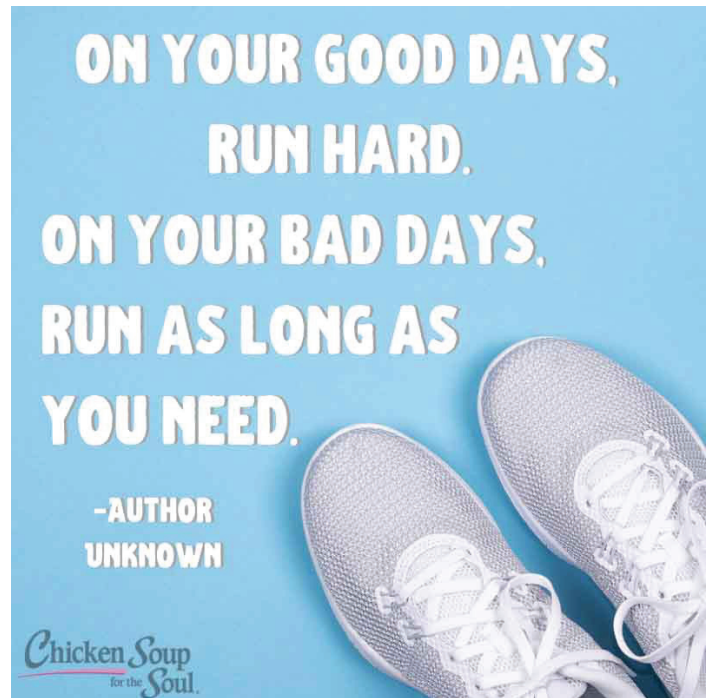


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- [2- Olive Grove Golf Course Firecracker Tournament](#)
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- [6- Weather Pages](#)
- [9- Daily Devotional](#)
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- [11- News from the Associated Press](#)



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

Sunday, July 7

2:00 p.m.: Legion at Redfield, (DH)

2:00 p.m.: U12 Midgets vs. Backous & Pierre at Manor Park

Monday, July 8

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

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

6:00 p.m.: Junior Legion at Northville, (DH)

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

Softball at Mellette (U8 at 5 p.m. (1 game), U10 at 6 p.m. (1 game), U14 at 7 p.m. (2 games)

Tuesday, July 9

5:30 p.m.: Legion hosts Aberdeen, (DH)

5:30 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees vs. Borge at Manor Park (R)

6:30 p.m.: U12 Midgets vs. Borge at Manor Park
Softball U14 hosts Frankfort, (DH), 6 p.m.

Wednesday, July 10

5:30 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees host Warner, (DH) (R)

6:00 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees host Jacobson, (DH) (B)

6:00 p.m.: T-Ball at Columbia (Gold)

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Olive Grove Golf Course Firecracker Tournament

Championship Flight

- 69- Brad and Dar Larson
- 72- Tom and Pat Price
- 73- Jarod Fliehs and Ashley Fliehs
- 73- Joe and Ruth Gorneau
- 74- Mark and Kari Herman
- 74- Steve Millard and Lisa Shriver
- 75- Austin Schuelke and Elise Ferrell
- 75- Tim and Barb Gillick
- 75- Mark Paptsein and Susie Sonsa



**Championship Flight Winner
Dar and Brad Larson**

First Flight

- 79- Brad and Brenda Waage
- 82- Rich and Tami Zimney
- 84- Kyle Spenser and Dee Kolb
- 84- Lorin and Julie Fliehs
- 85- Dave and Marcy Blackmun
- 85- Randy and Sue Stanley
- 85- Travis and JJ Johnson
- 86- Lance and Cindy Frohling
- 86- Tony and Brenda Madsen
- 88- Steve and Betty Dunker



**First Flight Winner
Brad and Brenda Waage**

Second Flight

- 82- Skip Kettering and Susie Easthouse
- 83- Jonathan and Mandilyn Fliehs
- 88- Les and Julie Hinds
- 91- Bob and Mavis Rossow
- 92- Tim and Jan Kearns
- 94- Rod and Arlys Kluess
- 97- Bob and Judy Sundling
- 100- Larry Frohling and Shirlee Briggs
- 102- Cody Kliever and Lexi Ferrell
- 118- Weston Dinger and Emily Fischer

Women's Closest to Pin #4: Barb Gillick
Any Longest Putt Hole #9: Tim Gillick
Men's Closest to Pin #8: Mark Pappstein
Putting Contest: Joe Gorneau



**Second Flight Winner
Susie Easthouse and Skip Kettering**

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GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting

July 8, 2019 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of minutes of June 10, 2019 and June 24, 2019 school board meetings as drafted or amended.

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation...in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.

2. Approval of June 2019 Financial Report, Agency Accounts, and Investments.

3. Approval of June 2019 School Lunch Report.

4. Approval of June 2019 School Transportation Report.

5. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

ADJOURN

ANNUAL REORGANIZATION BUSINESS:

1. Call to Order with members present.

2. Installation of incumbent board member, Deb Gengerke and new board members, Travis Harder and Tigh Flihs followed by election of president and vice president as well as appointments to the various "ad hoc" committees.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approve July 2019 District bills for payment.

2. Designate legal counsel/school attorney...Rodney Freeman of Churchill, Manolis, and Freeman of Huron.

3. Designate Groton Independent as official legal newspaper for FY20.

4. Designate Business Manager as custodian of all district accounts.

5. Approve engagement letter for Eide Bailly to conduct FY2019 school district audit.

6. Authorize Business Manager to continue existing funds and establish new accounts and to invest and reinvest funds in local institutions which serve the greatest advantage to the District.

7. Authorize Business Manager to publish staff salaries.

8. Designate official bank depository...First State Bank.

9. Adopt Groton Area School District Policy Manual with such revisions as previously approved.

10. Adopt Special Education Comprehensive Plan.

11. Authorize office personnel to administer Agency Funds & NSLP (school lunch) funds, with oversight by business office management.

12. Authorize superintendent to administer or direct federal programs, with Consolidated Application (Title programs) and related ESSA compliance issues assigned to building principals.

13. Appoint superintendent to act as Asbestos Compliance Officer.

14. Authorize superintendent or designee to close school in emergency situations or inclement weather.

15. Authorize superintendent or designee to institute NSLP & School Breakfast Agreement.

16. Adopt Food Safety Plan, HACCP-Based Standard Operating Procedures.

17. Authorize superintendent or designee to institute ASBSD school bus mutual assistance pact.

18. Authorize business manager to transfer petty cash and incident payment funds (SDCL 13-18-16/17).

19. Approve price quotes for 2019-2020 bakery products (Bimbo Bakery).

20. Approve price quotes for 2019-2020 dairy products (Dean Foods).

21. Approve peripheral sports and other volunteer school workers such as chain gang, line judges, Booster Club/PAC workers, assistant coaches, volunteer coaches, volunteer drivers, school board members etc. to be included in the school's worker's compensation insurance coverage.

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NEW BUSINESS:

1. 8:00 PM – DISTRICT BUDGET HEARING – Revenue & Expenditures – Line Items
 2. Set date and time for regular school board meetings.
 3. Appoint board member to serve as voting member of the North Central Special Education Cooperative Governing Board for 2019-2020 school year.
 4. Set salaries for board members...presently at \$50/meeting; \$75/meeting for chairman; mileage as applicable
 5. Set rate for substitute teachers for 19-20 school year...recommend \$100/day [Currently \$100/day].
 6. Set rate for substitute bus drivers for 19-20 school year...recommend \$65/day [Currently \$65/day].
 7. Establish activity admission & school lunch prices for 2017-2018. Recommendations
Admission: Adult - \$5; Doubleheader - \$6 No Change
Adult 10-punch ticket - \$45 No Change
Adult All-Activities Pass - \$75 No Change
1st-12th grade - \$4 No Change
1st-5th grade activity ticket - \$25 No Change
6th-12th grade activity ticket - \$30 No Change
Breakfast JrK-5 - \$2.50; 6-12 - \$3.00; Adult - \$3.25 No Change Lunch JrK-5 - \$3.25; 6-12 - \$3.75; Adult \$4.50 No Change
 8. Set rate for OST services for 19-20 school year [Recommend Increase of \$0.25/hour].
 9. Approve hiring Trent Traphagen as Assistant Girls Basketball Coach for 2019-2020.
 10. Approve resignation/retirement from Kathy Harry, Administrative Assistant.
- ADJOURN



Position available for full-time Police Officer

"Position available for full-time Police Officer. Experience and SD Certification preferred. Salary negotiable DOE. Please send application and resume to the City of Groton, PO Box 587 Groton, SD 57445. This position is open until filled. Applications may be found at <https://city.grotonsd.gov/forms/ApplicationForCityEmployee.pdf> For more information, please call 605-397-8422 Equal opportunity employer."

(0704.0710)



2 bedroom apt
\$750/month plus utilities
attached garage
major appliances furnished

480-980-8513
or
605-397-7118

Gasolinegate: Three Decades of Flawed Emission Reports Has Endangered Public

WASHINGTON, D.C. - The 263 million gasoline vehicles on American roadways are emitting significantly more harmful emissions than being reported, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) is ignoring the dangers of toxic compounds in gasoline, according to a new report released this week.

Simply titled Gasolinegate, the report and public service announcement video (which can be viewed at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uJlkHcFnR2U&feature=youtu.be>) was produced by Farmers Union Enterprises (FUE) and according to FUE Chairman Doug Sombke, it chronicles three decades of EPA collusion with the industry they are responsible for regulating, which FUE believes resulted in harming the public they are sworn to protect. Emails obtained through the Freedom of Information Act provide a history of what they call inaccurate testing of fuels and calculations of emissions. The result, FUE says, is much greater risk to the public than reported.

Despite dozens of reputable and peer reviewed studies confirming that ultra-fine toxic particulates are one of the most serious public health threats in urban areas, and have been linked to pre-term births, IQ loss, and asthma, not enough has been done, according to Sombke. Dieselgate was about the public health impact of 500,000 cars emitting more emissions than the public was told, and the cover up by Volkswagen by using on board computers as a "defeat device." Gasolinegate is about 263 million cars and light duty trucks emitting more than reported, particularly more toxic/carcinogenic emissions – for decades. 90% of urban Particulate (PM) emissions come from mobile sources, not power plants, and more than 80% of mobile source PM emissions come from gasoline powered vehicles, not diesel.

Farmers Union Enterprises took on this project to dispel the myths and misinformation that has kept clean burning ethanol out of the market, according to Sombke. "In their relentless effort to block competition, the monopoly of big oil extends to a revolving door policy of the petroleum industry infiltrating EPA, Congress, and other Federal agencies. Our research chronicles a consistent pattern of EPA always siding with the petroleum industry in its rulings and interpretations, failing to recognize Congressional intent and failing to act in the public interest," said Sombke.

"All we are asking is to make gasoline safe for the public and to open the door to alternative fuels that meet a wide range of public policy goals. EPA has the authority and responsibility to protect public health and has to break the stranglehold of big oil to do its job".

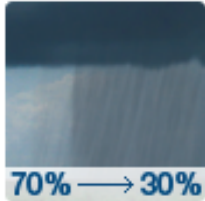


**FUE President
Doug Sombke**

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Today



Showers
Likely then
Chance
Showers

High: 77 °F

Tonight



Chance
Showers

Low: 61 °F

Saturday



Slight Chance
T-storms

High: 77 °F

Saturday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 58 °F

Sunday



Mostly Sunny
then Slight
Chance
T-storms

High: 81 °F

Today

Partly to
Mostly
Cloudy
Highs:
70 - 80

Showers and a
few storms this
morning.
**Stronger Storms
possible late this
evening along the
Missouri River**

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
weather.gov/abr

Graphic Created
7/5/2019 5:28 AM

Published on: 07/05/2019 at 1:29AM

Showers, and a few thunderstorms will track across the area during the morning hours. Dry conditions are expected this afternoon before additional storms move into the Missouri River valley late this evening into tonight.

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Today in Weather History

July 5, 1936: Three record high temperatures were set on this day. Near Gann Valley, the temperature reached 120 degrees, setting the state record. The state record was tied on July 15, 2006, at 17 miles WSW of Fort Pierre. Other record highs on this date include 119 degrees in Kennebec and 116 degrees in Murdo. The record highs near Gann Valley, Kennebec, and Murdo are all-time highs for each location.

July 5, 1996: A powerful thunderstorm packing over 100 mph winds and grapefruit-sized hail tracked from Belle Fourche Reservoir to Wall. The storm caused an estimated \$4.5 million in crop damage, killed numerous livestock, and stripped vegetation bare.

1891 - Sixteen horses were killed by hail, and many more have to be put to death due to injuries from a hailstorm at Rapid City, SD. (The Weather Channel)

1900 - A spectacular three day fire began when a bolt of lightning struck a refinery in Bayonne NJ. (David Ludlum)

1916 - A hurricane produced 82 mph winds, an 11.6 foot tide, and a barometric pressure of 28.92 inches at Mobile, AL. (David Ludlum)

1925: A large hailstone weighing a half pound fell at Plumstead, just outside of London, England. This hailstone was the heaviest hailstone ever recorded in the United Kingdom.

1937 - The temperature at Medicine Lake, MT, soared to 117 degrees to establish a state record. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1937 - Midale and Yellow Grass in Saskatchewan hit 113 degrees to establish an all-time record high for Canada that same day. (The Weather Channel)

1970 - The morning low at Death Valley CA was 103 degrees, and the high that afternoon was 120 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1980: The "More Trees Down" started in western Iowa and tracked eastward affecting several states along its path before dissipating in eastern Virginia.

1987 - Severe thunderstorms raked south central Kansas for the second morning in a row. Thunderstorm winds again gusted to 80 mph at Clearwater, and in the Wichita area reached 100 mph. Twenty-five persons were injured at a trailer park at El Dorado Lake. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms spawned eleven tornadoes in Montana and three in North Dakota. Baseball size hail was reported at Shonkin, MT, and wind gusts to 85 mph were reported south of Fordville, ND. Twenty cities in the north central U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Fargo ND with a reading of 106 degrees. Muskegon, MI, equalled their July record with a high of 95 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Moisture from what once was Tropical Storm Allison triggered thunderstorms over the Middle Atlantic Coast Region, which deluged Wilmington, DE, with a record 6.83 inches of rain in 24 hours, including 6.37 inches in just six hours. Up to ten inches of rain was reported at Claymont, northeast of Wilmington. July 1989 was thus the wettest month in seventy years for Wilmington, with a total of 12.63 inches of rain. Alamosa CO reported an all-time record high of 94 degrees, and Pierre, SD, hit 113 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 79 °F at 7:00 PM

Low Temp: 66 °F at 3:10 AM

Wind: 32 mph at 12:30 AM

Day Rain: 0.09 this morning

Record High: 108° in 1936

Record Low: 35° in 1915

Average High: 83°F

Average Low: 58°F

Average Precip in July.: 0.422

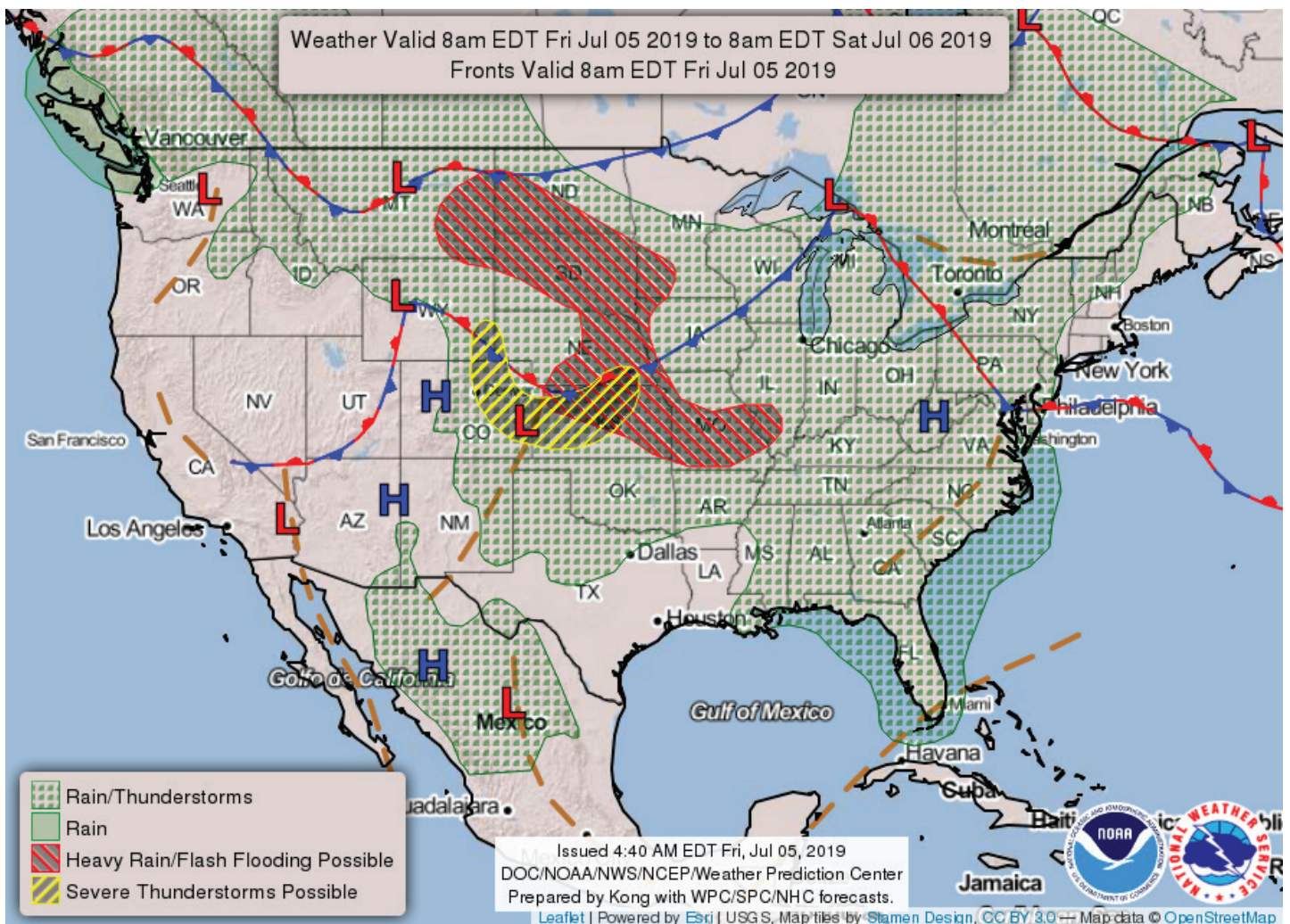
Precip to date in July.: 0.82

Average Precip to date: 11.26

Precip Year to Date: 13.54

Sunset Tonight: 9:25 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:52 a.m.





LIMITATIONS

There is a dramatic difference between the gifts parents can give their children and what God can give His children. Often we parents think we are doing great things for our children when we endow them with the things of this world. But those things, fortunately, and unfortunately, have their limitations.

Financial and material gifts that are passed on to children have limitations. But Gods spiritual gifts have no limitations. So, from his God-given wisdom, Solomon brought this important fact to our attention: Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord. We, as parents, cannot give our children what only God can give them: a prudent wife! What we give our children by way of inheritance is often controlled by legal and social contracts. But a prudent wife - which most parents would agree - is far more important for a sons wellbeing and can only come from God.

If we, as parents, want our sons to have a prudent wife is there something we can do? Is there a method or plan that we are to follow? Did we take them to church to find one who is faithful to the Lord in all things? Perhaps this a good places to start. However, prayer and devotions at homes are also essential. We may bless our sons materially but it is beyond our power to bless them spiritually and be assured that their wives will be prudent. This comes from following Gods wisdom and will bring honor to Him. To find a prudent wife is a result of prayer, seeking Gods guidance, by being patient, waiting on the Lord, and seeking His will.

But there is also another parental responsibility that we may easily overlook. A wife who is prudent does not just happen. She is the result of a godly mentor/mother who sets the example of a prudent wife by word and deed. Mothers shape the attitudes of prudent wives.

Prayer: Lord, all who are parents are involved in and responsible to share in and shape the lives of our children. May we seek Your guidance and follow Your wisdom! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 19:14 Houses and wealth are inherited from parents, but a prudent wife is from the Lord.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/27/2019 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 03/17/2019 Legion Post #39 Spring Fundraiser (Sunday closest to St. Patrick's Day, every other year)
- 04/13/2019 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/27/2019 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/04/2019 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/27/2019 Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Program (Memorial Day)
- 06/13/2019 Transit Fundraiser (Thursday Mid-June)
- 06/14/2019 SDSU Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 06/15/2019 Triathlon (Saturday before Father's Day)
- 06/21/2019 Best Ball Golf Tourney
- 06/22-23/2019 Groton Junior Legion Tournament
- 06/29/2019 Groton U10/U12 Round Robin Tournament
- 07/04/2019 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
- 07/14/2019 Summer Fest/Car Show (Sunday Mid-July)
- 07/18/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Tournament
- 07/21/2019 Granary Ice Cream Social & Family Music Fest
- 08/02/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Wine on Nine
- 08/09-11/2019 State Junior Legion Tournament in Groton
- 08/22/2019 First Day of School
- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/08/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/31/2019 Trunk or Treat/Halloween on Main (Halloween)
- 11/09/2019 Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- Bingo: every Wednesday at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 4/4/2020 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 4/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 5/2/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)

South Dakota men kill record channel catfish

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Two South Dakota men have bagged what the Bow Fishing Association of America is calling a new world-record channel catfish.

The Rapid City Journal reports 19-year-old Cody Sechser and 18-year-old Isaac Kipp of Montrose were bow-fishing on Skunk Creek 10 miles north of Hartford on June 9 when they shot a channel catfish that measured 24 pounds, 12 ounces and was 38½ inches long with a 20½-inch girth.

Sechser, Kipp and their friend Riley Scotting had been at the spot about an hour when Scotting, who didn't have a bow, saw the fish near some rocks in about a foot of water.

At first they wondered if the fish was a rock before realizing no rock has whiskers or fins like that fish. Sechser said he shot the fish in the spine and Kipp shot it behind the head, killing it instantly.

"For a solid two hours I thought I was dreaming," Sechser said. "It didn't even seem like it was real. To be honest, I didn't even sleep that first night."

They weighed the fish at Lake Time Steak House and Bait Shop on Lake Vermillion that night and in Montrose the next day. They suspected the fish might be a world record, so they sent video of the weigh-in to the bow fishing association.

The organization confirmed the fish was a new world record on June 18. The old record was 23 pounds, set less than two weeks before Sechser and Kipp killed their fish.

Sechser will be a sophomore wildlife and fisheries student at South Dakota State University this fall. Kipp will be a freshman wildlife and fisheries student.

And what became of their big catch? Sechser fileted the beast and fried it up.

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

Wet years fuel sweet clover growth in South Dakota

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Two wet growing seasons have fueled runaway yellow sweet clover growth in South Dakota, posing problems for native grasses, cattle and cutting equipment.

KOTA-TV reports the plant with its tell-tale yellow blossoms is biennial, which means it has a two-year life cycle. That means it takes a couple of consecutive wet years to produce the wave of growth the state is experiencing.

Krista Ehlert is a range specialist with the South Dakota State University Extension Office. She told the television station that the plant spends the first year growing its root system. It then turns all its energy to above-ground growth in year two.

"We get that nice yellow color which is pretty to some people and to other people it's a bit worrisome," she said.

The plant grows so dense and so tall — sweet clover can reach anywhere between five and eight feet — that it can shade out other grasses, she said. It also grows so stringy and tough that cattle can't eat it and haying equipment can't cut through it.

Honey bees like to congregate on the plants, though, producing a mild-flavor honey from the plant's nectar. Logan Cleaver works for the Stoddard Honey company in Utah and brings hives up to South Dakota every year so the bees can feast on sweet clover.

"South Dakota's awesome and this year should be one of the better years," Cleaver said.

Ehlert said it's too early to predict whether the state will see another bumper crop of sweet clover in 2020 but the plant has impressive staying power.

"It can create hundreds of thousands of seeds and they'll stay in the soil, viable, for 30 to 40 years," she said. "I would definitely keep an eye on it."

Yellow sweet clover is native to Europe. Invasive sweet clover populations are common on the Midwest

and Great Plains.

Trump calls America's story 'the greatest political journey'

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE, CALVIN WOODWARD** and **LYNN BERRY** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump celebrated the story of America as “the greatest political journey in human history” in a Fourth of July commemoration before a soggy but cheering crowd of spectators, many of them invited, on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. Supporters welcomed his tribute to the U.S. military while protesters assailed him for putting himself center stage on a holiday devoted to unity.

As rain fell on him, Trump called on Americans to “stay true to our cause” during a program that adhered to patriotic themes and hailed a mix of history's heroes, from the armed forces, space, civil rights and other endeavors of American life.

Trump largely stuck to his script, avoiding diversions into his agenda or reelection campaign. But in one exception, he vowed, “Very soon, we will plant the American flag on Mars,” actually a distant goal not likely to be achieved until late in the 2020s if even then.

A late afternoon downpour drenched the capital's Independence Day crowds, and Trump's speech unfolded in occasional rain. The warplanes and presidential aircraft he had summoned conducted their flyovers as planned, capped by the Navy Blue Angels aerobatics team.

By adding his own one-hour “Salute to America” production to capital festivities that typically draw hundreds of thousands of people anyway, Trump became the first president in nearly seven decades to address a crowd at the National Mall on the Fourth of July.

Protesters objecting to what they saw as his co-opting of the holiday inflated a roly-poly balloon depicting Trump as an angry, diaper-clad baby.

Trump set aside a historic piece of real estate — a stretch of the Mall from the Lincoln Monument to the midpoint of the reflecting pool — for a mix of invited military members, Republican and Trump campaign donors and other bigwigs. It's where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I have a dream” speech, Barack Obama and Trump held inaugural concerts and protesters swarmed into the water when supporters of Richard Nixon put on a July 4, 1970, celebration, with the president sending taped remarks from California.

Aides to the crowd-obsessed Trump fretted about the prospect of empty seats at his event, said a person familiar with the planning who was not authorized to be identified. Aides scrambled in recent days to distribute tickets and mobilize the Trump and Republican social media accounts to encourage participation for an event hastily arranged and surrounded with confusion.

Back at the White House, Trump tweeted an aerial photo showing an audience that filled both sides of the memorial's reflecting pool and stretched to the Washington Monument.

“A great crowd of tremendous Patriots this evening, all the way back to the Washington Monument!” he



Fireworks explode over Lincoln Memorial, Washington Monument and U.S. Capitol, at the National Mall, during the Independence Day celebrations in Washington on Thursday, July 4, 2019, after President Donald Trump's 'Salute to America' remarks at Lincoln Memorial. (AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

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said.

Many who filed into the sprawling VIP section said they got their free tickets from members of Congress or from friends or neighbors who couldn't use theirs. Outside that zone, a diverse mix of visitors, locals, veterans, tour groups, immigrant families and more milled about, some drawn by Trump, some by curiosity, some by the holiday's regular activities along the Mall.

Protesters earlier made their voices heard in sweltering heat by the Washington Monument, along the traditional parade route and elsewhere, while the VIP section at the reflecting pool served as something of a buffer for Trump's event.

In the shadow of the Washington Monument hours before Trump's speech, the anti-war organization Codepink erected a 20-foot-tall (6-meter-tall) Trump baby balloon to protest what activists saw as his intrusion in Independence Day and a focus on military might that they associate with martial regimes.

"We think that he is making this about himself and it's really a campaign rally," said Medea Benjamin, the organization's co-director. "We think that he's a big baby. ... He's erratic, he's prone to tantrums, he doesn't understand the consequences of his actions. And so this is a great symbol of how we feel about our president."

The balloon remained tied down at the Mall because park officials restricted the group's permission to move it or fill it with helium, Benjamin said.

Protesters also handed out small Trump baby balloons on sticks. Molly King of La Porte, Indiana, a 13-year-old Trump supporter in sunglasses and a "Make America Great Again" hat, happily came away with one.

"They're making a big stink about it, but it's actually pretty cute," she said. "I mean, why not love your president as you'd love a baby?"

A small crowd gathered to take pictures with the big balloon, which drew Trump supporters and detractors. "Even though everybody has different opinions," said Kevin Malton, a Trump supporter from Middlesboro, Kentucky, "everybody's getting along."

But Daniela Guray, a 19-year-old from Chicago who held a "Dump Trump" sign, said she was subjected to a racial epithet while walking along the Constitution Avenue parade route and told to go home.

She said she did not go to the Mall to protest but ended up doing so.

"I started seeing all the tanks with all the protests, and that's when I said, 'Wait, this is not an actual Fourth of July,'" she said. "Trump is making it his day rather than the Fourth of July."

Trump had sounded a defensive note Wednesday, tweeting that the cost "will be very little compared to what it is worth." But he glossed over a host of expenses associated with the display of military might, including flying in planes and tanks and other vehicles to Washington by rail.

Not since 1951, when President Harry Truman spoke before a large gathering on the Washington Monument grounds to mark the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, has a commander in chief made an Independence Day speech to a sizable crowd on the Mall.

Pete Buttigieg, one of the Democrats running for president, said, "This business of diverting money and military assets to use them as a kind of prop, to prop up a presidential ego, is not reflecting well on our country." Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, is a Navy Reserve veteran who served in Afghanistan in 2014.

Two groups, the National Parks Conservation Foundation and Democracy Forward, want the Interior Department's internal watchdog to investigate what they say may be a "potentially unlawful decision to divert" national parks money to Trump's "spectacle."

Trump has longed for a public display of U.S. military prowess since he watched a two-hour procession of French military tanks and fighter jets in Paris on Bastille Day in July 2017.

Washington has held an Independence Day celebration for decades, featuring a parade along Constitution Avenue, a concert on the Capitol lawn with music by the National Symphony Orchestra and fireworks beginning at dusk near the Washington Monument.

Trump altered the lineup by adding his speech, moving the fireworks closer to the Lincoln Memorial and summoning the tanks and warplanes.

Amid all the theatrics, Trump did pay tribute to the reason for the holiday: the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776.

"With a single sheet of parchment and 56 signatures," Trump said, "America began the greatest political journey in human history."

Associated Press writers Kali Robinson, Zeke Miller, Kevin Freking, Matthew Daly and Ellen Knickmeyer contributed to this report.

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At Tehran symphony, music lovers seek escape from reality

By KARIN LAUB Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Aficionados of Western classical music have carved out a niche for themselves in Iran, where cultural expression remains tightly controlled by strict rules imposed after the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

And perhaps surprisingly, musicians in their 20s and 30s perform for overwhelmingly young audiences.

This week, the Tehran Symphony Orchestra, including female musicians in burgundy headscarves on cello, horn and harp, played works by 19th-century Russian composers for an enraptured crowd in the capital's main concert venue, Vahdat Hall.

A major draw is Shahrzad Rohani, 65, the orchestra's charismatic music director. The Iranian-American composer, musician and conductor who has led orchestras in the United States and Europe, said he is proud of his homegrown crop of young musicians.

Classical music may not have mass appeal, but Rohani said in a backstage interview that there's potential for growth, citing a large turnout during a stadium concert last year in Abadan, a provincial city in southwestern Iran.

"Classical music is growing, and as you see, the audience, they are really supporting the arts and classical music," he told The Associated Press during the intermission of Wednesday's sold-out concert.

In four decades of conservative Islamic rule, the space for artistic expression in Iran has expanded or contracted, depending on whether political hard-liners or moderates prevail.

In the first decade after the Islamic Revolution, including the eight-year war with Iraq, pop music disappeared from the public sphere, said Nima Mina of the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London.

The Tehran Symphony Orchestra, founded in 1933, continued its work after 1979, he said. Live performances were initially rare, but have increased in number since the 1990s.

Even during periods of eased controls, red lines are enforced.



In this Wednesday, July 3, 2019 photo, Iranian musicians play while performing 19th century Russian composers in Tehran Symphony Orchestra at Unity Hall, in Tehran, Iran.

(AP Photo/Vahid Salemi)

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This includes a ban on female singers performing for mixed audiences, considered "haram," or religiously forbidden. In February, female guitarist Negin Parsa sang a solo during a concert by pop singer Hamid Askari. The authorities cut her microphone, and Askari's permission to perform was briefly suspended.

A music cafe in downtown Tehran complies with the ban on female singers during live shows, but not when playing records. On a recent afternoon, a blues recording featuring a soulful female vocalist played in the background, as customers sipped coffee and smoked cigarettes.

"Authorities rarely challenge the playing of recorded music in the cafe, and mainly argue about the hijab issue," said waitress Nillofar Dailami, 29, referring to the headscarf all Iranian women are required to wear. Dailami also professed a love for classical music as a result of her study of guitar.

These days, the influence of hard-liners appears on the upswing again as moderates find themselves on the defensive because of the seeming collapse of the 2015 nuclear deal they negotiated with world powers.

The U.S. walked away from the deal a year ago, instead embarking on a "maximum pressure" campaign against Iran, including unprecedented economic sanctions.

The sanctions have hurt ordinary Iranians, sending prices for staples and consumer goods soaring and weakening the local currency, while raising the specter of war with the U.S.

For Tehran music lovers, events like Wednesday's concert on the main national stage next to the Russian Embassy offers a momentary escape from reality.

"It is little moments that build up your life in the end," said Shafa Sabeti, a 36-year-old architect whose business has suffered as the result of the economic downturn linked to the U.S. sanctions. "Public spaces have gotten more crowded recently. People are just living the moment — maybe it's some coping mechanism."

Yet tensions and fear of escalation are a "major big black cloud hovering over the country," he said.

Wednesday's concert featured works by Russian composers Alexander Borodin, Sergey Rachmaninov and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.

The audience was entranced.

There was no fidgeting or coughing. A young couple in the balcony held hands. A woman nearby recorded the concert on her iPhone. Rohani, the conductor, was greeted by loud applause and addressed the crowd several times, including announcing details about an upcoming concert.

"I love the work of Rohani," said concert-goer Ali Reza, 26, who was introduced to classical music by learning to play the piano. He said most of his friends prefer other styles of music, including rock and pop.

Some said there's a generational divide, with older people tending to prefer traditional Iranian music.

"There is a lot of interest in Western culture among the young urban middle class population," said Mina, portraying it as pushback against the lifestyle and artistic expression promoted by the authorities.

He said that since the 1940s, Tehran's music conservatory has provided a steady supply of musicians, including those who later join the Tehran Symphony Orchestra.

One of the graduates of the conservatory, violinist Ed Nekoo, spent 10 years in the Los Angeles area but returned home to care for his mother.

He said he misses the exchange with peers abroad and complained of the lack of foreign music teachers.

"We have to learn the music by ourselves," said Nekoo, 44.

Still, he's optimistic.

"Our audience is so young," he said. "That's what I like about classical music."

Associated Press writer Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran contributed reporting.

Outrage in Russia as abused teen sisters charged with murder

By NATALIYA VASILYEVA Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — One evening last summer, Mikhail Khachaturyan decided that his living room wasn't tidy enough, so he summoned his three teenage daughters one by one and doused each with pepper spray.

There was little unusual about this evening in the Khachaturyan household, according to court records,

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except for one thing: The sisters decided they couldn't take the violence and abuse anymore. They waited until their father fell asleep in his rocking chair and attacked him with a kitchen knife and a hammer. He put up a fight, but died within minutes.

The Khachaturyan sisters, now aged 18, 19 and 20, were charged last month with premeditated murder, in a case that has drawn outrage and shone a light on the way the Russian justice system handles domestic violence and sexual abuse cases.

More than 200,000 people have signed an online petition urging the prosecutors to drop the murder charges, which could land the sisters in prison for up to 20 years.

Supporters of the sisters have protested outside Russian embassies in more than 20 locations abroad, and a theater has staged a performance in solidarity. They had planned a major rally in central Moscow on Saturday, but said they had to cancel it, citing city hall refusing to provide security for the gathering.

"The Khachaturyan case is quite indicative of the general situation with domestic violence and how the Russian state responds to this problem," says Yulia Gorbunova, who authored an extensive report on domestic violence for Human Rights Watch last year.

Pressured by conservative family groups, President Vladimir Putin in 2017 signed a law decriminalizing some forms of domestic violence, which has no fixed definition in the Russian legislation. Police routinely turn a blind eye to cases of domestic abuse, while preventive measures, such as restraining orders, are either lacking or not in wide use.

Court filings showed that the Khachaturyan sisters were repeatedly beaten by their father, a war veteran, and sexually abused. He had kept a stockpile of knives, guns and rifles at home despite having been diagnosed with a neurological disorder, and was known to shoot indoors. He repeatedly threatened neighbors and family with violence.

The Khachaturyan sisters' lawyers say the girls were driven to the edge.

"The first day we met," Krestina's lawyer Alexei Liptser said, "she said she's better off here, in jail, than living at home the way she had been."

Going to the police was not an option for Khachaturyan's victims, who feared that life for them would only get worse. The girls had shared some of the horrors they had gone through with school friends but pleaded them not to go to the police. In the year before the attack, the girls attended less than two months of classes in total, but the school administration did not interfere.

Prosecutors acknowledge the extraordinarily violent circumstances that pushed the teenagers to attack and eventually kill their own father, but they insist that Maria, Angelina and Krestina should be tried for murder. The sisters' lawyers argue that they were acting in justified self-defense in circumstances of lasting abuse and life-threatening violence.



In this photo taken on Wednesday, June 26, 2019, Angelina Khachaturyan attends hearings in a court room in Moscow, Russia. Three Khachaturyan sisters, now aged 18, 19 and 20, face charges for the premeditated murder of their father who allegedly abused them for years, could land them in prison for up to 20-years, but the case has provoked outrage in Russia and calls to stop the court case.

(Alexander Avilov, Moscow News Agency photo via AP)

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The sisters have been released on bail and barred from seeing each other, witnesses in the case or the media. They are reportedly in good spirits. "At least, no one is beating them up," Liptser says.

The case of the three timid teenagers has inspired 29-year-old Zarema Zaudinova to direct a performance at the underground Theater Doc last week, combining the hair-raising experiences of the sisters with performers' own personal stories. Some members of the audience walked out after one of the more graphic accounts of abuse.

For Zaudinova, the Khachaturyan case was the last straw.

"We have no protection," she says. "We will either get raped or we will get thrown into prison if we defend ourselves."

Research on Russian criminal court cases compiled by media outlet Media Zona shows that out of 2,500 women convicted of manslaughter or murder in 2016 to 2018, nearly 2,000 killed a family member in a domestic violence setting.

Human Rights Watch has documented cases where "a very clear case of self-defense" was not recognized as such by prosecutors and led to the victim's imprisonment, according to Gorbunova.

"The choice is not whether you go to the police and get help," she says. "The choice for these women was either to die or they had to protect themselves to the best of their ability."

Almost 2,000 people have recently posted first-person accounts of abuse and victim blaming to social media, after a young woman facing criminal charges for injuring her alleged rapist launched the hashtag #It'snotmyfault.

The bill to replace jail terms with fines in certain cases of domestic violence breezed through the Russian parliament in 2017 and was promptly signed by Putin. Despite its detrimental effect on domestic violence victims, the measure sparked a rare public debate on domestic violence and abuse in a country where a proverb goes: "If he beats you, that means he loves you."

Gorbunova says that public perception of domestic violence has been changing, triggered by the highly publicized court cases like that of the Khachaturyan sisters or the case of Margarita Gracheva, whose husband, previously reported to the police for threats of violence, took her to a forest and chopped off both of her hands. Gracheva endured online bullying and accusations of "provoking" her spouse before her husband was sentenced to 14 years in prison last year, a rare win for a victim of domestic violence in Russia.

The women of Theater Doc say the verdict in the Khachaturyan sisters' case would send a strong message to Russian society.

"We need to fight for it, and talk loud and clear about it," says Zaudinova, who herself told a story on-stage of being molested by a male relative at the age of 12. "If the girls get sent to prison and the court doesn't acknowledge that that was self-defense, they will be putting more people in prison and you won't be able to do anything to the person who decided to rape you."

Biden: It would be 'great' to have a female vice president

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democratic presidential front-runner Joe Biden says it would be "great" to have a female vice president, but he won't say whether he'd pick Sen. Kamala Harris for the No. 2 spot if he receives his party's nomination.

In an interview aired Friday on CNN, Biden said, "I think it helps having a woman on the ticket." He was asked whether it might be Harris, who confronted him at last week's Democratic presidential debate over his stance on busing in the 1970s. He said he was not going to get into specifics because "I don't even have the nomination."

"I think it'd be great to have a female VP," Biden said. "And if I don't win, it'd be great to have a female president."

Harris surged in polls after the debate confrontation, when she criticized Biden for recently highlighting his decades-old work with segregationist senators and his opposition to public school busing during the 1970s.

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The former vice president is leading the pack of more than 20 Democratic presidential hopefuls .

Biden is considered a moderate at a time in which some in the party, including presidential hopefuls Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders, are pushing it further left on economic and social issues.

Biden insisted that the "vast majority of Democrats are where I am on issues," and he called the party "center-left."

"Look, it's center-left," he said. "That's where I am. Where it's not is way left."



Former vice president and Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden greets local residents while walking in the Independence Fourth of July parade, Thursday, July 4, 2019, in Independence, Iowa. (AP Photo/Charlie Neibergall)

Strongest earthquake in 20 years rattles Southern California

By JOHN ANTCZAK and OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The strongest earthquake in 20 years shook a large swath of Southern California and parts of Nevada on the July 4th holiday, rattling nerves and causing injuries and damage in a town near the epicenter, followed by a swarm of ongoing aftershocks.

The 6.4 magnitude quake struck at 10:33 a.m. Thursday in the Mojave Desert, about 150 miles (240 kilometers) northeast of Los Angeles, near the town of Ridgecrest, California.

Multiple injuries and two house fires were reported in the town of 28,000. Emergency crews were also dealing with small vegetation fires, gas leaks and reports of cracked roads, said Kern County Fire Chief David Witt.

He said 15 patients were evacuated from the Ridgecrest Regional Hospital as a precaution and out of concern for aftershocks.



In this image taken from video provided by Ben Hood, a firefighter works to extinguish a fire, Thursday, July 4, 2019, following an earthquake in Ridgecrest, Calif. (Ben Hood via AP)

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Kern County District Supervisor Mick Gleason told CNN there were some structural issues with the hospital and some patients had to be moved from one ward to another and that others were taken to a neighboring building.

Gleason did not say what the structural issues were.

Ridgecrest Mayor Peggy Breeden said that utility workers were assessing broken gas lines and turning off gas where necessary.

The local senior center was holding a July 4th event when the quake hit and everyone made it out shaken up but without injuries, she said.

"Oh, my goodness, there's another one (quake) right now," Breeden said on live television as an after-shock struck.

Gov. Gavin Newsom declared a state of emergency for Kern County. The declaration means that the state will help the county and municipalities in it with emergency aid and recovery efforts.

Ridgecrest Mayor Peggy Breeden praised Newsom for declaring the emergency. She also noted at a news conference that other nearby governments have offered to help the recovery effort.

President Donald Trump said he was fully briefed on the earthquake and that it "all seems to be very much under control!"

Police and fire officials said at a news conference Thursday afternoon that they have enough resources so far to meet needs in the wake of the earthquake. Ridgecrest Police Chief Jed McLaughlin said at a news conference that "we have plenty of resources."

California Highway Patrol Lt. John Williams says officials have found cracks on several roads in the county, but overpasses and underpasses are in good shape.

A series of aftershocks included a 4.5 magnitude temblor, according to the United States Geological Survey.

"It almost gave me a heart attack," said Cora Burke, a waitress at Midway Cafe in Ridgecrest, of the big jolt. "It's just a rolling feeling inside the building, inside the cafe and all of a sudden everything started falling off the shelf, glasses, the refrigerator and everything in the small refrigerator fell over."

Video posted online of a liquor store in Ridgecrest showed the aisles filled with broken wine and liquor bottles, knocked down boxes and other groceries strewn on the floor. Flames were seen shooting out of one home in the community.

Lucy Jones, a seismologist with the California Institute of Technology's seismology lab, said the earthquake was the strongest since a 7.1 quake struck in the area on October 16, 1999.

"This has been an extremely quiet abnormal time," Jones said. "This type of earthquake is much more normal ... The long term average is probably once every five or 10 years somewhere in Southern California."

Jones said that the 6.4 quake centered near the town of Ridgecrest was preceded by a magnitude 4.2 temblor about a half hour earlier.

She said vigorous aftershocks were occurring and that she wouldn't be surprised if a magnitude 5 quake hit but that they were striking in a remote area, sparsely populated area. "This is an isolated enough location that that's going to greatly reduce the damage," she said.

People from Las Vegas to the Pacific Coast reported feeling a rolling motion and took to social media to report it.

Local emergency agencies also took to social media to ask people to only call 911 for emergencies.

"We are very much aware of the significant earthquake that just occurred in Southern California. Please DO NOT call 9-1-1 unless there are injuries or other dangerous conditions. Don't call for questions please," the LAPD said in a statement published on Twitter.

There were no reports of serious damage or injuries in Los Angeles, the department said.

The quake was detected by California's new ShakeAlert system and it provided 48 seconds of warning to the seismology lab well before the shaking arrived at Caltech in the Los Angeles suburb of Pasadena but it did not trigger a public warning through an app recently made available in Los Angeles County.

USGS seismologist Robert Graves said the ShakeAlert system worked properly.

Graves said it calculated an intensity level for the Los Angeles area that was below the threshold for a

public alert. The limits are intended to avoid false alarms.

Ashleigh Chandler, a helicopter rescue EMT at Fort Irwin, California, said the quake happened as she was getting ready for a July 4th party.

"I was just in the living room getting everything ready, we start to feel the shaking, so then I look up and then the wine bottles start rattling and I thought, 'They're going to fall.'

"My stepson was in the house and my dog, so we just got everyone outside and then it ended. It was like 15, 20 seconds, maybe. It was pretty good shaking, so I'm out of breath."

"Everyone's OK."

Glenn Pomeroy, the head of California's Earthquake Authority, said the earthquake is "an important reminder that all of California is earthquake country."

Pomeroy urged the estimated 2,000 people in the region hit by the quake who have California Earthquake Authority insurance policies to contact their residential insurance agencies as soon as possible. Information on how to file a policy claim is on the agency's website: EarthquakeAuthority.com, he said.

Rodriguez reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writer Rachel Lerman in San Francisco and AP Radio reporter Shelly Adler in Washington, D.C., contributed.

Sudan's protesters claim victory for their 'revolution'

By **FAY ABUELGASIM** and **NOHA ELHENNAWY** Associated Press

KHARTOUM, Sudan (AP) — Leaders of Sudan's pro-democracy movement welcomed on Friday the power-sharing agreement with the ruling military council as a victory for their "revolution," raising hopes for an end to the three-month standoff with the generals and deadly violence.

"Today, our revolution has won and our victory shines," read a statement posted early Friday on the Facebook page of the Sudanese Professionals' Association, which has spearheaded the protests.

The emerging deal could break the political impasse that has gripped the country since the military ousted the longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir in April, amid an uprising against his rule.

In the following months, protesters stayed in the streets demanding the generals handover power to a civilian leadership. Talks collapsed when security forces razed a protest camp outside the military headquarters in Khartoum on June 3 leaving more than a hundred killed, according to protesters.

The African Union and Ethiopia made intensive efforts to bring the



FILE - In this June 29, 2019, file photo, Sudanese Gen. Abdel-Fattah Burhan, head of the military council, speaks during a military-backed rally, in Omdurman district, west of Khartoum, Sudan. An African Union envoy says Sudan's ruling military council and the country's pro-democracy movement have reached a power-sharing agreement, including a timetable for a transition to civilian rule. Mohammed el-Hassan Labat said early Friday, July 5, that both sides agreed to form a joint sovereign council that will rule the country for "three years or a little more." The sides agreed to five seats for the military and five for civilians with an additional seat going to a civilian with military background. (AP Photo/Hussein Malla, File)

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generals and the protesters back to the negotiating table.

Negotiations resumed earlier this week, after tens of thousands of demonstrators flooded the streets of Sudan's main cities over the weekend, in the biggest show of numbers since the razing of the protesters' sit-in camp. At least 11 people were killed in clashes with security forces, according to protest organizers.

When news of the deal broke around dawn on Friday, hundreds of protesters returned to the streets dancing, singing and waving Sudanese flags, while passing drivers honked.

The military-controlled Al-Sudan television channel played national songs. It also reran excerpts of the press conference announcing the agreement, held jointly by protest and military leaders, which it subtitled "Congratulations to the Sudanese people."

"We hope that the formation of transitional institutions marks the beginning of a new era," said Omer El-Digair, a leader of the Forces for the Declaration of Freedom and Change, a political coalition representing the protesters, at the joint press conference with the military and African mediators following the conclusion of the deal. "We hope it is an era where we can shut off the sound of pistols and destroy for good prisons of arbitrary detention."

The two parties agreed to form a joint sovereign council to lead the country during a transitional period of three years and three months, said the SPA statement.

The council will include five civilians representing the protest movement and five military members. An eleventh seat will go to a civilian chosen by both parties.

A military member will preside over the council during the first 21 months, followed by a civilian member after, according to the statement.

This suggests a significant concession on the part of pro-democracy forces, which had insisted that the sovereign council have only a civilian president. However, the deal did secure another key demand, that protest leaders select the members of a technocratic Cabinet to be formed independently from the generals.

According to the SPA statement, the two parties also agreed to launch "a national independent investigation" into the killings of protesters since al-Bashir was ousted on April 11, according to the statement.

"I am not fully satisfied but it is a step forward to bring peace to our people," Tarek Abdel Meguid, an FDFC leader, told The Associated Press.

He said that concessions were necessary to avoid further bloodshed.

"It is a civilian revolution and the people had already rejected the idea of sharing power" with the military council, he said. "But this is what the balance of power imposed."

Abdel Meguid said that the FDFC was expected to meet this afternoon and discuss whether to call off plans for rallies to mark 40 days since the protester deaths, followed by launching a national strike on July 14.

In Hong Kong, colonial flag still a symbol of prized values

By SYLVIA HUI Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — They smashed glass windows, sprayed rude graffiti and defaced Hong Kong's official emblem with black paint. But of all the dramatic photos showing hundreds of young protesters storming the city's legislative building this week, one image makes for particularly uncomfortable viewing in Beijing: The British colonial flag draped aloft a podium in the assembly's chamber.

That's not all. On a day supposed to celebrate the 22nd anniversary of Hong Kong's return to the "motherland," other protesters were pictured defiantly flying giant Union flags in the Legislative Council.

Why are some protesters — many of them millennials — harking back to a bygone colonial era, two decades after Britain handed the city over to China as a semi-autonomous territory?

"Does it really mean that people seriously want colonial rule again? No — but I don't think there's any dispute among protesters that British rule was better than what we've got after the handover, especially in recent years," said Lam Yin Pong, a Hong Kong journalist.

"There might be some element of a rose-tinted lens. Perhaps some people are fantasizing about the 'good old days,'" he added. "But what's clear is that under colonial rule there was never a clear feeling of freedoms being gradually eroded, of a series of government actions completely against our interests."

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Hong Kong has been rocked by massive street protests and its most serious political crisis after its government tried to push through legislation that would allow suspects in crimes to be extradited to mainland China for trial. The proposed bills have triggered broader fears that China is chipping away at the freedoms and rights that Hong Kong was guaranteed for 50 years after its July 1, 1997, handover to Beijing rule under a "one country, two systems" deal.

Its constitution, the Basic Law, promised that Hong Kong voters should ultimately achieve universal suffrage, a goal that Beijing has pushed back indefinitely. That has long caused widespread resentment, especially among the city's increasingly disenfranchised youth.

But Hong Kong never enjoyed democracy under 155 years of British rule either.

Governors at the time were appointed in London, and lawmakers were not directly elected to the Legislative Council until 1991. Most of parliament's seats were either appointed or

chosen by powerful professional groups. The city's last British governor, Chris Patten, managed to push through democratic reforms only in the last years before his 1997 departure.

Even so, Britain was — and still is — widely seen in Hong Kong as a beacon of Western-style civil liberties and the rule of law, leaving a legacy of independent courts, a well-oiled civil service and institutions like an anti-corruption watchdog. The colonial years saw steady economic growth, and its free market policies meant the city flourished as one of the world's leading business hubs.

"I miss the British-Hong Kong government before 1997. The British helped us build a lot of things: separation of powers, our rule of law, our entire social system," said Alexandra Wong, 63, a protester who's often seen raising the Union Jack at demonstrations and carried one into the legislative building on Monday night. "What I can do is to hopefully encourage young people to continue to persist" in fighting for their rights, she said.

It helped that Patten and his administration showed a gift for connecting with the populace and are remembered fondly by many to this day.

"He projected complete commitment to the people. People could feel he wanted to be on their side," said Leo Goodstadt, a British economics professor and chief policy adviser to the colonial government from 1989 to 1997.

By contrast, Patten's Chinese successors all suffered dismal popularity ratings — none more so than current Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Recent polls show that under her leadership, trust in Beijing and feelings of identification with China have plunged. Lam's administration is widely seen as inept and arrogantly out of touch with public sentiment, bulldozing through unpopular policies with no regard for widespread



FILE - In this July 1, 2019, file photo, protesters put a Hong Kong colonial flag and deface the Hong Kong logo at the Legislative Chamber after they broke into the Legislative Council building in Hong Kong. Of all the dramatic photos showing hundreds of protesters storming Hong Kong's legislature this week, one image makes for particularly uncomfortable viewing in Beijing: The British colonial flag draped aloft a podium in the assembly's chamber. (AP

Photo/Vincent Yu, File)

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opposition.

Many in the city see police violence against protesters in recent weeks as marking a new low for a government seen to be oblivious to residents' rights.

"At least one million people have taken to the streets but they keep refusing to listen," Lam said. "Never mind the British — any rational, civilized government would have backed off."

Some say the protesters' raising of the colonial-era and Union flags was a deliberate message for the world — especially Britain — to do more to uphold the democratic values they symbolize. Patten recently called for Britain to fulfil its "duty to help Hong Kong out of this dark moment."

Both of Britain's two leading prime ministerial candidates have made a point of stressing solidarity with Hong Kong's protesters, and British media have featured the news prominently. Benedict Rogers, a human rights activist who heads the group Hong Kong Watch, said he's been encouraged that the Hong Kong question is receiving much more attention in the British Parliament.

"We need to sustain this," Rogers said. "Britain must take a lead in the international community and mobilize other countries to send a strong united message to allow Hong Kong's freedoms to be preserved."

It's not clear, however, if the country has the appetite to take steps beyond offering words of concern and condemnation — or if the flags have had the opposite effect of hardening Beijing's stance against the city.

In an escalating war of words, Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, in the running to be Britain's next leader, has warned China not to use the Hong Kong protests as a "pretext for repression." He threatened "serious consequences" if China failed to honor the 1984 Sino-British Joint Declaration upholding Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy — though he stopped short of spelling out any measures.

The Chinese foreign ministry shot back, dismissing Hunt's comments as "shameless" posturing and meddling and mocked him for "basking in the faded glory of British colonialism."

Kerry Brown, director of the Lau China Institute at King's College London, said the question now is what America and Europe will do.

"Right now it's mostly just rhetoric and it's not likely to get to the situation where the U.K. can unilaterally do anything beyond the symbolic," he said.

Certainly not everyone in Hong Kong sees things as better in the colonial days — though some believe that the more widespread political apathy back then is no bad thing compared to the turmoil today.

"Back in the day, there was no one involved in political issues, everyone was politically apathetic. ... I don't understand the reason why there are so many political demands after the handover," said a Chinese medicine shop owner who gave only his surname, Chan. "Everyone can say anything now. I don't see there is no freedom. The time when our government was British, I think we didn't have that much autonomy."

Associated Press journalists Katie Tam and Phoebe Lai in Hong Kong contributed to this report.

June jobs report could show whether US economy is weakening

By JOSH BOAK AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The June jobs report being released Friday will likely help determine whether the U.S. economy has stabilized or is gradually weakening.

The evidence is conflicting. Consumer spending has solidified. Home sales are rebounding. But America's manufacturing sector is slowing along with construction spending. Growth in the services sector, which includes such varied industries as restaurants, finance and recreation, slowed in June.

Economists have estimated that the government will report that employers added 164,000 jobs in June, according to data provider FactSet. That would roughly match the average monthly gain this year and would mark a healthy rebound from the meager 75,000 jobs that were added in May.

For June, the unemployment rate is expected to hold at 3.6% — the lowest level since 1969 — for a third straight month.

The slowdown in hiring during May suggested that employers had grown more cautious in the face of weaker global growth, political showdowns over trade and, perhaps, some difficulty in finding enough quali-

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fied workers at the wages companies are willing to pay.

"Most economists have been expecting payrolls to slow down for a couple of years now," said Stephen Stanley, chief economist at Amherst Pierpont Securities. "With all of the low-hanging fruit already being harvested, firms are basically going to run out of qualified people to hire."

If the government were to report a second straight tepid jobs report, it could reinforce expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates late this month to help support the economy. The Fed has expressed concern about threats to the economy, especially from President Donald Trump's trade wars, and about inflation remaining persistently below its 2% target level.

A rate cut would be the Fed's first in more than a decade.

The pace of the overall economy is widely thought to be slowing sharply from annual growth that neared a healthy 3% last year. Even the job market itself, one of the pillars of the 10-year economic expansion, the longest on record, may be flagging. Job openings have grown just 2.2% so far this year, according to the jobs site Glassdoor. In 2018, openings had increased 9.8%.

Employers in some sectors of the economy are signaling less eagerness to hire. The construction industry, which had been adding jobs at an annual rate of more than 300,000 at the start of this year, is now adding positions at an annual rate of 215,000.

Manufacturing is sputtering, likely in part because of the tariffs Trump has imposed on many Chinese imports. For the past three months, manufacturers have added, on average, a mere 1,667 workers each month. A year ago, the average monthly gain was 21,000.

But even if those sectors decline, job growth has generally been supported by the health care and business services sectors. Both those sectors reported a decline in hiring in May, setting the stage for a possible bounce-back.

Overall, employers have been adding jobs faster than new workers are flowing into the economy. That suggests that the unemployment rate will remain near its five-decade low and that the economy will keep growing, even if only modestly.

Still, a survey of job growth in the private sector released Wednesday by payroll processor ADP suggested that job gains could start to fall below population growth, thereby potentially causing unemployment to rise.

ADP's figures don't always correspond with the government's job numbers. But if job growth slips or stays depressed, said Mark Zandi, chief economist at Moody's Analytics, it raises the risk that "unemployment will begin to notch higher."



In this Tuesday, June 4, 2019 photo, job applicants line up at the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood during a job fair in Hollywood, Fla. On Friday, July 5, the U.S. government issues the June jobs report. (AP Photo/Wilfredo Lee)

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Concerts, fireworks and a military parade mark July Fourth

NEW YORK (AP) — The national holiday to mark America's birth as a country has been filled with parades, concerts, competitive eating and, of course, fireworks.

Boston, Philadelphia, Washington, New York and other places around the country are holding massive celebrations with big name artists like Jennifer Hudson, Luke Bryan and Carole King.

But Independence Day won't be free from politics, as President Donald Trump's plan for a celebration in Washington featuring a display of tanks, fighter jets and a stealth bomber is garnering support from some and protests from others.

Highlights from celebrations around the country:

THE BIGGEST SHOW

Fireworks over New York's East River lit up the Brooklyn Bridge, a display said to be one of the biggest in the country. As they waited for the show to start, people watched New York Police Department helicopters in a procession along the river.

Carmela Serino, a college student from Queens, said she liked how the crowd in Brooklyn Bridge Park reflected the diversity of the city. People were wearing everything from tank tops to burkas and chatting in Spanish, Japanese, Telugu, and a host of other languages.

Christina Garza, a flight attendant from Maine, agreed.

"With what's going on with politics these days, it's so nice to see this. No one's arguing, no one's fighting. We're just gathered on this turf," she said.

As the sun set, red, white, and blue lights shone from several buildings in Lower Manhattan and along the Brooklyn waterfront.

The fireworks spectacle, plus concert, is broadcast on NBC and this year features country powerhouses Luke Bryan, Maren Morris and Brad Paisley, as well as Jennifer Hudson, Ciara, Khalid and Derek Hough.

POPPING OFF

Boston is marking Independence Day with a traditional procession, speeches, a Boston Pops concert and fireworks.

Festivities began Thursday morning at City Hall with a brief speaking program. Marchers then set off for the Old Granary Burial Ground where Samuel Adams, John Hancock and other prominent colonial leaders are buried.

They also made a stop at the Old State House, where the Declaration of Independence is read out from a balcony by a member of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company — just as it was in 1776.

The procession ended at Faneuil Hall where Boston University Dean of Students Kenneth Elmore delivered a speech in a tradition dating to 1773.

The Boston Pops orchestra performs at night with fireworks over the Charles River as a backdrop.



Fireworks seen from the Lincoln Memorial explode over the Potomac River for Independence Day, Thursday, July 4, 2019, in Washington. (AP Photo/Andrew Harnik)

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HISTORIC CELEBRATION

The nation's oldest continuous Fourth of July celebration took place in Bristol, Rhode Island. The events began on Flag Day and culminated with a parade on July Fourth that drew tens of thousands. The annual celebration began in the seaside town in 1785.

THE NATION'S CAPITAL

A soggy, cheering crowd of spectators listened to President Donald Trump pay tribute to the U.S. military on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial.

Trump's speech unfolded in occasional rain, and the warplanes and presidential aircraft he had summoned conducted their flyovers as planned, capped by the Navy Blue Angels aerobatics team.

Supporters roared, but protesters also assailed the show, saying it put the president center stage on a holiday traditionally devoted to unity.

By adding his own, one-hour "Salute to America" production to capital festivities that typically draw hundreds of thousands anyway, Trump became the first president in nearly seven decades to address a crowd at the National Mall on Independence Day.

Earlier in the day, Washington held its traditional Fourth of July parade.

PBS is broadcasting a concert from the West Lawn of the Capitol featuring host John Stamos and performances by the National Symphony Orchestra, Carole King, Vanessa Williams, Colbie Caillat and Lee Brice.

NEW CITIZENS

Around the country, more than two dozen naturalization ceremonies will be held to welcome in the newest Americans in places like the Liberty Bell Center in Philadelphia and George Washington's home in Mount Vernon, Virginia.

Vice President Mike Pence celebrated Independence Day by welcoming 44 immigrants into "the American family" in a naturalization ceremony in the nation's capital.

Pence said it was "deeply humbling" to stand on "the hallowed ground" of the National Archives in Washington before the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights. He told the new U.S. citizens, who hail from 26 other countries, that he and President Donald Trump were extending to them "the welcome of the American people."

"Congratulations to you all," he said.

FOR THE KIDS AND KIDS AT HEART

At Legoland in Winter Haven, Florida, children can help create a giant United States flag out of LEGO bricks on July 4 as part of the Red, White and Boom celebration. Once the sun goes down, special viewing glasses will allow guests to watch "a gazillion bricks explode from the sky" above Lake Eloise during the theme park's largest fireworks display of the year.

In Orlando, Walt Disney World is hosting a special show called Celebrate America! A Fourth of July Concert in the Sky on Thursday night.

AMERICA'S BIRTHPLACE

In Philadelphia, the celebrations begin with a parade near Independence Hall and culminate with a concert featuring Meghan Trainor and Jennifer Hudson on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. The annual fireworks show blasts off after the concert around the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Police say 33 people protesting treatment of migrants and asylum seekers were cited after briefly interrupting the Salute to America parade in Philadelphia. The protesters, assembled by a group called "Never Again is Now," were demanding closure of border detention centers and the abolition of the immigration and customs agency.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF BOOM

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Thousands watched Willimantic's annual Boom Box Parade in Connecticut. In what's become an offbeat tradition, participants and spectators carry radios all tuned to the same local station, which provides traditional marching music.

The parade dates to 1986, when the town couldn't find a marching band for its annual Memorial Day parade. Organizers approached radio station WILI-AM for help. Station officials said it was too late to organize and publicize an event for that holiday, but began planning for July Fourth, and the tradition was born.

EXPLODING ROCKETS

Firefighters in South Carolina had to dodge exploding rockets to douse a spectacular fire that destroyed at least two containers of fireworks stored for sale on the Fourth of July.

The blaze early Thursday provided for an impressive, though sparsely attended show as shells and rockets burst through the metal containers, sending colorful showers into the air above the Davey Jones Fireworks and the House of Fireworks stores in Fort Mill.

BIG DOGS

In New York City, Joey Chestnut and Miki Sudo defended their titles to once again win at the annual Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest on the Coney Island boardwalk.

Chestnut ate 71 franks and buns while Sudo chowed down 31. Both fell short of their records but easily took home the trophies.

A 'KEY' WINNER

A Key West man has won the Mile-High Key Lime Pie Eatin' Contest on the subtropical island where the pie originated.

David Johnson plunged face-first into a 9-inch pie smothered with whipped cream during Thursday's challenge. The rules forbid contestants from using their hands.

He consumed it in 58.2 seconds, besting 24 rivals in the kickoff of the annual Key Lime Festival.

A TOXIC FOURTH

Thousands of people were expected on Mississippi's beaches for the July Fourth holiday even though they can't go into the water because toxic bacteria are flourishing along the coast.

The Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality has warned that polluted Midwest floodwaters have fed an outbreak of cyanobacterium. Popularly known as blue-green algae, it can cause rashes, diarrhea and vomiting.

Trump asks Americans to 'stay true to our cause'

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE, CALVIN WOODWARD and LYNN BERRY Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump celebrated the story of America as "the greatest political journey in human history" in a Fourth of July commemoration before a soggy but cheering crowd of spectators, many of them invited, on the grounds of the Lincoln Memorial. Supporters welcomed his tribute to the U.S. military while protesters assailed him for putting himself center stage on a holiday devoted to unity.

As rain fell on him, Trump called on Americans to "stay true to our cause" during a program that adhered to patriotic themes and hailed an eclectic mix of history's heroes, from the armed forces, space, civil rights and other endeavors of American life.

He largely stuck to his script, avoiding diversions into his agenda or re-election campaign. But in one exception, he vowed, "Very soon, we will plant the American flag on Mars," actually a distant goal not likely to be achieved until late in the 2020s if even then.

A late afternoon downpour drenched the capital's Independence Day crowds and Trump's speech unfolded in occasional rain. The warplanes and presidential aircraft he had summoned conducted their flyovers as planned, capped by the Navy Blue Angels aerobatics team.

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By adding his own, one-hour "Salute to America" production to capital festivities that typically draw hundreds of thousands anyway, Trump became the first president in nearly seven decades to address a crowd at the National Mall on the Fourth of July.

Protesters objecting to what they saw as his co-opting of the holiday inflated a roly-poly balloon depicting Trump as an angry, diaper-clad baby.

Trump set aside a historic piece of real estate — a stretch of the Mall from the Lincoln Monument to the midpoint of the reflecting pool — for a mix of invited military members, Republican and Trump campaign donors and other bigwigs. It's where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I have a dream" speech, Barack Obama and Trump held inaugural concerts and protesters swarmed into the water when supporters of Richard Nixon put on a July 4, 1970, celebration, with the president sending taped remarks from California.

Aides to the crowd-obsessed Trump fretted about the prospect of empty seats at his event, said a person familiar with the planning who was not authorized to be identified. Aides scrambled in recent days to distribute tickets and mobilize the Trump and GOP social media accounts to encourage participation for an event hastily arranged and surrounded with confusion.

Back at the White House, Trump tweeted an aerial photo showing an audience that filled both sides of the memorial's reflecting pool and stretched to the Washington Monument. "A great crowd of tremendous Patriots this evening, all the way back to the Washington Monument!" he said.

Many who filed into the sprawling VIP section said they got their free tickets from members of Congress or from friends or neighbors who couldn't use theirs. Outside that zone, a diverse mix of visitors, locals, veterans, tour groups, immigrant families and more milled about, some drawn by Trump, some by curiosity, some by the holiday's regular activities along the Mall.

Protesters earlier made their voices heard in sweltering heat by the Washington Monument, along the traditional parade route and elsewhere, while the VIP section at the reflecting pool served as something of a buffer for Trump's event.

In the shadow of the Washington Monument hours before Trump's speech, the anti-war organization Codepink erected a 20-foot tall "Trump baby" balloon to protest what activists saw as his intrusion in Independence Day and a focus on military might that they associate with martial regimes.

"We think that he is making this about himself and it's really a campaign rally," said Medea Benjamin, the organization's co-director. "We think that he's a big baby. ... He's erratic, he's prone to tantrums, he doesn't understand the consequences of his actions. And so this is a great symbol of how we feel about our president."

The balloon remained tied down at the Mall because park officials restricted the group's permission to move it or fill it with helium, Benjamin said.

Protesters also handed out small Trump-baby balloons on sticks. Molly King of La Porte, Indiana, a 13-year-



President Donald Trump, first lady Melania Trump, Vice President Mike Pence and Karen Pence and others stand as the US Army Band performs and the US Navy Blue Angels flyover at the end of an Independence Day celebration in front of the Lincoln Memorial, Thursday, July 4, 2019, in Washington. (AP Photo/Alex Brandon)

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old Trump supporter in sunglasses and a "Make America Great Again" hat, happily came away with one. "They're making a big stink about it but it's actually pretty cute," she said. "I mean, why not love your president as you'd love a baby?"

A small crowd gathered to take pictures with the big balloon, which drew Trump supporters and detractors. "Even though everybody has different opinions," said Kevin Malton, a Trump supporter from Middlesboro, Kentucky, "everybody's getting along."

But Daniela Guray, a 19-year-old from Chicago who held a "Dump Trump" sign, said she was subjected to a racial epithet while walking along the Constitution Avenue parade route and told to go home.

She said she did not come to the Mall to protest but ended up doing so. "I started seeing all the tanks with all the protests and that's when I said, 'Wait, this is not an actual Fourth of July,'" she said. "Trump is making it his day rather than the Fourth of July."

Trump had sounded a defensive note Wednesday, tweeting that the cost "will be very little compared to what it is worth." But he glossed over a host of expenses associated with the display of military might, including flying in planes and tanks and other vehicles to Washington by rail.

Not since 1951, when President Harry Truman spoke before a large gathering on the Washington Monument grounds to mark the 175th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, has a commander in chief made an Independence Day speech to a sizable crowd on the Mall.

Pete Buttigieg, one of the Democrats running for president, said, "This business of diverting money and military assets to use them as a kind of prop, to prop up a presidential ego, is not reflecting well on our country." Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, is a Navy Reserve veteran who served in Afghanistan in 2014.

Two groups, the National Parks Conservation Foundation and Democracy Forward, want the Interior Department's internal watchdog to investigate what they say may be a "potentially unlawful decision to divert" national parks money to Trump's "spectacle."

Trump has longed for a public display of U.S. military prowess ever since he watched a two-hour procession of French military tanks and fighter jets in Paris on Bastille Day in July 2017.

Washington has held an Independence Day celebration for decades, featuring a parade along Constitution Avenue, a concert on the Capitol lawn with music by the National Symphony Orchestra and fireworks beginning at dusk near the Washington Monument.

Trump altered the lineup by adding his speech, moving the fireworks closer to the Lincoln Memorial and summoning the tanks and warplanes.

Amid all the theatrics, Trump did pay tribute to the reason for the holiday — the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. "With a single sheet of parchment and 56 signatures," Trump said, "America began the greatest political journey in human history."

___ Associated Press writers Kali Robinson, Zeke Miller, Kevin Freking, Matthew Daly and Ellen Knickmeyer contributed to this report.

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

We have a wiener! Joey Chestnut eats 71 hot dogs for title

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Joey "Jaws" Chestnut ate 71 wieners and buns to secure his 12th title at Nathan's Famous annual July Fourth hot dog eating contest on Thursday, just a few hot dogs shy of breaking the record he set last year.

In front of a crowd of fans and facing 17 opponents, the California native far exceeded his nearest competitors, but didn't quite make or pass the 74-dog mark he reached in 2018.

When asked how he felt after the contest, Chestnut, 35, said, "I feel like I should eat a couple more.

"I knew it was going to be close. I was trying hard and I was overstuffing my mouth and it wasn't going down," he said. "I just needed to find a way to move a little bit faster. I think it's getting harder the older I get."

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Miki Sudo won the women's competition by chomping down 31 hot dogs.

The 33-year-old fell short of her total last year of 37 frankfurters but earned her sixth consecutive title by easily beating runner-up Michelle Lesco, who wolfed down 26 hot dogs.

Like Chestnut, she expressed some disappointment in not eating more.

"It wasn't my best number, the numbers were pretty low across the board. I don't know if it was the heat, but I really can't complain. I wasn't feeling in my best shape so I'm just glad that it was enough to pull off a sixth belt," she said.

Sonya "The Black Widow" Thomas holds the all-time women's record of 45 hot dogs in 10 minutes.

Chestnut and Sudo will each take home \$10,000.

Spectators with foam hot dog hats, plastic noisemakers and homemade signs descended on Coney Island's famed boardwalk for the contest.

The annual eat-off started in 1972, though the company has long promoted the event with a theatrical backstory that places its start date in 1916.

Chestnut has only lost once since 2007, when he pulled ahead of longtime foe Takeru Kobayashi for the first time. An ESPN documentary released Tuesday features the two former rivals and their extreme training regimens.

"It's not something that there's books written about," Chestnut says in the film, which shows him lifting his head up and down with a weight dangling from his mouth. "There's no trainers. Everything's trial and error."

Kobayashi no longer takes part in the event.

Spectator George Cartolano, 40, said his favorite part of the contest was "watching them try not to regurgitate."

Elle Marks, 27, said she likes Chestnut because he's relatable. "He's a normal guy who just happens to be able to eat 74 hot dogs," she said.

Chestnut's next meal will probably be a "salad" and "a lot of liquid," he said. But he'll be back next year for the franks.

"As long as I'm healthy, as long as I'm happy and competitive, you can count me in," he said.



Joey Chestnut stuffs his mouth with hot dogs during the men's competition of Nathan's Famous July Fourth hot dog eating contest, Thursday, July 4, 2019, in New York's Coney Island. (AP Photo/Sarah Stier)

Today in History

By The Associated Press

Today is Friday, July 5, the 186th day of 2019. There are 179 days left in the year.

On July 5, 1954, Elvis Presley's first commercial recording session took place at Sun Records in Memphis, Tennessee; the song he recorded was "That's All Right."

On this date:

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In 1811, Venezuela became the first South American country to declare independence from Spain.

In 1865, the Secret Service Division of the U.S. Treasury Department was founded in Washington, D.C., with the mission of suppressing counterfeit currency.

In 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed the National Labor Relations Act.

In 1946, the bikini, created by Louis Reard, was modeled by Micheline Bernardini during a poolside fashion show in Paris.

In 1947, Larry Doby made his debut with the Cleveland Indians, becoming the first black player in the American League three months after Jackie Robinson broke the color barrier in the National League. In the game against the Chicago White Sox at Comiskey Park, Doby, pinch-hitting for Bryan Stephens, struck out in his first at-bat during the seventh inning; Chicago won 6-5.

In 1971, President Richard Nixon certified the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which lowered the minimum voting age from 21 to 18.

In 1975, Arthur Ashe became the first black man to win a Wimbledon singles title as he defeated Jimmy Connors, 6-1, 6-1, 5-7, 6-4.

In 1977, Pakistan's army, led by General Mohammad Zia ul-Haq, seized power from President Zulfikar Ali Bhutto (Bhutto was executed in 1979).

In 1989, "The Seinfeld Chronicles," the pilot to the situation comedy "Seinfeld," aired on NBC-TV.

In 1991, a worldwide financial scandal erupted as regulators in eight countries shut down the Bank of Credit and Commerce International.

In 2011, a jury in Orlando, Florida, found Casey Anthony, 25, not guilty of murder, manslaughter and child abuse in the 2008 disappearance and death of her 2-year-old daughter, Caylee.

In 2013, Pope Francis cleared two of the 20th Century's most influential popes to become saints in the Roman Catholic church, approving a miracle needed to canonize Pope John Paul II and waiving Vatican rules to honor Pope John XXIII.

Ten years ago: A bankruptcy judge ruled that General Motors Corp. could sell the bulk of its assets to a new company, clearing the way for the automaker to emerge from bankruptcy protection. Riots and street battles that killed nearly 200 people erupted in China's western Xinjiang province in the deadliest ethnic unrest to hit the region in decades. Roger Federer won his record 15th Grand Slam title when he outlasted Andy Roddick 5-7, 7-6 (6), 7-6 (5), 3-6, 16-14 in a marathon match for his sixth Wimbledon championship.

Five years ago: Ukrainian troops forced pro-Russian insurgents out of Slovyansk, a key stronghold in Ukraine's embattled east. Petra Kvitova overwhelmed Eugenie Bouchard 6-3, 6-0 in less than an hour to win Wimbledon for the second time.

One year ago: Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Scott Pruitt resigned amid ethics scandals that prompted more than a dozen federal and congressional investigations; deputy administrator Andrew Wheeler, a former coal industry lobbyist, was named to take over as acting administrator. James Alex Fields Jr. pleaded not guilty to federal hate crime charges in a car attack on a crowd of protesters opposing a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, on Aug. 12, 2017; a 32-year-old woman died and dozens were injured. (Fields later pleaded guilty to 29 federal hate crime charges under a plea deal in which prosecutors agreed not to seek the death penalty.)

Today's Birthdays: Actress Shirley Knight is 83. Singer-musician Robbie Robertson is 76. Julie Nixon Eisenhower is 71. Rock star Huey Lewis is 69. Baseball Hall of Fame pitcher Rich "Goose" Gossage is 68. Country musician Charles Ventre is 67. Singer-songwriter Marc Cohn is 60. Actor John Marshall Jones is 57. Actor Dorian Wilson is 57. Actress Edie Falco is 56. Actress Jillian Armenante is 55. Actress Kathryn Erbe is 54. Actor Michael Stuhlbarg is 51. Country musician Brent Flynn (Flynnville Train) is 50. Rapper RZA is 50. Rhythm and blues singer Joe is 46. Rock musician Bengt Lagerberg (The Cardigans) is 46. Actor Dale Godboldo is 44. Rapper Bizarre is 43. Rapper Royce da 5'9" is 42. Rock singer Jason Wade (Lifehouse) is 39. Actor Ryan Hansen is 38. Country musician Dave Haywood (Lady Antebellum) is 37. Rock musician Nick O'Malley (Arctic Monkeys) is 34. Actor Jason Dolley is 28. California Angels player Shohei Ohtani is 25.

Thought for Today: "Never let your sense of morals prevent you from doing what is right." — Isaac Asimov, American author (1920-1992).