nuclear deal, Iran agreed to have less than 300 kilograms (661 pounds) of uranium enriched to a maximum of 3.67%. Previously, Iran enriched as high as 20%, which is a short technical step away from reaching weapons-grade levels. It also held up to 10,000 kilograms (22,046 pounds) of the higher-enriched uranium.

Neither Zarif nor the U.N. agency said how much uranium Iran now had on hand. Last week, an Iranian official in Vienna said that Tehran was 2.8 kilograms away from the limit. Iran previously announced it had quadrupled its production of low-enriched uranium, which at under 3.67% is enough to power a nuclear reactor to create electricity, but is far below weapons-grade levels.

However, Iran could have chosen to mix the low-enriched uranium with raw uranium, diluting it and bringing it down under the cap. Pushing past the limit served as a notice to Europe, Zarif said.

The "actions of the Europeans have not been enough so the Islamic Republic will move ahead with its plans as it has previously announced," Zarif said. "We are in the process of doing our first phase of actions both on increasing our stockpile of enriched uranium as well as our heavy water reserves."

Breaking the stockpile limit by itself doesn't radically change the one year that experts say Iran would need to have enough material for an atomic bomb, if it chooses to pursue one.

But by coupling an increasing stockpile with higher enrichment, it begins to close that one-year window and hamper any diplomatic efforts at saving the accord.

At the time of the 2015 deal, which was agreed to by Iran, the United States, China, Russia, Germany, France and Britain, experts believed Iran needed anywhere from several weeks to three months to have enough material for a bomb.

Zarif stressed the country remained on track to raise its enrichment if Europe did not take any additional steps toward saving the accord.

"The next step is about the 3.67% limitation, which we will implement too," he warned.

Trump campaigned on pulling the U.S. from the deal, which saw Iran agree to limit its enrichment of uranium in exchange for the lifting of economic sanctions. Since Trump withdrew America from the pact a year ago, the U.S. has re-imposed previous sanctions and added new ones, as well as warning other nations they would be subject to sanctions as well if they import Iranian oil.

Amid the tensions, Yemen's Houthi rebels have launched repeated drone attacks on Saudi Arabia as the kingdom's long war in the country continues. The Houthi's satellite news channel Al-Masirah claimed a new attack on Abha regional airport late Monday, which Saudi Arabia said wounded eight Saudis and one Indian. Earlier attacks on the airport have killed one person and wounded dozens more.

Trump discussed the situation by phone with French President Emmanuel Macron, the White House said.

A spokeswoman for EU foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini said the bloc urged Iran "to reverse this step and to refrain from further measures that undermine the nuclear deal," known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Spokeswoman Maja Kocijancic underlined that Europe "remains fully committed to the agreement as long as Iran continues to fully implement its nuclear commitments."

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 34 of 52

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said he was "deeply worried" by Iran's announcement. In a tweet, he urged Tehran "to avoid any further steps away from JCPoA & come back into compliance."

As Netanyahu said Iran's move was a "significant step toward making a nuclear weapon," he urged European countries to "stand by your commitments" to impose sanctions against Tehran if it violated the agreement.

"The policy changed from 'wait out Trump' to 'hit back at Trump.' That's a big deal," said Cliff Kupchan, a chairman at the Eurasia Group and longtime Iran watcher. "I don't think either side wants war, but both sides do want leverage. We're in for a rough ride."

In Moscow, Russia's Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov noted that Iran had warned it was going to exceed the limit set by the deal and emphasized that Tehran's move followed "unthinkable" U.S. pressure.

"It didn't come as a surprise, Iran long has warned about it," Ryabkov said.

"Exceeding the 300-kilogram limit causes regret, but shouldn't be overdramatized. It must be seen as a natural result of the preceding events," Ryabkov said. "Iran has faced an unprecedented and unthinkable U.S. sanction pressure, effectively meaning a total oil embargo, an attempt to strangle a sovereign state."

Associated Press writers Kiyoko Metzler in Vienna and Vladimir Isachenkov in Moscow contributed to this report.

Japanese whalers bring home 1st commercial catch in 31 years

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japanese whalers returned to port Monday with their first catch after resuming commercial whaling for the first time in 31 years, achieving the long-cherished goal of traditionalists that is seen as largely a lost cause amid slowing demand for the meat and changing views on conservation.

A fleet of five boats left the northern Japanese port of Kushiro earlier Monday and brought back two minke whales. A crane lifted them and slowly placed them on the back of a truck to be taken to a portside factory for processing. Workers in blue plastic overalls poured sake from paper cups onto the first whale to express thanks and celebrate the first catch.

It was the first commercial hunt since 1988, when Japan switched to what it called research whaling after commercial whaling was banned by the International Whaling Commission. Japan gave six months' notice that it was withdrawing from the IWC, a move that took effect Sunday.

The Fisheries Agency said the hunts will stay within the country's exclusive economic zone, and the catch quota for the rest of this year will be 227 whales, fewer than the 637 that Japan hunted in the Antarctic and the northwestern Pacific in its research program in recent years. The announcement of the quota, originally planned for late June, was delayed until Monday in an apparent move to avoid criticism during this past weekend's Group of 20 summit in Osaka.

As the boats left port, whalers, their families and local officials in two major whaling towns, Shimonoseki in southwestern Japan and Kushiro in the north, celebrated the fresh start, hoping for their safe return and a good catch. Shimonoseki is Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's electoral constituency.

"We hope commercial whaling will be on track as soon as possible, contribute to local prosperity and carry on Japan's rich whale culture to the next generation," Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yasutoshi Nishimura told reporters in Tokyo.

Officials said the catch of the two minke whales was a nice surprise because they were not thought to be in the area and whalers were expecting Monday's trip to be only ceremonial.

Fisheries Agency officials said the whale meat will be auctioned at a local fish market Thursday and later hit stores, mainly in the region but possibly in Tokyo. Whalers are hoping for a special price for the historic meat that is higher than the average 2,000 yen per kilogram (\$18 per 2.2 pounds) that their counterparts from Antarctic research whaling used to get.

While the resumption of commercial whaling was condemned by many conservation groups, others see it as a face-saving way to let the government's embattled and expensive whaling program gradually suc-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 35 of 52

cumb to changing times and tastes.

Despite massive attention, tax money and political support from ruling party lawmakers, whaling in Japan involved only a few hundred people and accounted for less than 0.1% of the total meat consumption in fiscal 2017, according to government data.

Whale meat was an affordable source of protein during the lean times after World War II, with annual consumption peaking at 223,000 tons in 1962. But whale was quickly replaced by other meats. The supply of whale meat fell to 6,000 tons in 1986, the year before the moratorium on commercial whaling imposed by the IWC banned the hunting of several whale species.

Under its research whaling, which was criticized as a cover for commercial hunts because the meat was sold on the market, Japan caught as many as 1,200 whales a year. It drastically cut back its catch in recent years after international protests escalated and whale meat consumption slumped at home.

Today, about 4,000-5,000 tons are supplied in Japan annually, or 30-40 grams (1-1.4 ounces) of whale meat per person a year, Fisheries Agency officials say.

The research whaling program lost money for years — 1.6 billion yen (\$15 million) in the last year alone.

Japan will stick to a very strict catch quota and will continue conducting research, Hideki Moronuki, a Fisheries Agency official and the chief negotiator at the IWC, said in a recent interview. He said Japan's commercial whaling will never harm whale stocks.

The commercial whaling will be carried out by two groups. The mother factory ship Nisshin-maru and two support boats that used to go to the Antarctic will travel as far as Japan's 200 nautical mile exclusive economic zone to catch minke, Bryde's and sei whales. Five other smaller ships will stay closer to the coast but also hunt minkes, in addition to 168 Baird's beaked and two other kinds of small whales they used to catch outside of IWC jurisdiction. Altogether, they are to catch 52 minkes, 150 Bryde's and 25 sei whales through Dec. 31.

Whales caught in coastal waters will be brought back for fresh local consumption at any of six local whaling hubs that are mainly in northern Japan but include Taiji, the home constituency of ruling Liberal Democratic Party heavyweight Toshihiro Nikai. The town is also known for its dolphin hunts shown in the documentary movie "The Cove."

Whale meat caught further off the coast will be frozen and distributed for wider consumption.

Moronuki says the fate of commercial whaling depends on whether whale meat is widely accepted by consumers since it won't receive as many subsidies as before.

The government, however, plans to provide as much as 5 billion yen (\$46 million) for projects to help stabilize commercial whaling, including development of rich whale hunting grounds and research and development in the first few years, officials said.

Moronuki said he hopes whale meat will be reasonably priced so it will gain long-term popularity instead of being an expensive delicacy for a limited clientele. The government used to sell whale meat caught in the scientific program for school lunch programs at discounted prices, he said.

"The future of commercial whaling depends on how popular whale meat can be," he said. "Whale meat is a traditional food in Japan and I would like many people to try and develop a taste for it, especially younger people."

A 2017 survey by the Japan Whaling Association showed about 64% of respondents said they have eaten whale meat, but most said they haven't had any in five years.

Ultimately, the resumption of traditional whaling may end up saving large government subsidies and the lives of many whales, experts say.

"What we are seeing is the beginning of the end of Japanese whaling," said Patrick Ramage, director of the International Fund for Animal Welfare. "It is a win-win solution that results in a better situation for whales, a better situation for Japan, a better situation for international marine conservation efforts and is therefore to be welcomed."

Whaling is losing support in other whaling nations including Norway and Iceland, where whalers have cut back on catches in recent years amid criticism that commercial hunts are bad for their national image and tourism.

Iceland caught only 17 whales, while Norway hunted 432 in the 2017-2018 season, way below their catch quota of 378 and 1,278 respectively, according to the IWC.

Japanese are also beginning to see ecotourism as a better option for whales than hunting them for food. "People in coastal communities all do better when whales are seen and not hurt," Ramage said.

Follow Mari Yamaguchi on Twitter at <https://www.twitter.com/mariyamaguchi>

Baptism by fire: Stephanie Grisham's eventful first days

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — She is President Donald Trump's new top spokeswoman. But she said barely a word during what became her introduction to the world.

Stephanie Grisham received a baptism by fire over the weekend as she accompanied the president on his high-stakes trip to Asia and threw her body into a fracas with North Korean security officials.

It was an early sign of how Grisham, a former Trump campaign staffer and aide to the first lady, might reshape a role she technically didn't start until Monday. She's taking the job just as Trump enters a White House stretch that will help determine whether he wins another four years in the job.

Trump had just made his historic steps into North Korea and was walking with Kim Jong Un back across the border for a meeting in the Demilitarized Zone when the situation devolved into chaos on Sunday. Tensions were already high, as Kim's personal security force had tried to push around American and South Korean journalists covering the leaders' greeting.

When reporters tried to follow the leaders into Freedom House, where Trump and Kim would spend nearly an hour meeting behind closed doors, North Korean guards suddenly blocked the entrance, trying to keep out White House reporters. A fracas erupted, with guards grabbing at photographers' bags and cameras while the Americans tried to push and pull their way inside while shouting that they were just doing their jobs.

Once inside the lobby, as some of Kim's men again tried to block reporters, a few Secret Service agents stepped in — as did Grisham. In a moment caught on live television feeds, Grisham body-blocked one of the North Korean guards to help create space for the American reporters to run past. She beckoned them to come forward.

Later, she showed other White House officials the bruises she had to show for it.

It was a brief public defense of press freedom from a White House that has produced few of them. Though Trump staffers routinely advocate for reporters' access on international trips, Grisham's predecessor Sarah Sanders eliminated the daily press briefing and Trump himself has regularly used hostile rhetoric against the press.

Grisham declined to talk to reporters about her actions at the DMZ, which may have come instinctually for a staffer who joined the Trump orbit as a press wrangler on the campaign, tasked with shepherding the traveling press pool to events and, at times, advocating for access.

But others who've had the job complimented her response.

"There's always two parts to being the press secretary. One is to speak for the president and the other is to help the press. And on the latter, Stephanie could not have had a better, stronger first day," said Ari Fleischer, who served as press secretary under President George W. Bush.

While relations between the press and Trump White House will likely remain hostile, "it's good to see the American press secretary standing up for the American press corps," he said.

Trump, for his part, has suggested Grisham's arrival could signal a less contentious era. "She actually gets along with the media," Trump has said about his decision to choose her for the role.

Grisham is one of a small number of former campaign officials still working in the White House. She will have an unusually expansive job, serving as both press secretary and communications director — strategic communications aide Mercedes Schlapp announced her departure Monday — as well as continuing to serve the first lady.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 37 of 52

She spent Monday, her first official day, holding introductory meetings with staffers, which will continue through the week.

She earned the president and Melania Trump's trust while serving as Mrs. Trump's spokeswoman, and became known in that role for sending out pointed comments defending her boss and, occasionally, revealing breaks between the president and first lady. She has also criticized the media, at times, for reporting on stories she deems unworthy of attention.

Before joining Trump's campaign, Grisham worked in Republican politics in her home state of Arizona. She was press aide to the then-speaker of the Arizona House, David Gowan, when he set off a fight with journalists over access to the House chamber, barring reporters from the House floor unless they submitted to extensive criminal and civil background checks.

He reversed course after an outcry from journalists, the public and other lawmakers.

Grisham accompanied the president to Japan and South Korea after Sanders announced she'd be leaving at the end of June. In Asia, Grisham was largely seen but not heard. She had a seat at the table during the president's meetings with world leaders such as Germany's Angela Merkel and Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman.

But she did not talk to reporters, politely declining requests for comment by saying that she was still getting up to speed in the new job.

Her voice was heard publicly just once, in a telling moment in Seoul in the hours before the president's trip to the DMZ.

Trump held a news conference with his South Korean counterpart, Moon Jae-in, and each leader was to field one question from the American press and one from the Korean. Podiums were set up on the side for each leaders' press secretary and, as per protocol, each spokeswoman would announce which reporter would ask the question.

South Korea's spokeswoman did so. But when it was Grisham's turn, she opted to cede the selection of a reporter to the media-obsessed president.

"I'm going to let our president choose," she said. "Go ahead, Mr. President."

As many in the hall laughed, Trump thanked her.

"She's learned very well," he said. "Thank you very much, Stephanie. I appreciate it."

Associated Press writer Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

Follow Lemire and Colvin on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/colvinj> and <https://twitter.com/JonLemire>

Prosecutor tells jury to use SEAL's own words to convict him

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — A Navy SEAL murdered a wounded war prisoner in Iraq in 2017 and the proof is his own words, his own photos and the testimony of his fellow troops, a military prosecutor told a jury Monday, while defense lawyers called it a "mutiny" by entitled, junior SEALs trying to oust a demanding chief.

The case of Special Operations Chief Edward Gallagher, a Bronze Star recipient, is now in the hands of a jury of five Marines and two sailors, including a SEAL, many of whom had been in heavy combat in Iraq.

Both sides told jurors that witnesses had lied on the stand and it was their duty to push through the evidence to find the truth. The panel will weigh whether Gallagher, a 19-year veteran on his eighth deployment, went off the rails and fatally stabbed the war prisoner on May 3, 2017, as a kind of trophy kill, or was the victim of allegations fabricated after the platoon returned to San Diego to stop him from getting a Silver Star and being promoted.

The two-week trial included the testimonies of nearly a dozen SEALs, including Special Operator Corey Scott, a medic like Gallagher, who told the court that he saw the chief stab the Islamic State militant in the neck but stunned the court when he said he was the one who ultimately killed the prisoner by plugging his breathing tube with his thumb as an act of mercy.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 38 of 52

Seven SEALs said Gallagher unexpectedly stabbed the prisoner, moments after he and the other medics treated the detainee. Two, including Scott, testified they saw Gallagher plunge his knife into the prisoner's neck.

Under the military justice system, the prosecution needs two-thirds of the jury, or in this case five jurors, to agree to a guilty verdict to convict or they must acquit him. They can also convict him of lesser charges, such as attempted murder.

Navy Cmdr. Jeff Pietrzyk said in closing arguments that text messages by Gallagher show he is guilty.

One message said: "I've got a cool story for you when I get back. I've got my knife skills on." Another text stated: "Good story behind this. Got him with my hunting knife."

He then showed a photo of the dead prisoner with Gallagher holding up his head by the hair.

"The government's evidence in this case is Chief Gallagher's words, Chief Gallagher's pictures, Chief Gallagher's SEALs," Pietrzyk said.

The prosecutor said the witness who changed his story and claimed to have killed the prisoner himself was lying to protect Gallagher.

He acknowledged that the victim — a 17-year-old Islamic State fighter wounded in an airstrike — is not sympathetic.

"Before the air strike, he would have done anything in his power to kill an American," Pietrzyk said, but he said the care of war prisoners is what sets U.S. forces apart.

"We're not ISIS. When we capture someone and they're out of the fight, that's it. That's where the line is drawn," Pietrzyk said.

During the trial, it was revealed that nearly all the platoon members readily posed for photos with the dead prisoner and watched as Gallagher read his reenlistment oath near the body in an impromptu ceremony.

Defense lawyer Tim Parlatore began his closing argument the same way he started the trial. "This is case is not about murder, it's about mutiny," Parlatore said.

The attorney said there's no body, no forensics, and the SEALs who testified against Gallagher lied because they didn't like his demanding leadership. He called the pictures of Gallagher clutching the corpse's hair and his texts about his knife skills just the dark humor of a warrior.

Parlatore also contended that investigators never asked Scott about the cause of the death, which is why they were surprised by his testimony.

"They didn't even listen to their own witness," Parlatore said.

The defense showed videos clips by an Iraq TV crew of the prisoner being interviewed after he was hit, then arriving at the SEAL compound and being handed over to the SEALs by the Iraqi troops. It also showed Gallagher pulling out his medical bag and treating the detainee.

An Iraqi general who handed the wounded prisoner to the SEALs testified that Gallagher did not stab the boy. And Marine Staff Sgt. Giorgio Kirylo said after the militant died that he moved the body to take a "cool guy trophy" photo with it and saw no stab wounds on his neck.

Gallagher's attorneys said there are a number of things that could have caused the militant's death, including internal injuries from the blast.

Defense attorney Marc Mukasey called it "a weak, evil, Hail Mary farce of a case" that never should have made it to the court.

"The government wants you to believe that Chief Gallagher flipped from Dr. Jekyll, a life saver, to Mr. Hyde, the murderer, in a split second," he said.

Gallagher and his wife, Andrea, hugged and kissed over the bar of the court's gallery after the arguments finished.

Most of the witnesses were granted immunity to protect them from being prosecuted for acts they described on the stand.

Lt. Jacob Portier, the officer in charge, has been charged separately for overseeing the reenlistment ceremony and not reporting the alleged stabbing.

Death toll from clashes at Sudan rallies climbs to 11

By **FAY ABUELGASIM** and **SAMY MAGDY** Associated Press

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — At least 11 people were killed in clashes with Sudan's security forces during mass demonstrations demanding a transition to civilian rule, Sudanese activists said Monday.

Tens of thousands of people flooded the streets of the capital, Khartoum, and other areas Sunday in the biggest protests since security forces cleared a sit-in last month. They called for the military to hand over power to civilians following the coup that ousted longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir in April.

Nazim Sirraj, a prominent activist, told The Associated Press on Monday that three bodies were found next to a school in Omdurman, the twin city of Khartoum. The three were shot dead in an area where security forces had barred protesters from marching toward a hospital and had fired tear gas to disperse them, he said. One wounded person died on the way to the hospital in Khartoum, he added.

Sirraj said the total death toll was 11, including one killed in the city of Atbara, a railway hub north of Khartoum and the birthplace of the December uprising that eventually led to al-Bashir's ouster.

The Sudan Doctors Committee, the medical arm of the Sudanese Professionals' Association, which has spearheaded the demonstrations, confirmed the death toll.

Authorities said late Sunday that at least seven people were killed and nearly 200 wounded, including 27 injured by bullets during the demonstrations.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called again Monday "for restraint by all sides and urgent resumption of the political talks towards the establishment of a civilian-led transitional government as soon as possible," U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric said.

The U.N. chief also called for "accountability" for any loss of life by protesters or civilians, Dujarric said.

The U.S. Embassy issued a statement condemning the use of live ammunition against protesters Sunday, saying military authorities should be held accountable for the deaths. It also called for Sudan's factions to reach agreement immediately on the formation of a civilian-led transitional government.

The ruling military council blamed protest leaders for the deaths after they diverted the routes of marches.

Lt. Gen. Gamal Omar, a member of the council, said in a statement it was regrettable that the Forces for Declaration of Freedom and Change, which represents the protesters, diverted marches toward the presidential palace and the military headquarters.

He said security forces used tear gas to disperse protesters, who hurled stones at them.

Omar said the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces arrested "elements" who fired at security forces in Omdurman, killing two people and wounding three RSF members. Omar said over two dozen security forces were wounded across the county.

Protest leader Mohammed al-Asam said they would continue in their "revolutionary acts" till the military hands over power to civilians.

"The military council has only one option, which is to respond to demands of the Sudanese people," he said in a video clip posted on the SPA Facebook late Sunday.

The protests came amid a weeklong standoff between the ruling military council and protest leaders. Talks between the two sides over a power-sharing agreement collapsed when security forces violently broke up a protest camp in Khartoum on June 3.

The ensuing clampdown resulted in at least 128 people killed across Sudan, according to protest organizers. Authorities put the death toll at 61, including three security forces.

In a statement late Monday, the FDFC called for a regionally backed investigation into the crackdown since al-Bashir's ouster April 11.

It also demanded an "immediate" transfer of power to a civilian-led transitional government that would include a Cabinet, legislative body and a sovereign council — the last composed of civilian and military members with limited symbolic powers.

2020 candidate Buttigieg says he raised \$24M in 2nd quarter

By BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pete Buttigieg said Monday that he raised \$24.8 million during the second fundraising quarter, a massive sum that cements him as a top White House contender despite entering the Democratic presidential primary as a little-known Indiana mayor.

The impressive haul tops the \$18 million raised last quarter by Bernie Sanders, who led the Democratic field in fundraising during that period. It will help Buttigieg transition from a scrappy startup operation to a more formidable campaign for the 2020 Democratic nomination and give him staying power to weather the summer months, when fundraising typically dries up.

Meanwhile, many of his better-known rivals have struggled to raise money and could face more challenging circumstances.

"He did exactly what you are supposed to do," said Rufus Gifford, who was finance director of President Barack Obama's 2012 campaign. "They are seizing on opportunities, they are building infrastructure, hiring staff and working their butts off."

Campaigns often release an early glimpse of their end-of-quarter fundraising, particularly if the numbers are good. So far, none of his rivals have followed suit, though they have until July 15 to report the numbers to the Federal Election Commission.

The figures will be a crucial factor in determining which candidates qualify for the September debate stage.

Buttigieg, 37, surprised many people with a first quarter haul of roughly \$7 million, which topped many of the better-known candidates in the race. Since then, he's parlayed his biography as a gay military veteran and Rhodes scholar who was twice elected to lead the Rust Belt city of South Bend into becoming one of the hottest tickets in Democratic fundraising.

"The LGBT community is very enthusiastic about supporting him," said Gifford, who is gay. "That does not mean they are going to vote for him. But they want to support the candidacy because it's historically important."

Buttigieg's campaign says he has \$22.6 million cash on hand and received money from donors from all 50 states, as well as U.S. territories, with an average contribution of about \$47.

His campaign says that will allow him to build out an operation in early voting states, including Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada. Already, his staff has grown from a handful of strategists and volunteers to a headcount that exceeds 100. Recently, his South Bend headquarters moved into a larger office.

While Buttigieg has drawn swooning donors, he still faces significant challenges. For one, his support with African Americans in public opinion polls is dismal, raising questions about his ability to build a winning coalition in an increasingly diverse Democratic Party.

As most candidates were furiously trying to raise money during the last two weeks before the June 30 deadline, Buttigieg had to cancel a California fundraising trip to deal with unrest at home after a white South Bend police officer shot and killed a black man who police say was armed with a knife.

"Clearly his support is not coming from people of color, yet he is getting lots and lots of donations," said Steve Phillips, an African American civil rights attorney whose Dream United super PAC is supporting New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, who is black. "In order to win, there has to be an enthusiastic and large turnout of voters of color."

For now, Buttigieg is doing well enough in overall polls and has received contributions from more than 400,000 people, securing his spot in the September debates.

The Democratic National Committee requires participants to hit 2% in multiple polls and 130,000 individual donors. Although many campaigns are worried, DNC Chairman Tom Perez has resisted pressure to relax the requirements.

Currently, the only other locks for the fall debates are former Vice President Joe Biden, Sanders, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and California Sen. Kamala Harris.

Although his rivals have yet to release their numbers, Biden hinted last month that he's taken in a similar

amount to Buttigieg.

Biden has said his campaign had amassed 360,000 donors, who gave an average of \$55 apiece. The math suggests he collected about \$19.8 million since entering the race in April, but his campaign declined to confirm the figure at the time.

His campaign remained coy on how much he has raised but told supporters in an email on Monday that they "blew our fundraising goal out of the water."

Associated Press writer Sara Burnett contributed to this report from Chicago.

Drowned father and daughter mourned at El Salvador cemetery

By **MARCOS ALEMÁN** Associated Press

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP) — A man and his young daughter who drowned trying to cross into Texas were laid to their final rest Monday, a week after a heartbreaking image of their bodies floating in the Rio Grande circled the globe.

About 200 relatives and friends followed a hearse bearing the bodies of Óscar Martínez and his 23-month-old daughter Valeria inside La Bermeja municipal cemetery in southern San Salvador. The ceremony was private, and journalists were not allowed access.

Many wore black and wept. They carried flowers and green palms, and some held signs bearing the logo of the Alianza soccer team favored by Óscar Martínez, who belonged to a group that supports the club.

"For those who cheer you on from heaven," one read.

"I knew them. They are good people, and I can't believe they died this way," said Berta Padilla, who arrived earlier along with about 30 others on a bus from Altavista, the working-class city the Martínezes called home before they left in early April, headed for the United States.

"We came from Altavista to be with Oscar's family," Padilla added. "We are with them in their pain."

Tania Vanessa Ávalos, their wife and mother, returned to El Salvador on Friday ahead of their remains.

A municipal police officer said their graves were in a section of the cemetery named after Saint Óscar Romero, the San Salvador archbishop who devoted himself to helping the poor and was assassinated in 1980. Romero, who was canonized last year, is buried in the crypt of the city's cathedral.

After the burial, relatives stayed behind at the gravesite to say a last goodbye, said family friend Reyna Moran.

"This is very painful, most of all because of the baby. ... They went in search of a better future, but everything came to an end in the river," Moran said.

A collection of floral arrangements adorned the grave, including one from El Salvador's president and first lady. Interior Minister Mario Durán was among those who attended.

The photographs of Martínez, 25, and Valeria, lying face-down along the riverbank, the tiny girl tucked inside his black shirt and her arm draped over his neck, prompted a global outpouring of emotion. They underscored the perils faced by migrants and asylum-seekers trying to reach the United States.

"We are dismayed, shocked, everyone is in pain," said Altavista Mayor Victor Manuel Rivera. "This family has lost an angel of just under 2 years, and seeing that heartbreaking image, the photo, is shocking."

President Nayib Bukele said late Sunday that the drownings were "a great tragedy" and that there's blame to be shared among governments.

U.S. policies designed to deter Central Americans and others from coming have stalled thousands on the Mexico side of the border as they wait to request asylum in the United States. Meanwhile, Mexico is stepping up immigration enforcement under intense pressure from the Trump administration.

And Bukele, who took office a month ago, said his own country shares responsibility.

"We can speak blame to any other country, but what about our blame?" Bukele said in lengthy remarks, much of them delivered in English. "I mean, what country did they flee? Did they (flee) the United States? They fled El Salvador. They fled our country. It is our fault."

"We haven't been able to provide anything, not a decent job, not a decent school," he continued. "What

if there's a little girl who had a decent school here, a decent health care system for her and her family, a decent house with water supply, a job for his parents, for his mother and his dad, a decent job, living in a zone where a gang member would not come to rape her and kill her family?"

Many of those trying to reach the U.S. border in recent months have said they were fleeing grinding poverty, a lack of opportunity and violence in the gang-dominated Northern Triangle region of El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala, or a combination of these factors.

Martínez's mother said last week that the family had hoped to live and work in the United States for a few years, saving enough money to return and build a home of their own.

"These are situations that make visible the problem of migration, something that happens daily," said Mario Vega, pastor of the Elim Protestant church, one of El Salvador's largest. "Yesterday it became known that another Salvadoran died in a detention center in Texas, and this is something that happens every day."

Vega criticized U.S. policies on migration and expressed hope that all countries would heed a U.N. call to respect migrants' human rights.

"May God will that this tragedy sensitize people," he said.

Associated Press writers Peter Orsi and Christopher Sherman in Mexico City contributed to this report.

US duty free magnates fund controversial Israeli settlements

By URI BLAU and JOSEF FEDERMAN The Associated Press

HEBRON, West Bank (AP) — When travelers shop at dozens of duty free stores at airports worldwide, they may be paying for more than a bottle of vodka or a box of chocolates.

The Falic family of Florida, owners of the ubiquitous chain of Duty Free Americas shops, funds a generous and sometimes controversial philanthropic empire in Israel that runs through the corridors of power and stretches deep into the occupied West Bank. An Associated Press investigation shows that the family has donated at least \$5.6 million to settler groups in the West Bank and east Jerusalem over the past decade, funding synagogues, schools and social services along with far-right causes considered extreme even in Israel.

The Falics support the ultranationalist Jewish community in Hebron, whose members include several prominent followers of a late rabbi banned from Israeli politics for his racist views, and whose movement is outlawed by the U.S. as a terrorist organization. They back Jewish groups that covertly buy up Palestinian properties in east Jerusalem, and they helped fund an unauthorized settlement outpost in the West Bank.

They have supported groups that are pushing for the establishment of a Third Temple for Jews at the holiest and most contested site in the Holy Land. They also have given more money than any other donor to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, a strong supporter of settlements, and have donated to other leaders of his Likud party.

The Falics' philanthropy is not limited to the settlements, and they support many mainstream causes in the U.S. and Israel, such as hospitals, athletics and helping the needy. But they are a key example of how wealthy U.S. donors have bolstered the contentious settlement movement.

"Far-right foreign donors are a pillar of the settlement enterprise," said Brian Reeves, a spokesman for Peace Now, an Israeli anti-settlement watchdog group.

Most of the world considers Jewish settlements in the West Bank and east Jerusalem to be obstacles to peace that gobble up territories claimed by the Palestinians for a future independent state. The international community overwhelmingly believes the settlements violate international law, which prohibits an occupying power from transferring its own population into the territory it occupies.

However, Israel considers the territories "disputed," and says the fate of the settlements should be determined through negotiations.

In a response to AP questions through his lawyer, Simon Falic, who spoke on behalf of the family, said Jews should be able to live anywhere in the Holy Land, whether it's Israel, Israeli-annexed east Jerusalem or the West Bank. He condemned violence and claimed none of the groups he supports do anything il-

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 43 of 52

legal under Israeli law.

"We are proud to support organizations that help promote Jewish life all over the Land of Israel," said Falic, whose business is based in Miami, Florida. "The idea that the mere existence of Jewish life in any geographical area is an impediment to peace makes no sense to us."

Since the capture of the West Bank and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war, the settler population has grown to about 700,000 people, roughly 10% of Israel's Jewish population. In recent years, it has received a boost from Netanyahu's pro-settler government and from a far more tolerant attitude by President Donald Trump, whose top Mideast advisers are longtime settlement supporters.

This growth has been fueled in part by fundraising arms for leading settlement groups in the United States, which allow them to collect tax-deductible contributions from thousands of American donors.

Data on American philanthropic support for settlements is limited, mainly due to a lack of transparency requirements. But according to a past investigation of U.S. tax forms by the Israeli daily Haaretz, fundraising organizations in the U.S. raised more than \$230 million for settlement causes between 2009 and 2013 alone.

Other big donors include casino magnate Sheldon Adelson, a backer of Netanyahu and Trump, who donated \$5 million in 2014 through his charitable foundation to the Israeli university in the West Bank settlement of Ariel, according to IRS records. Billionaire Ira Rennert, financier Roger Hertog and the U.S. ambassador to Israel, David Friedman, are also among prominent Jewish-American donors to settlement causes. The names of scores of lesser-known donors adorn buildings, playgrounds and even park benches throughout the West Bank.

The Falics stand out for the wide scope of groups they support and their close ties with leading Israeli politicians.

The family has two main charitable organizations, the U.S.-based Falic Family Private Foundation and the Segal Foundation in Israel. It is not clear whether the U.S. foundation contributed to the settlements, because its financial reports do not outline its recipients.

The Segal foundation, operating since 2007, gave away roughly \$15 million in its first decade. This foundation's financial reports also do not outline recipients, but the AP analysis identified at least \$5.6 million in donations to settlement and far-right causes by searching through the Israeli records of more than two dozen settlement organizations. Other funds went to other causes, including the country's amateur American football league, a Jerusalem hospital and a Jewish seminary in northern Israel.

Falic said the family's support for Jewish life "should not imply the exclusion of anyone else, including Christians and Muslims." However, critics say activities billed as harmless philanthropy have come at the expense of Palestinians and their claim to a state.

"Everyone should be aware that when they shop at 'Duty Free Americas,' their dollars could potentially finance some of the most extreme right-wing actors in Israel," said Ran Cohen, founder of the Israeli Democratic Bloc, which aims to expose anti-democratic trends.

Duty Free Americas is headed by three Falic brothers: Simon, Jerome and Leon. The chain operates over 180 stores at airports and border crossings in the U.S. and Latin America, including New York's JFK, Atlanta's Hartsfield-Jackson, Ronald Reagan and Dulles in Washington, and Miami International, according to the company website. Leon Falic told the trade publication TRBusiness that the privately held company last year posted over \$1.65 billion in sales.

Simon Falic said that under Jewish tradition, it is customary to donate 10% of one's earnings to charity.

During the decade ending in 2017, they donated about \$35 million, according to U.S. and Israeli tax records. Over that time, their U.S. foundation distributed about \$20 million. Their U.S. tax filings say that nearly all of the foundation's contributions went to "various worldwide Jewish organizations," but do not offer details.

Simon Falic provided the AP with a detailed breakdown of the foundation's 2017 donations, much of which went to mainstream Jewish causes such as WIZO, a women's organization that operates scores of Israeli daycare centers, shelters and training programs; Friends of the IDF, a fundraising branch that

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 44 of 52

assists Israeli soldiers; and Chabad, a network of religious institutions. They also contribute generously in the U.S. to medical research, synagogues and Jewish schools.

Most of their donations in Israel, however, do not appear in these forms. Instead, that money is channeled from Panamanian-based companies through the Israel-based Segal foundation, whose name is a Hebrew acronym based on the brothers' first names.

Falic said the reason for this is not because Panama is a tax haven, but because his brother Leon lives there, and a number of their companies are based in Panama. But the lack of transparency there makes tracking their donations more difficult.

Falic described himself as a "big supporter" of Netanyahu, who has allowed Israeli settlements to flourish during his 10 years in office. Although Falic said he has not contributed to Netanyahu since 2014, collectively the Falics have donated more than \$100,000 to Netanyahu over the years, making them his biggest donors, according to Israeli public records.

The Falics are also prominent figures in Israeli right-wing circles. In April, Simon Falic mingled with the mayor of Jerusalem, Ambassador Friedman and other dignitaries in the VIP section of a special Passover service at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Friedman, Florida Sen. Rick Scott, Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, evangelical preacher John Hagee, conservative TV host Mike Huckabee and Netanyahu's son, Yair, have been among the many politicians and VIPs to attend parties at Simon Falic's Jerusalem home.

The Falics also support American politicians, both Democratic and Republican. Since 2000, they have given over \$1.7 million to pro-Israel politicians, including Trump, Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, New York Sen. Chuck Schumer and Florida Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz.

Oded Revivi, a settler leader, described Simon Falic and his family as generous and influential, but also modest and shunning publicity.

"You understand that he knows the most important people. He sits in the most influential junction," said Revivi. "They've been extremely helpful and extremely generous."

Among the projects and investments the Falics have in the West Bank is the Psagot winery, an award-winning vintner that is also a centerpiece of the burgeoning settler tourism industry. The family has also built a sprawling biblical theme park in the West Bank settlement of Shilo, revered as the ancient site of the biblical tabernacle. The site attracts tens of thousands of evangelical Christian tourists each year, but has also drawn criticism for what some say is a narrow historical interpretation that minimizes Muslim history.

The Falics funded the construction of a synagogue and mikveh, or ritual bath, in 2014 in what was then the unauthorized West Bank outpost of Kerem Reim. Kerem Reim was retroactively legalized three years later.

"All of these donations were entirely legal," wrote Falic. "Any insinuation or allegation to the contrary is patently false and defamatory."

Israeli records show the Falics also granted over \$100,000 to two groups that seek the re-establishment of the Jewish Temple on a contested site in Jerusalem. Revered by Jews as the Temple Mount, that same area houses the Al-Aqsa Mosque, Islam's third-holiest site. The competing claims to the hilltop compound are a frequent flashpoint of violence.

Falic said the family is not involved in efforts to establish the Third Temple. But he described Yehuda Glick, a former lawmaker and leading figure in the Third Temple movement, as a friend, and said he finds it "ludicrous" that Jews cannot pray at their holiest site. Glick, who survived a 2014 Palestinian assassination attempt, was among the guests at a Passover barbecue hosted by the Falics at the winery for families who had lost relatives in Palestinian attacks.

Perhaps the Falics' most controversial area of activity is Hebron, a city where several hundred ultranationalist settlers live in heavily guarded enclaves amid some 200,000 Palestinians.

Relations between the populations are notoriously tense, and some of the Jewish leaders are followers of the late Rabbi Meir Kahane, whose "Kach" party was outlawed in Israel in the 1980s for calling for a mass expulsion of Arabs from the country. The U.S. also branded Kach a terrorist group.

Falic's associates in Hebron include Baruch Marzel, Kahane's former aide, who remains a prominent political activist in Israel.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 45 of 52

According to the AP analysis, the Falics donated roughly \$600,000 to "Hachnasat Orchim Hebron," a group that hosts visitors to the Jewish community and provides snacks to Israeli soldiers protecting the settlers. Marzel's wife Sarah is one of the group's founders, and Marzel is deeply involved.

They also have given about \$50,000 to the "Fund for the Rescue of the People of Israel," which served as a fundraising arm of Lehava, a group that opposes Jewish-Arab couples in an anti-assimilation campaign and often is accused of using intimidation or even violence.

Falic said he was not aware of any connection to Lehava, and said the donations, made in 2011 and 2012, were to assist needy families. He noted that he opposes assimilation and intermarriage but also rejects violence. Israeli financial records show the fund has links to several Kahane disciples, including Marzel.

Marzel is a well-known figure in Israel, easily recognized with a wild brown beard. He continues to call for mass expulsions of Arabs, and has a long history of clashes with the police. During the recent election campaign, he was a leading figure in "Jewish Power," a hard-line party led by Kahane followers.

Marzel said the Falics "do a lot of good things" and called them "good Jews," but said they did not work closely together. Yet photos and videos on Facebook show Simon Falic and Marzel warmly embracing at social events in Hebron and Jerusalem. In one 2016 video, taken at Falic's spacious Jerusalem home, the two men and Third Temple activist Glick hug and sway together as a well-known Israeli pop singer serenades them.

Falic said his connections to Marzel were primarily through a "beautiful project" that runs food trucks serving pizza, ice cream and snacks to Israeli soldiers protecting the residents of Hebron.

"While I may not agree with everything he has said, the work we have done that has been affiliated with the Hebron community has been positive, non-controversial and enhances Jewish life in the Hebron area — which we strongly support," he said.

Issa Amro, a Palestinian activist in Hebron, disagrees. He said the seemingly harmless project serves the settler cause at the expense of Palestinians.

"We are suffering from settler violence," he said. "When I tell the soldiers 'protect me,' they tell me 'we are not here to protect you. We are with our own people, who are the settlers.'"

In Jerusalem, the family contributed more than \$1 million to causes affiliated with Ateret Cohanim, which facilitates the sale of Palestinian properties in and around the Old City to Jewish settlers, an act of treason in Palestinian society.

Aviv Tartasky of Ir Amim, a monitoring group looking at Israeli-Palestinian relations in Jerusalem, said Ateret Cohanim often hides the identities of the purchasers, who are religious, nationalist Jews.

"When they come to live inside a Palestinian community, it can disrupt life for the community," he said.

Ateret Cohanim says the Jewish people have a right to live anywhere in Jerusalem. Executive director Daniel Luria declined to comment on the Falic family, saying he does not discuss his donors.

But Falic doesn't hide his support for what he called Ateret Cohanim's efforts "to bring Jewish life back to all of Jerusalem."

"It is unfortunate," he added, "that a Jewish family dedicated to this cause is newsworthy."

AP-NORC Poll: Trump not boosted by strong American economy

By JOSH BOAK and HANNAH FINGERHUT Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The solid economy is doing little to bolster support for President Donald Trump.

Americans give Trump mixed reviews for his economic stewardship despite the growth achieved during this presidency, according to a new survey by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research.

Nearly two-thirds describe as "good" an economy that appears to have set a record for the longest expansion in U.S. history, with decade-long growth that began under Barack Obama. More people consider the economy to be good today than did at the start of the year.

But significantly fewer approve of Trump's handling of the economy, even as it remains a relative strength compared with other issues. The survey indicates that most Americans do not believe they're personally benefiting from his trade policies. And only 17% said they received a tax cut, despite government and private sector figures showing that a clear majority of taxpayers owed less after the president's tax

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 46 of 52

overhaul passed in 2017.

These doubts create a possible vulnerability as Trump highlights the economy's solid performance in his campaign for re-election in 2020. During two nights of debates last week, almost every Democratic presidential candidate found ways to criticize the president by decrying the wealth gap .

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren said it was evidence of "corruption." Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders railed against the concentration of wealth in the three richest Americans, while former Vice President Joe Biden said Trump thinks Wall Street, not the middle class, built America.

Christel Bastida, 39, a neuroscience researcher, was active in Democratic politics last year during the Senate race in Texas and plans to run for Houston City Council.

"I personally don't feel more secure financially and I think that's the case for a lot of people who are middle class," she said. "A lot of working-class people are not comfortable now. I know there were tax breaks that were supposed to be helpful to people, but it turns out they're helpful to billionaires and corporations and I'm neither."

Nearly half of Americans, 47%, approve of Trump's handling of the economy, but his overall approval rating — 38% — is low compared with what past presidents have enjoyed in strong economic conditions. Only about 4 in 10 Americans approve of his handling of taxes and trade negotiations.

The public skepticism has persisted even as the president routinely congratulates himself on the economy, including the 3.6% unemployment rate and stock market gains.

He tweeted last week: "The Stock Market went up massively from the day after I won the Election, all the way up to the day that I took office, because of the enthusiasm for the fact that I was going to be President. That big Stock Market increase must be credited to me."

The 2017 tax overhaul was sold by the administration as a way to return more income to everyday Americans. But the poll shows nearly half say they think their taxes stayed the same or are unsure; 33% said they increased. This suggests the tax cuts may have been too modest to notice or were eaten up by daily expenses, or that people were disappointed with their refunds.

That feeling of being left behind has energized Democrats seeking to turn out the vote next year. The tax overhaul disproportionately favored corporations and the wealthy, allowing Democrats to say the tax cuts were fundamentally unfair.

Democrats are more likely than Republicans to say the amount they paid in taxes increased in the last year, 42% versus 25%, while more Republicans say their taxes decreased, 25% versus 10%.

Nor are tariffs popular.

Trump has imposed a tax on roughly \$250 billion worth of Chinese imports, part of an effort to force the world's second-largest economy to trade on more favorable terms with the United States. China retaliated with their own tariffs that hit the U.S. agricultural sector, causing the Trump administration to provide aid to farmers with lost profits.

The president has also threatened tariffs on Mexico in order to get that country to reduce the border-crossings into the United States and has mused about hitting European autos with import taxes as well.

A mere 15% of Americans said the tariffs will help them and their family.

With regards to the national economy, just 26% said the tariffs will help, a sharp decline from 40% who said that last August. About half said the tariffs will be harmful.

Republicans, in particular, are less optimistic: Half think Trump's tariffs will help the economy, down from 7 in 10 in August.

Ryan Brueggemann, 37, of New Berlin, Wisconsin, runs a dairy farm with his brother. He supports Trump but dislikes the tariffs, though he understands why the president has deployed them so frequently.

"I don't believe it's a great business practice to use them," Brueggemann said. "But it came down to the point where our country is being taken advantage of unfairly and that the only way other nations were going to listen to what we wanted to renegotiate and even get them to the table to think about it was to get their attention by putting some tariffs on products."

Paul Miller, 81, a retired shoe factory foreman from Carlisle, Pennsylvania, said he still intends to vote

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 47 of 52

for Trump, since he hasn't seen anyone better yet in the Democratic field.

Living off his pension and Social Security, Miller said the tax cuts were basically irrelevant for him. And he doesn't agree with the president's claim that China is paying for the tariffs, rather than U.S. consumers and companies.

"I sort of have mixed feelings about the tariffs," he said. "Of course, I don't believe it when Trump says we won't have to pay them. We will."

Associated Press reporters Carrie Antfingher in New Berlin, Wisconsin, and John L. Mone in Houston contributed.

The AP-NORC poll of 1,116 adults was conducted June 13-17 using a sample drawn from NORC's probability-based AmeriSpeak Panel, which is designed to be representative of the U.S. population. The margin of sampling error for all respondents is plus or minus 4 percentage points. Respondents were first selected randomly using address-based sampling methods and were interviewed later online or by phone.

Online:

AP-NORC Center: <http://www.apnorc.org/>

Analysis: EU leaders leader fail again to share out top jobs

By MIKE CORDER and RAF CASERT Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — European Union leaders let their people down Monday. And now they're hoping some sleep will help them save face and wrap up a never-ending summit that has turned into a massive embarrassment.

After a choppy few years, they had a precious opportunity to show unity as they huddled to make appointments for prestigious EU jobs, people who will run the world's biggest trading bloc over the next five years.

Instead, leaders bickered, pointed fingers, organized unsuccessful backroom meetings to stake out narrow nationalist agendas and sought first and foremost to protect their own party political interests.

"Our credibility is fundamentally stained by all these too-long meetings," French President Emmanuel Macron said after an all-night summit fell apart without agreement on the top posts.

"We are a club of 28 that meets without ever deciding anything. Our compatriots see it," he said, arguing for fundamental change to how the EU works.

German Chancellor Angela Merkel had little positive to say about what happened. "Today people find this pretty bad. I can believe that and we'll have to live with it."

To make matters worse, the leaders had already failed to agree on the top jobs at a two-day summit less than two weeks ago.

They will try yet again Tuesday.

Instead of highlighting a united "Team Europe," to use Macron's phrasing, EU leaders indulged in the kind of backroom horse trading for Brussels jobs that has long raised the ire of anti-EU populists who claim the bloc is opaque and out of touch with the continent's 500 million people, who need answers to much more urgent questions.

EU voters turned out in numbers not seen in two decades for European Parliament elections in May, showing a renewed interest in the bloc's future after years marked by battles over Brexit and the continent's migrant crisis.

"No other major democracy in the world has such a bizarre and arcane method for choosing its political leadership," Dutch EU lawmaker Sophie in 't Veld tweeted Monday. "Over 200 million people have voted (for European Parliament), but 28 individuals withdraw behind closed doors and play musical chairs."

The challenge at Sunday's summit seemed straightforward enough. EU Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker and Council chief Donald Tusk are both closing in on the end of their mandates this autumn, as is

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 48 of 52

foreign policy chief Federica Mogherini. European Parliament President Antonio Tajani is due to be replaced on Wednesday in a vote by lawmakers that would not require the leaders' consent.

All are high-profile jobs involving meeting and negotiating with world leaders like U.S. President Donald Trump and China's Xi Jinping. Or fighting for trade deals with economic heavyweights like Japan, or defending strategic agreements with Iran.

After the failed June 20-21 summit, drawn-out talks to carve up the jobs resumed among a small group of leaders at the Group of 20 meeting of leaders in Osaka last week, before continuing Sunday at a summit of all 28 EU leaders in Brussels. The leaders haggled into the night and continued as a pastel pink sunrise faded into Monday morning. By the time the leaders threw in the towel, the midday sun was beating down on EU headquarters.

Pledges of increased electoral accountability on how the EU leadership is picked soon faded. While May's EU elections attracted more voters to the ballot boxes across the continent, they also delivered a more splintered parliament, in which the two biggest groups cannot command a majority for the first time.

That means that divisions between political groupings have only deepened, making it harder than ever to balance political, geographic and gender considerations when assigning top jobs.

Dutch socialist Frans Timmermans hoped to replace Juncker as president of the EU's Commission, even though the S&D socialists group in parliament is smaller than the EPP Christian Democrats. The appointments have to be signed off by European lawmakers and that may not be so easy in the new Parliament.

Timmermans wasn't invited to the summit, but squeezed in a meeting with one of the leaders anyway. A vocal proponent of transparency at the EU, he was livestreamed talking Sunday night with Bulgarian Prime Minister Boyko Borissov at a Bulgarian diplomatic residence discussing his candidature and the Bulgarian's wish list.

But after a few minutes of talking to Borissov, Timmermans pointed to the camera and said: "I'm not sure we should be recording all of this." Immediately afterward, the video clip ended.

As the all-nighter dragged on, exhaustion set in and Tusk told the leaders to go home and try again on Tuesday.

"It's complicated and I don't know if we'll get it done tomorrow," said Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte.

"I'm sure there will be phone calls, but I'm going to let the others have a nap, too," he said.

Lorne Cook, Geir Moulson from Frankfurt, Angela Charlton from Paris and Veselin Toshkov from Sofia contributed.

Don't recall Apollo 11? Global festivities have you covered

By JEREMY REHM Associated Press

You can run a race, hit a museum, shoot off a rocket or count down to the moment 50 years ago that Neil Armstrong first stepped foot on the moon.

There's no shortage of events and exhibits celebrating the historic moon landing. Museums, galleries, concert halls, movie theaters and towns with an Apollo 11 connection will be marking the anniversary over the next few weeks, particularly for the July 16 launch, July 20 moon landing and July 24 splashdown.

In downtown Wapakoneta, Ohio — Armstrong's birthplace — the festivities include the Moon Festival Pageant, a Run to the Moon race and a "Wink at the Moon" concert, a nod to his family's request after Armstrong died in 2012.

In Huntsville, Alabama, where the Saturn V rocket was developed, there'll be dancing in the streets. Residents will moonwalk down the roads of "Rocket City," reliving the day they danced in the streets in 1969.

The U.S. Space and Rocket Center is also going for a world record. On July 16 at 8:32 a.m. local time, exactly 50 years after Apollo 11 astronauts blasted off for the moon, the museum will attempt to set a Guinness World Record by launching 5,000 model rockets simultaneously.

"It's going to be epic," said Pat Ammons, spokeswoman for the museum and its popular space camp. The cardboard rockets will be set up in circles representing the five F-1 engines that propelled Saturn V

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 49 of 52

into space.

The museum has also invited space fans around the world to launch their own rockets that day. So far, people from 29 countries have joined, including Argentina, Vietnam and China, Ammons said.

NASA will mark the occasion on the eve of the landing anniversary with a live, 1 ½-hour broadcast on NASA TV from several sites, including Kennedy Space Center in Florida, the launch site for Apollo 11 crew of Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin and Michael Collins.

The Astronaut Scholarship Foundation is throwing an astronaut golf tournament, astronaut parade and astronaut pub crawl in Florida. And there's nowhere better to learn about the moon landing than the Wings Over the Rockies Air and Space Museum's weeklong "Apolopalooza" in Denver.

Peanuts character Snoopy will make appearances in his astronaut regalia at Comic Con in San Diego and at Space City in Toulouse, France for the countdown to man's first steps.

Can't join Snoopy? NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston and the Armstrong Museum in Wapakoneta will do public countdowns as well. And as part of their weeklong celebrations on the National Mall, the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum will host "The Eagle Has Landed," a free late-night celebration with scavenger hunts, stargazing and a countdown.

Some of the world's famous art galleries are also joining in the fun. Iconic and some rare drawings, paintings, films, astronomical instruments, photographs and even cameras that were flown in space will go on display.

New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art will open five galleries bedecked with images of the moon dating from the dawn of photography in the 1830s. And the National Gallery of Art in Washington is putting together an exhibit celebrating a century of lunar photographs including the earliest lunar images by Warren de la Rue and Lewis M. Rutherford.

"It's just extraordinary how magical these photographs are," said art historian and exhibit curator Diane Waggoner.

For a history crash course, theaters and museums are bringing the Apollo 11 mission back to life.

The new IMAX film "Apollo 11: First Steps" combines never-before-seen footage and audio recordings. Starting on July 8, PBS will air its "Chasing the Moon" documentary series. And the Hollywood film "First Man" is available to stream.

The National Air and Space Museum will have Armstrong's refurbished spacesuit out for the first time since 2003. It also put statues of his spacesuit in baseball stadiums around the country. A Smithsonian exhibit featuring the Apollo 11 command module that flew astronauts to the moon is now on display at Seattle's Museum of Flight and travels to Cincinnati this fall.

Beginning Monday, the public can visit NASA's Apollo-era Mission Control in Houston that was recently restored to the way it looked 50 years ago.

"I think it conveys a great history of what humans have been able to accomplish," said Tracy Lamm of Space Center Houston.

Follow Jeremy Rehm on Twitter: @jrehm_sci

Follow AP's full coverage of the Apollo 11 anniversary at: <https://apnews.com/Apollo11moonlanding>

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Why wealth gap has grown despite record-long economic growth

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — As it enters its 11th year, America's economic expansion is now the longest on record — a streak that has shrunk unemployment, swelled household wealth, revived the housing market and helped fuel an explosive rise in the stock market.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 50 of 52

Yet even after a full decade of uninterrupted economic growth, the richest Americans now hold a greater share of the nation's wealth than they did before the Great Recession began in 2007. And income growth has been sluggish by historical standards, leaving many Americans feeling stuck in place.

Those trends help explain something unique about this expansion: It's easily the least-celebrated economic recovery in decades.

As public discontent has grown, the issue has become one for political candidates to harness — beginning with Donald Trump in 2016. Now, some of the Democrats running to challenge Trump for the presidency have built their campaigns around proposals to tax wealth, raise minimum wages or ease the financial strain of medical care and higher education.

America's financial disparities have widened in large part because the means by which people build wealth have become more exclusive since the Great Recession.

Fewer middle-class Americans own homes. Fewer are invested in the stock market. And home prices have risen far more in wealthier metro areas on the coasts than in more modestly priced cities and rural areas. The result is that affluent homeowners now sit on vast sums of home equity and capital gains, while tens of millions of ordinary households have been left mainly on the sidelines.

"The recovery has been very disappointing from the standpoint of inequality," said Gabriel Zucman, an economist at the University of California, Berkeley, and a leading expert on income and wealth distribution.

Household wealth — the value of homes, stock portfolios and bank accounts, minus mortgage and credit card debt and other loans — jumped 80% in the past decade. More than one-third of that gain — \$16.2 trillion in riches— went to the wealthiest 1%, figures from the Federal Reserve show. Just 25% of it went to middle-to-upper-middle class households. The bottom half of the population gained less than 2%.

Nearly 8 million Americans lost homes in the recession and its aftermath, and the sharp price gains since then have put ownership out of reach for many would-be buyers. For America's middle class, the homeownership rate fell to about 60% in 2016 from roughly 70% in 2004, before the housing bubble, according to separate Fed data.

The other major engine of household wealth — the stock market — hasn't much benefited most people, either. The longest bull market in U.S. history, which surpassed its own 10-year mark in March, has shot equity prices up more than four-fold. Yet the proportion of middle-income households that own shares has actually declined.

The Fed calculates that about half of middle-income Americans owned shares in 2016, the most recent year for which data is available, down from 56% in 2007. That includes people who hold stocks in retirement accounts.

The decline in stock market participation occurred mainly because more middle-income workers took contract work or other jobs that offered no retirement savings plans, the Fed concluded.

Hannah Moore, now 37, has struggled to save since graduating from college in December 2007, the same month the Great Recession officially began. She has worked nearly continuously since then despite a couple of layoffs.

"I had many jobs, all at the same time," she said. "It's just not been the easiest of decades if you're trying to jump-start a career."

She works for a design firm in Los Angeles that contracts with luxury apartment developers that build rental housing marketed to high-tech employees. She loves the work. But she struggles with Los Angeles' high costs.

Moore says she could afford a monthly mortgage payment. But she lacks the savings for a down payment. About half her income, she calculates, is eaten up by rent, health insurance and student loan payments of \$850 a month.

As financial inequalities have widened over the past decade, racial disparities in wealth have worsened, too. The typical wealth for a white household is \$171,000 — nearly 10 times that for African-Americans. That's up from seven times before the housing bubble, and it primarily reflects sharp losses in housing wealth for blacks. The African-American homeownership rate fell to a record low in the first three months

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 51 of 52

of this year.

Most economists argue that higher income growth is needed to make it easier for more Americans to save and build wealth.

Zucman favors a higher minimum wage, cheaper access to college education and more family-friendly policies to enable more parents to work. He and his colleague Emmanuel Saez, also an economist at the University of California, Berkeley, helped formulate Sen. Elizabeth Warren's proposed wealth tax on fortunes above \$50 million to help pay for those proposals.

Income growth has lagged partly because for most of the expansion, employers have had a surfeit of workers to choose among when filling jobs, leaving them little pressure to raise pay.

Not until 2016 did the unemployment rate fall below 5%. Average hourly pay finally began to pick up, with the lowest-income workers receiving the fastest average gains.

"Overall, there's growing inequality," Elise Gould, an economist at the liberal Economic Policy Institute said, "with signs of hope at the bottom. It's just taken a very long time."

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, July 2, the 183rd day of 2019. There are 182 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 2, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed into law a sweeping civil rights bill passed by Congress.

On this date:

In 1776, the Continental Congress passed a resolution saying that "these United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent States."

In 1881, President James A. Garfield was shot by Charles J. Guiteau at the Washington railroad station; Garfield died the following September. (Guiteau was hanged in June 1882.)

In 1892, the Populist Party (also known as the People's Party) opened its first national convention in Omaha, Nebraska.

In 1917, rioting erupted in East St. Louis, Illinois, as white mobs attacked black residents; nearly 50 people, mostly blacks, are believed to have died in the violence.

In 1937, aviator Amelia Earhart and navigator Fred Noonan disappeared over the Pacific Ocean while attempting to make the first round-the-world flight along the equator.

In 1961, author Ernest Hemingway shot himself to death at his home in Ketchum, Idaho.

In 1976, the U.S. Supreme Court, in *Gregg v. Georgia*, ruled 7-2 the death penalty was not inherently cruel or unusual.

In 1977, Russian-American author Vladimir Nabokov, 78, died in Montreux, Switzerland.

In 1982, Larry Walters of San Pedro, California, used a lawn chair equipped with 45 helium-filled weather balloons to rise to an altitude of 16,000 feet; he landed eight miles away in Long Beach.

In 1987, 18 Mexican immigrants were found dead inside a locked boxcar near Sierra Blanca, Texas, in what authorities called a botched smuggling attempt; a 19th man survived.

In 1996, electricity and phone service was knocked out for millions of customers from Canada to the Southwest on a record-hot day. Seven years after they shotgunned their parents to death in the family's Beverly Hills mansion, Lyle and Erik Menendez were sentenced to life in prison without parole.

In 1997, Academy Award-winning actor James Stewart died in Beverly Hills, California, at age 89.

Ten years ago: Thousands of U.S. Marines poured into Taliban-controlled villages in southern Afghanistan in the first major operation under President Barack Obama's strategy to stabilize the country. North Korea test-fired two short-range missiles. The 35-nation International Atomic Energy Agency chose Yukiya Amano of Japan as its next head. Federal marshals took possession of disgraced financier Bernard Madoff's \$7 million Manhattan penthouse, forcing Madoff's wife, Ruth, to move elsewhere.

Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, July 02, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 002 ~ 52 of 52

Five years ago: Palestinians accused Israeli extremists of abducting and killing an Arab teenager and burning his body, sparking hours of clashes in east Jerusalem and drawing charges that the youth was murdered to avenge the killings of three kidnapped Israeli teens. Louis Zamperini, 97, an Olympic runner who survived a bomber crash in the Pacific Ocean, weeks adrift and then years as a Japanese prisoner of war and became the subject of a celebrated book and movie, died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: Rescue divers in Thailand found 12 boys and their soccer coach, who had been trapped by flooding as they explored a cave more than a week earlier. President Donald Trump interviewed four prospective Supreme Court justices in his search for a replacement for retiring Justice Anthony Kennedy. Harvey Weinstein was charged with a sex crime against a third woman as New York prosecutors continued building cases against the former Hollywood studio boss. Jackson family patriarch Joseph Jackson was buried in the same Southern California cemetery as his late son Michael. Fresh off a landslide victory, Mexico's newly elected leftist president Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador pledged to "reach an understanding" with Donald Trump.

Today's Birthdays: Former Philippine first lady Imelda Marcos is 90. Jazz musician Ahmad Jamal is 89. Actor Robert Ito is 88. Actress Polly Holliday is 82. Racing Hall of Famer Richard Petty is 82. Former White House chief of staff John H. Sununu is 80. Former Mexican President Vicente Fox is 77. Writer-director-comedian Larry David is 72. Luci Baines Johnson, daughter of President Lyndon B. Johnson, is 72. Actor Saul Rubinek is 71. Rock musician Roy Bittan (Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band) is 70. Rock musician Gene Taylor is 67. Actress Wendy Schaal is 65. Actress-model Jerry Hall is 63. Actor Jimmy McNichol is 58. Country singer Guy Penrod is 56. Rock musician Dave Parsons (Bush) is 54. Actress Yancy Butler is 49. Contemporary Christian musician Melodee DeVevo (Casting Crowns) is 43. Actor Owain (OH'-wyn) Yeoman is 41. Race car driver Sam Hornish Jr. is 40. NHL center Joe Thornton is 40. Singer Michelle Branch is 36. Actress Vanessa Lee Chester is 35. Figure skater Johnny Weir is 35. Actor Nelson Franklin is 34. Actress-singer Ashley Tisdale is 34. Actress Lindsay Lohan is 33. Actress Margot Robbie is 29.

Thought for Today: "The best way to find out if you can trust somebody is to trust them." — Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961).