

# Groton Daily Independent

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## **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

### Thursday, July 11

Cancelled: Legion at Castlewood, (DH)  
6:00 p.m.: T-Ball at Claremont (Black)  
Softball hosts Webster (U10 at 6 p.m. (1 game), U12 at 7 p.m. (2 games))  
Softball hosts Faulkton, (DH), 6 p.m.

### July 12-14

Legion at Clark Tourney  
U12 Midgets State Tournament, TBD  
U10 Pee Wees State Tournament, TBD

### Saturday, July 13

1:00 p.m.: Locke Electric Amateurs at Mt. Vernon (Tentative)

### Sunday, July 14

1:00 p.m.: Locke Electric Amateurs vs. Groton 2 Amateurs

### Monday, July 15

6:00 p.m.: U8 Pee Wees host Sisseton (R,B)

### Tuesday, July 16

5:30 p.m.: Junior Legion at Clark, (DH)  
Softball hosts Ipswich (U8 at 6 p.m. (1 game), U10 at 7 p.m. (2 games))

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## Cover Crops 2019 - What to Plant When

BROOKINGS, S.D. - As many Midwest producers look to cover crops to build soil health and/or provide supplemental forage after a soggy spring, many questions are arising regarding management decisions, specifically species selection and planting timing.

There is no 'hard and fast' blanketed mix that can be recommended to all producers, as each grower is in a unique circumstance with different production environments, soil types and management techniques. Rather than seeking the 'go-to' mix of your neighbor's choosing, ask yourself a few fundamental questions before planting a cover crop. Below are some of the critical questions producers should consider before planting cover crops on prevent plant acres this season.

**Herbicide history.** Consider your crop rotation as well as haying/chopping and grazing restrictions of herbicides previously applied; this includes herbicides applied before planting cover crops this season, as well as those applied in the previous season. This is a key component to having a successful cover crop. For more considerations regarding herbicide carryover click [here](#).

**Insurance and Farm Service Agency (FSA) Guidelines.** Be sure to check with your insurance agent and FSA representative on all details regarding the seeding of your cover crop. The prevent plant harvest date for mechanical forage harvest and/or grazing has been changed to September 1 for 2019. Frequently asked questions and answers regarding insurance can be found on the Risk Management Agency (RMA) website.

**Purpose.** Always begin with the end in mind. Soil health, weed suppression, nutrient capture, soil moisture management, additional harvested forage and grazing may all be common reasons to plant a cover crop. Try focusing on your own objectives when creating a planting plan. The SD Cover Crop Poster lists most common South Dakota cover crops and their purpose ratings, seeding rates and seeding depths.

**Seed availability and price.** As cover crop seed is in high demand this year, the seed of some popular forage cover crop species could be in scarce supply and may have risen in price, which are important



### 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**

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factors to consider before choosing a mix. Although most producers want to keep costs low, it should be kept in mind that forage crops and/or improved soil health does come at a price and some investment will be necessary.

**Crop rotation.** Keep your previous crop and intended crop for 2020 in mind; it is generally recommended to plant cover crops of diverse growth habit to the subsequent cash crops, i.e., primarily broadleaves prior to grass cash crops and vice versa.

**Termination.** In most cases, many cover crops will winter kill. However, some species may over-winter such as cereal rye, winter wheat, triticale, etc. Additionally, some seed, such as some ryegrass and vetch, can stay dormant for a prolonged period (hard seed). This does not eliminate these crops as an option; it simply requires prompt spring attention and management, as these crops may be of great value to utilize excess moisture in a potentially wet spring.

**Weed Control.** Often times, if a diverse cover crop mix is planted, it is nearly impossible to chemically control weeds during the growth of the cover crop. If a mix is well-planned and grown under ideal growing conditions, weed control typically is not an issue. However, if a particular weed is of concern, this should be considered before selecting cover crops. Winter rye is known for its inherent allelopathic characteristics, i.e. its ability to suppress weeds by the production of a biological chemical substrate that is harmful to other surrounding species. However, other grasses such as sprawling or more ground covering broadleaf crops (such as vetches, or radish and turnip) can aid in weed suppression by keeping soils covered.

**Soil Fertility.** If a producer intends to use a cover crop as forage, nitrogen application may be required. Consider previous crop credits and current soil test levels if legumes were planted. In many situations, low nitrogen application rates (30-60lbs/a) will provide considerable growth for cover crops. It is important to apply the appropriate rate of nitrogen when planting for forage purposes to avoid nitrate buildup in the plant, which may cause toxicity to animals. Check the South Dakota Fertilizer Recommendations Guide for suggested soil fertility guidelines for major South Dakota crops.

**Planting time.** As most cover crops are grown in blends, it is difficult to establish an exact seeding date based on individual crop species. However, there are suggested planting timing windows for crop types based on the proportion of different cover crops species in the blend. Cool season cover crops such as small grains, peas, clovers, vetch and brassicas should be planted during or near the third week of July, as average daily temperatures tend to decrease due to lower night temperatures, which creates a better growing environment for cool season species. On the other hand, warm season species (forage sorghums, sorghum-sudangrass, buckwheat, sunflower, and teff grass, etc.) can be planted prior to the third week of July, but ideally no later than the first week of August. Typically, these crops are planted in June, but delayed and prevented planting of row crops may have predetermined an early July planting. When planted within these suggested guidelines, cover crops should have ample growth to be harvested for forage after September 1. Due to growth habit, some species in the mix may mature faster than others, which should not inhibit forage harvest.

Although there are many factors to take into consideration, cover crops can be an excellent tool to mitigate the challenging planting season. Cover crops not only reduce fallow acres, but also enhance soil health and provide supplemental forage. For more information, contact your nearest SDSU Extension Regional Center or local NRCS office for cover crop recommendations and other assistance.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA  
NEWS WATCH**

**Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.**

## Juvenile drug arrests rise in S.D. despite reform efforts

**By: Nick Lowrey**

Over the past decade, South Dakota saw a significant increase in the number of juveniles arrested for drug crimes, and officials see few signs that the arrests will fall anytime soon despite recent reforms of the state juvenile justice system.

According to state crime data, the number of youths arrested on drug charges such as possession, use and distribution nearly doubled from 579 in 2008 to 1,043 in 2012. Since 2012, the number of juvenile arrests for drug crimes hasn't fallen below 948. The number peaked at 1,062 in 2015, the same year a set of sweeping new juvenile justice reforms went into effect.

State officials are uncertain whether the upward trend in arrests means that more young people are actually using drugs, if more are being caught due to increased enforcement, or whether the juvenile justice system reforms of 2015 that sought to keep juveniles out of jail has inadvertently led to a higher re-offense rate by some juvenile drug users. The number of juveniles arrested for all other crimes not related to drugs has fallen across the state in recent years.

The rise in juvenile drug arrests comes as the state is already grappling with increased arrest rates of adults on drug charges. The number of adults arrested for drug crimes in South Dakota climbed from 2,778 in 2008 to 9,080 in 2018, an increase of nearly 227%.

Law enforcement and judicial officials have in the past blamed much of the rise in adult arrests on the methamphetamine epidemic and also the proliferation of opioid addiction in South Dakota. While the reasons for the climbing juvenile drug arrests are less clear, the arrest numbers for juveniles and adults are causing concern among state officials that the drug problem in South Dakota needs constant focus.

"Drug crime is something that's growing in South Dakota, and it's something we need to pay attention to," said Tim Bormann, chief of staff to South Dakota Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg.

The high juvenile drug arrest rate gave the state some unflattering national attention earlier this year. In March, 2019, a study conducted by the Greenhouse Treatment Facility in Grand Prairie, Texas, showed that South Dakota had the highest juvenile drug arrest rate in the nation in 2017. According to the study, 1,056 juvenile drug arrests were made

**The Groton Area School District is hiring for the  
2019-2020 School Year.**

**MS/HS Administrative Assistant/Study Hall  
Supervisor**

**Yearbook Advisor**

**Assistant Boys Basketball Coach**

Applications are available at [www.grotonrea.com](http://www.grotonrea.com)  
under the employment tab. Contact Joe Schwan,  
Superintendent with questions at 605-397-2351.

Applications should be sent to  
Groton Area School District  
Joe Schwan, Superintendent  
PO Box 410  
Groton, SD 57445

**The Groton Area School District is an Equal  
Opportunity Employer.**

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**Greg Sattizahn, chair of the South Dakota Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee, provides an overview of what the oversight committee has focused on over the past four years and gives a quick look at the committee's plans for the future.**

**"At least some of the increase in juvenile drug arrests might be related to what's going on with adults, who are being arrested on drug crimes at an alarming rate in South Dakota. It sure makes sense to me that if you have more drug use at home, you'll have more kids exposed to it."**  
-- Greg Sattizahn

that year, a rate of more than 45 juveniles per 10,000 South Dakotans under the age of 18. The Greenhouse study was based on data from the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 2017 Uniform Crime Report.

By comparison, Wyoming, the state with the second-highest rate of juvenile drug arrests in the study, had 579 such arrests and a rate of about 35 drug arrests per 10,000 juveniles. North Dakota was third in the ranking, with 479 juvenile drug arrests for about 17 arrests per 10,000 juveniles in 2017.

Minnesota, population 5.6 million, reported 1,893 total juvenile drug arrests in 2017 for a rate of about 14 arrests per 10,000 youths. Montana, Iowa and Nebraska all reported fewer juvenile drug arrests than South Dakota and much lower arrest rates.

South Dakota officials, however, say the rate in the Greenhouse study doesn't tell the whole story.

Greg Sattizahn, chairman of the South Dakota Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee, which monitors the state's juvenile justice reform efforts, said the Uniform Crime Report isn't supposed to be used to rank states. Sattizahn said there are too many factors unaccounted for in the data, including that not every jurisdiction in every state reports their statistics to the FBI.

In 2018, 17 South Dakota jurisdictions failed to report a full year's worth of data, said Bormann.

Despite concerns over the rankings, state data shows that the number of juveniles arrested for drug offenses has increased dramatically since 2008 and has remained at an elevated level since.

Prior to 2015, South Dakota had one of the highest rates of juvenile incarceration in the country. The statistics was one driving force behind efforts by then-Gov. Dennis Daugaard to sign what was known as the Juvenile Justice Public Safety Improvement Act in March of that year.

The law created or boosted funding for a suite of new services and diversion programs designed to fight addiction and alter behavior instead of locking juveniles up, Sattizahn said. The goal behind many of the reforms is to keep youths out of the justice system altogether, he said.

"If we have too heavy a hand ... you can push them further into the criminal justice system," Sattizahn said.

So far, the reform effort has had some success. The number of youths placed into the custody of the Department of Corrections for the first time fell by 63% between 2014 and 2018, according to the Juvenile Justice Oversight Committee 2018 annual report.

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In another sign of success, the number of youths arrested for crimes not related to drugs has declined. In 2012, the state reported 6,617 arrests of juveniles for all crimes other than drug use, possession or distribution. In 2018, South Dakota reported 5,026 non-drug juvenile arrests, a 24% decline over that period.

The state's law enforcement community is pegging the rise in juvenile drug arrests at least partially on the Juvenile Justice Public Safety Improvement Act, Bormann said. The argument is that because youths who were arrested used to be placed in treatment or a detention center, but are now released into the community, that they have more opportunities to reoffend.

"One of the things you will hear from prosecutors and law enforcement is, it tends to create a lot of repeat offenders," Bormann said.

Local law enforcement agencies, however, aren't required to report how many times they arrest the same person for the same crime. As a result, there isn't a good way for state officials to track the number of repeat arrests.

The sharp rise in South Dakota's juvenile drug arrest numbers also predates the juvenile justice reforms by more than five years. Bormann said the creation of regional law enforcement task forces, made up of state, federal and local officers, might account for part of the increase in arrests. The first such task force, known as the Northern Plains Safe Trails Task Force, was created by federal officials in 1999.

At least some of the increase in juvenile drug arrests might be related to what's going on with adults, Sattizahn said, citing the rapid climb in adult drug arrests.

"It sure makes sense to me that if you have more drug use at home, you'll have more kids exposed to it," Sattizahn said.

Bormann said there are probably more youths doing drugs, too. But it's hard to know whether that's true or not. The biennial anonymous Youth Risk Behavior Survey, one of the nation's most important tools for tracking substance abuse in teens, did not reach statistical validity in South Dakota in 2017. States administer the voluntary survey on behalf of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The YRBS collects information such as how many youths are doing drugs and what kinds of drugs they are taking. The last YRBS was administered in 2017 but not enough youths and schools participated, so the data gathered wasn't considered representative of the state population.

Results from the 2007 to 2015 surveys showed the number of youths using marijuana was declining. The number of youths who were using meth fluctuated between about 3% to 5%.

Trends surrounding youths and prescription medication abuse haven't been studied or reported. Questions about the issue weren't added to the YRBS until 2011, so officials say there is not enough data to identify trends. But, in 2015, the YRBS estimated that about 13 percent of South Dakota teens had misused prescription drugs.



**One of the major goals of the 2015 juvenile justice reform efforts in South Dakota was to reduce the number of youths sent to facilities such as the Western South Dakota Juvenile Services Center in Rapid City, shown here.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

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Nationally, according to the 2017 YRBS, the number of youths doing drugs was falling. Survey results from South Dakota and some other states were included in the CDC 2017 national report, but the percentage of youths who reported taking illegal drugs had fallen from 22.5% in 2007 to about 14% in 2017.

Finding good data on what youths are doing, what treatment programs seem to be working and which programs aren't working has been a challenge for Sattizahn and the Juvenile Justice Oversight Council.

"We feel like we need that data," Sattizahn said.

Bormann, who served as Faulk County state's attorney before he became Ravensborg's chief of staff, said he has seen first-hand the challenges the legal system faces when trying to keep youths away from drugs. Reducing drug use in rural areas, in particular, has been a struggle, he said. Treatment centers, counselors, court services and judges tend to be concentrated in population centers, nsaid. For Faulk County, the nearest city with everything needed to run a successful treatment program was 60 miles away in Aberdeen.

"There are some great programs that are being used to great effect," Bormann said. "But in a location like where I was, it didn't always work."

For all the challenges that exist in trying to reform the juvenile justice system and reduce the number of youths being arrested for drugs, there's been a lot of success, Sattizahn said.

The number of youths sent to an out-of-home detention or treatment facility has dropped by more than half from 220 in 2014 to 82 in 2018. More youths and their families are completing diversion or treatment programs too, Sattizahn said. In 2018, 353 families completed Functional Family Therapy, for example.

"Before (the juvenile reforms) we couldn't even identify what diversion programs there were in the state," Sattizahn said.

One effort to improve access to diversion allows probation officers to set up and run their own diversion programs on a case-by-case basis, Sattizahn said.

"It's kind of different because you have a court officer doing work outside the court system," Sattizahn said.

One of South Dakota's more well-known diversion programs is Teen Court. There are 12 Teen Court programs spread around the state. Usually, they are run by local non-profits. Essentially, Teen Courts function as sentencing courts for youths by youths. To be eligible for Teen Court, a juvenile arrestee has to plead guilty to the crime they were arrested for and be referred to the program by the local state's attorney.

Aside from a judge, which usually is a local lawyer, the local coordinators, and a few parent volunteers, Teen Courts are run by youths. Teen volunteers from nearby high schools and middle schools act as attorneys for defendants, prosecutors and the jury. The defense attorneys and prosecutors question defendants



**Tim Bormann of the South Dakota Attorney General's Office said high juvenile arrest rates may be driven by the fact that some youths may be repeat offenders.** Photo: Nick

Lowery, South Dakota News Watch

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and the jury ultimately decides on a fitting punishment.

The Central South Dakota Teen Court is based in the Stanley County Courthouse in Fort Pierre. The program saw 44 cases between July 1, 2018 and June 30, 2019. A total of 29 of those cases were marijuana- or alcohol-related, said Emily Steffen, who coordinates the program for Capital Area Counseling Services. Six of the cases were repeat offenders, she said.

Steffen said Teen Court is based on the principles of restorative justice, an idea that seeks to repair damage done by crime. Sentences range from community service and job shadows with police to writing essays and making apologies. Once a defendant's punishment is complete, Steffen sends a letter to the state's attorney recommending that the case be dropped.

"I think overall it's really successful," Steffen said.

There are limitations to what Teen Court can do, and youths who are sent to teen court for the first time have to pay a \$60 fee. If they wind up in the program again, the fee jumps to \$155. Teen Court also doesn't see cases where defendants are accused of possessing or using hard drugs such as methamphetamines.

The state has also increased efforts to drill in on the root causes of drug use by youths, which often means examining home and family situations. Tiffany Wolfgang, division director for behavioral health at the state Department of Social Services, said one of the most important programs the department oversees when it comes to youths and drugs is functional family therapy. The idea, Wolfgang said, is to get a handle on some of the issues in a child's home that might be pushing them toward substance abuse.

"It may be the kid who gets arrested but we need to look at the family," Wolfgang said.

Functional Family Therapy, as the name suggests, works by treating the whole family. In all, 61 of South Dakota's 67 counties had access to the program in 2018. Wolfgang said DSS also has been working to put systems of care coordinators in place to work within schools to help identify and work with youths who are struggling with mental health or substance abuse disorders before they wind up in trouble with the law.

Challenges in providing such services are made more difficult due to the rural nature and sparse population of South Dakota, she said. Just because programs exist doesn't mean they can be delivered everywhere or to everyone in the same way, Wolfgang said.

"It's hard to develop intensive care programs," she said.

The work is made harder by the nature of addiction, which often can be part of a deeper mental health issue, Wolfgang said.

"I think it can be hard at times for the justice system to understand behavioral health issues," Wolfgang said.

South Dakota's court system has been getting better at working with youths who have an addiction or have a mental illness, Wolfgang said, but progress takes time and patience.

"I think the challenge is that these aren't quick fixes ... these are complex issues that require collaboration," Wolfgang said.



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Today

Tonight

Friday

Friday  
Night

Saturday



Patchy Fog  
then Sunny

Clear

Mostly Sunny

Mostly Clear

Mostly Sunny

High: 86 °F

Low: 68 °F

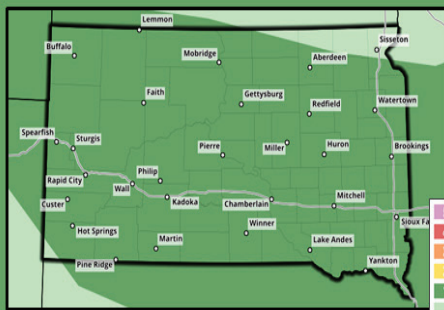
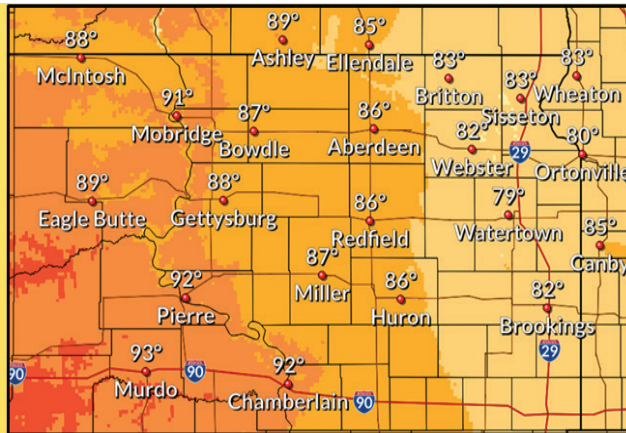
High: 88 °F

Low: 67 °F

High: 89 °F

**Hot & Humid  
Today...  
With Sunny Skies**

**Highs:  
90s West/80s East**



Isolated Strong To Severe Storms

**...Storms Return  
Stormy Early Friday  
Morning**



ISSUED: 4:06 AM - Thursday, July 11, 2019



Published on: 07/11/2019 at 12:07AM

Hot and humid air returns to the region today on a south breeze. A weak system crossing the region overnight will bring isolated strong to severe storms with the main risk being hail and strong winds Friday morning. Heat and humidity will be the story for the foreseeable future, albeit that is fairly standard for this time of year.

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## Today in Weather History

July 11, 1909: A deadly, estimated F2 tornado moved ESE across the Simpson Park section of Big Stone City in South Dakota. A bus was thrown from the road, and the driver was killed. Two homes and several barns were destroyed. As the tornado crossed the foot of Big Stone Lake, it tore apart a railroad yard and killed four of the 26 Armenian laborers who were living in box cars at Ortonville, Minnesota. Nineteen were injured.

July 11, 1981: Severe thunderstorms moved eastward across the entire length of the South Dakota along the northern portion of the state. Hail, with the largest up to nine inches in circumference, resulted in 100 percent crop loss, damage to numerous buildings and loss of livestock. Trees were stripped, and large limbs were broken. High winds also accompanied these storms. Storms lasted into the early morning hours on the 12. Thunderhawk in Corson County had estimated winds of 70 to 75 mph that destroyed a machine shop and seven metal grain storage bins. In and around Pollock, a silo was moved three feet off the foundation. Power and telephones lines were down. Rainfall measured 2.28 inches in two hours in Pollock.

1936: From July 5-17, temperatures exceeding 111 degrees in Manitoba and Ontario claimed 1,180 lives (mostly the elderly and infants) during the most prolonged, deadliest heat wave on record. Four hundred of these deaths were caused by people who drowned seeking refuge from the heat. In fact, the heat was so intense that steel rail lines and bridge girders twisted, sidewalks buckled, crops wilted and fruit baked on trees. Some record temperatures include; 112 degrees at St. Albans and Emerson, Manitoba, 111 at Brandon, Manitoba, 108 at Atikokan, Ontario, and Winnipeg, Manitoba.

1990: The costliest hailstorm in U.S. history occurred along the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies. (Denver, Colorado): Softball-sized hail destroyed roofs and cars, causing more than \$600 million in total damage.

1888 - Heavy snow reached almost to the base of Mt. Washington, NH, and the peaks of the Green Mountains were whitened. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 90 mph at Parkston, SD, and wind gusts to 87 mph at Buffalo, MN. Later in the day strong thunderstorm winds at Howard WI collapsed a circus tent injuring 44 persons. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in southern Texas, with totals ranging up to 13 inches near Medina. Two men drowned when their pick-up truck was swept into the Guadalupe River, west of the town of Hunt. Ten cities in the eastern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date. Baltimore, MD, reported a record high reading of 102 degrees for the second day in a row. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather from North Dakota to Indiana. Thunderstorms in North Dakota produced tennis ball size hail at Carson. Thunderstorms in Indiana produced wind gusts to 75 mph at Fort Wayne. Five cities in the Southern Atlantic Coast Region reported record high temperatures for the date, including Lakeland, FL, with a reading of 100 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

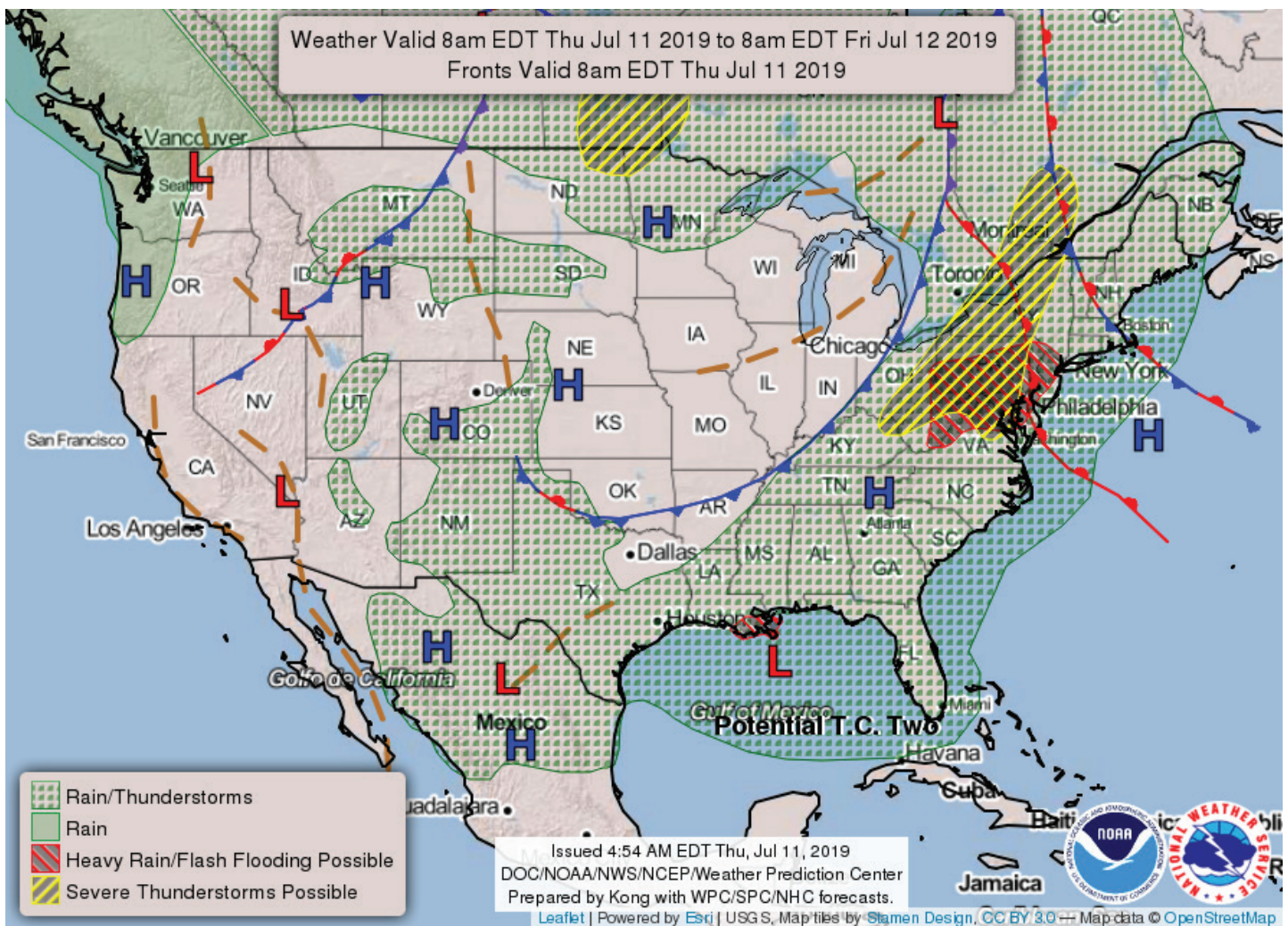
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## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp:** 79 °F at 5:46 PM  
**Low Temp:** 64 °F at 4:06 AM  
**Wind:** 29 mph at 10:57 AM  
**Day Rain:** 0.00

**Record High:** 110° in 1930  
**Record Low:** 45° in 1941  
**Average High:** 83°F  
**Average Low:** 59°F  
**Average Precip in July.:** 1.07  
**Precip to date in July.:** 1.22  
**Average Precip to date:** 11.91  
**Precip Year to Date:** 13.94  
**Sunset Tonight:** 9:22 p.m.  
**Sunrise Tomorrow:** 5:57 a.m.



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## ONE MORE TIME. HOWEVER?

Solomon refuses to let us forget the theme of Proverbs: wisdom. He frequently reminds us of its significance, then demonstrates how we are to apply it to our daily activities, its effect on our present life, and ultimately our life with God in eternity. The fear of the Lord leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble. Perhaps a more accurate and easily understood way to translate this verse is The fear of the Lord is life indeed! Life, when lived in this manner means that those who accept and live life the way God designed it to be, need never fear the Lord.

It is easy to lose sight of what God intended life to be. If we look at life the way God created us to be, a reflection of His image, we will more likely than not discover that it is quite different from how we plan to live. It is not adding the fear of God to our lives, but living life as God specifically designed it to be and being afraid of not meeting His expectations. God created man to have a divine dimension above and beyond our humanity. God intended our manner of living to be evident and obvious to others.

First, God designed us to be devoted to Him alone. He is at the center of our soul - the sum total of our life - including our feelings, thoughts, and actions. Everything we think and feel and do are all focused on pleasing Him. We are dedicated to building His Kingdom on earth by using the gifts and talents He has given us to honor Him. It is living life in, through, and for Him.

Secondly, whatever we do proceeds or had its origins in Him. Others see His character in us: His love and grace, mercy and forgiveness; His compassion and comfort, and care of and for others. We will do His work in His world by doing His will.

Finally, we do these things by applying His wisdom to our lives and following His guidance every moment of every day.

Prayer: Lord, all this seems impossible and unattainable. But, its not about attaining. Its about maintaining an attitude of wanting to be who You created us to be! Help us, Jesus! Amen!

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the Lord leads to life; then one rests content, untouched by trouble.

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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)

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## News from the Associated Press

### SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

09-23-25-26-34

(nine, twenty-three, twenty-five, twenty-six, thirty-four)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

16-22-32-36-42, Star Ball: 8, ASB: 3

(sixteen, twenty-two, thirty-two, thirty-six, forty-two; Star Ball: eight; ASB: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$21.6 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$121 million

Powerball

07-09-26-44-68, Powerball: 3, Power Play: 3

(seven, nine, twenty-six, forty-four, sixty-eight; Powerball: three; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$180 million

### FCC approves priority window for tribes to expand broadband

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — The Federal Communications Commission has approved a priority filing window for tribes to obtain licenses that could boost internet service in rural communities.

The commission voted 3-2 Wednesday in favor of the filing window for federally recognized tribes.

The 2.5 Ghz-band of spectrum largely is unassigned in the U.S. West and is seen as key to expanding 5G access.

The licenses could help tribes establish or expand broadband coverage in underserved areas. Tribally owned entities, including colleges and universities, also would be given priority for licenses.

The filing window for tribes could open as early as December. The remaining spectrum would be auctioned off for commercial use.

The FCC vote also removed the educational use requirement for the spectrum. The changes won't affect existing license holders.

### Keystone pipeline opponents again seek to block construction

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Opponents of the Keystone XL oil pipeline asked a judge to again block construction of the \$8 billion project after President Donald Trump issued it a new permit.

Attorneys for environmental groups made the request Wednesday in a lawsuit before U.S. District Judge Brian Morris in Montana. They say Trump's permit was illegal.

The 1,184-mile (1,900-kilometer) pipeline proposed by TC Energy would carry crude oil from Canada to Nebraska.

Opponents contend it would make climate change worse by increasing fossil fuel consumption.

Morris temporarily blocked construction last year, saying officials had not fully considered oil spills and other impacts. That ruling was upheld on appeal, only to have Trump issue a new permit in March.

Government attorneys say that permit is not subject to environmental laws. They want the lawsuit dismissed.

## Body of missing girl found in swollen South Dakota creek

CHERRY CREEK, S.D. (AP) — Searchers have recovered the body of a young girl from a swollen creek in north-central South Dakota.

Witnesses say the girl went missing early Tuesday afternoon from the banks of Cherry Creek near the confluence of the Cheyenne River on the Cheyenne River Sioux Reservation.

Volunteers and residents from the village of Cherry Creek found her body in a bend of the creek late Wednesday morning.

KOTA-TV reports officials say the creek is usually between 3 and 4 feet deep, but is running 7 to 8 feet deep because of heavy rains.

Officials have not yet released the girl's name.

Information from: KOTA-TV, <http://www.kotatv.com>

## Social media spat erupts over South Dakota missing girl case

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota state lawmaker has been hit with a no-trespass order after a social media blowup over her activism in a missing girl case.

The dispute began when one of state Sen. Lynne DiSanto's constituents accused her of using Serenity Dennard's disappearance for personal gain — that the senator's actions are more about self-promotion than finding Serenity, the Rapid City Journal reported Wednesday.

Serenity was 9 when she walked away in frigid weather in February from the Black Hills Children's Home, which is in a rugged, forested area of western South Dakota, and remains missing despite multiple searches. Since then, DiSanto has launched a website and Facebook page with commentary, videos and other content related about the case, and started a GoFundMe page in hopes of raising reward money.

Police said Patricia Kassner, who like DiSanto is from Box Elder, posted messages on the Facebook page accusing DeSanto of exploiting the girl's disappearance.

"To use a situation like this for your own personal gain and just to stir up drama is just evil," said one of Kassner's messages, according to a police report.

DiSanto called Kassner "completely and totally ignorant" in one reply and also wrote, "Patricia Kassner I see you live close to me!!! Awesome! I'll be stopping by to say Hi so we can talk face to face soon."

Massner contacted Box Elder police July 1 and expressed concerns about a potential confrontation.

Lt. Chris Misselt issued the no-trespass order even though Kassner acknowledged to him that DiSanto would "probably not" show up to assault her and DiSanto told him she didn't intend her message as a threat.

"When people engage on social media, things can get taken out of context, and there was nothing that happened," DiSanto told the newspaper. She said she's using her platform in a positive way and asked why more elected officials aren't talking about the case.

But Kassner stuck to her assertions that DiSanto was using the case for her own benefit. She also criticized DiSanto for featuring large photographs of herself as the primary images on her Facebook page and website, instead of more prominently featuring photos of Serenity.

"Go onto any of her pages and what is the first thing you see but a big picture of her?" Kassner said of DiSanto.

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

## 2 die when flash flood creates chasm in North Dakota road

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Authorities say two people were killed when a flash flood washed out a highway, causing a chasm up to 70 feet deep on a reservation in North Dakota.

Tribal chairman Mike Faith says the bodies of Trudy Peterson and Jim Vanderwal were recovered Tuesday on the Standing Rock Reservation in Sioux County.

The flooding overnight Monday washed out a section of a road over Joe Brush Creek, resulting in a hole

that reservation roads officials estimate is 30 to 40 feet (9 to 12 meters) wide and 60 to 70 feet (18 to 21 meters) deep.

The drivers of a bus and a pickup truck were rescued and taken to hospitals after their vehicles plunged into the hole.

## 3 vehicles owned by Elvis Presley going up for auction

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Elvis Presley fans can take to the road in his personal stretch limousine, on his last motorcycle or in a pickup truck if they have the money, an auction house announced Wednesday.

Kruse GWS Auctions said the items will be part of its Artifacts of Hollywood auction on Aug. 31.

Presley drove the white-on-white 1973 Lincoln Continental stretch many times around Memphis, Tennessee, Kruse said. It features an old-school TV and other amenities. There are photos showing "the King" driving the car he was in when he stopped at a car accident in Memphis in 1976.

The auction house said a 1976 Harley Davidson FLH 1200 Electra Glide motorcycle was the last motorcycle Presley ever purchased. He transported it from California to Memphis and sold it 90 days before he died in 1977 at age 42. The Harley has been on display at the Pioneer Auto Museum in Murdo, South Dakota, since the late 1980s.

The third Presley vehicle is one of three GMC pickups that Presley purchased in 1967 for his Circle G Ranch in Mississippi. Two years later, his father, Vernon, sold them back to the same dealership, the auction house said. It has undergone a total restoration.

## Acosta defends Epstein deal amid calls for his resignation

By JILL COLVIN and RICHARD LARDNER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Trying to tamp down calls for his resignation, Labor Secretary Alex Acosta on Wednesday defended his handling of a sex trafficking case involving now-jailed financier Jeffrey Epstein, insisting he got the toughest deal he could at the time.

In a nearly hour-long news conference, Acosta retraced the steps that federal prosecutors took in the case when he was U.S. attorney for the Southern District of Florida a decade ago, insisting that "in our heart we were trying to do the right thing for these victims." He said prosecutors were working to avoid a more lenient arrangement that would have allowed Epstein to "walk free."

"We believe that we proceeded appropriately," he said, a contention challenged by critics who say Epstein's penalty was egregiously light.

The episode reignited this week when federal prosecutors in New York brought a new round of child sex trafficking charges against the wealthy hedge fund manager. And on Wednesday, a new accuser stepped forward to say Epstein raped her in his New York mansion when she was 15.

Jennifer Araoz, now 32, told "Today" she never went to police because she feared retribution from the well-connected Epstein. She now has filed court papers seeking information from Epstein in preparation for suing him.

While the handling of the case arose during Acosta's confirmation hearings, it has come under fresh and intense scrutiny after the prosecutors in New York brought their charges on Monday, alleging Epstein abused dozens of underage girls in the early 2000s, paying them hundreds of dollars in cash for massages, then molesting them at his homes in Florida and New York. Epstein has pleaded not guilty to the charges; if convicted he could be imprisoned for the rest of his life.

Acosta's lawyerly presentation was an effort to push back against growing criticism of his work in a secret 2008 plea deal that let Epstein avoid federal prosecution on charges that he molested teenage girls. A West Palm Beach judge found this year that the deal had violated the Crime Victims' Rights Act because the victims were not informed or consulted.

He was also out to persuade President Donald Trump to keep him on the job as Democratic presidential candidates and party leaders called for his ouster.



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Acosta insisted his office did the best it could under the circumstances a decade ago. He said state authorities had planned to go after Epstein with charges that would have resulted in no jail time until his office intervened and pressed for tougher consequences, a contention that is supported by the record. The alternative, he said, would have been for federal prosecutors to "roll the dice" and hope to win a conviction.

"We did what we did because we wanted to see Epstein go to jail," Acosta said. "He needed to go to jail."

But Epstein only was given 13 months in a work-release program, which let him work out of the jail six days a week. Acosta said it was "entirely appropriate" to be outraged about that leniency, but he blamed that on Florida authorities. "Everything the victims have gone through in these cases is horrific," he said, while repeatedly refusing to apologize to them.

"I think it's important to stand up for the prosecutors" in his old office, he said.

His account did not sit well with Barry Krischer, who was the Palm Beach County attorney during the case. Krischer, a Democrat, said Acosta "should not be allowed to rewrite history."

Acosta's South Florida office had gotten to the point of drafting an indictment that could have sent Epstein to federal prison for life. But it was never filed, leading to Epstein's guilty plea to two state prostitution-related charges. In addition to the work-release jail sentence, Epstein was required to make payments to victims and register as a sex offender.

Krischer said the federal indictment was "abandoned after secret negotiations between Mr. Epstein's lawyers and Mr. Acosta." He added: "If Mr. Acosta was truly concerned with the State's case and felt he had to rescue the matter, he would have moved forward with the 53-page indictment that his own office drafted."

Acosta has said he welcomes the new case, and earlier defended himself on Twitter, crediting "new evidence and additional testimony" uncovered by prosecutors in New York for providing "an important opportunity to more fully bring him to justice."

Pressed on whether he had any regrets, Acosta repeatedly suggested that circumstances had changed since the case arose. "We now have 12 years of knowledge and hindsight and we live in a very different world," he said. "Today's world treats victims very, very differently."

Trump has, so far, also defended Acosta, praising his work as labor secretary and saying he felt "very badly" for him "because I've known him as being somebody that works so hard and has done such a good job."

Though Trump may have made the tagline "You're fired!" famous on his reality show "The Apprentice," he has shown a pattern of reluctance to fire even his most embattled aides. Trump, for instance, took months to dismiss Scott Pruitt as Environmental Protection Agency administrator despite a dizzying array of scandals, and allowed Jeff Sessions to remain as attorney general for more than a year even as he railed at and belittled him.

Trump typically gives his Cabinet secretaries the opportunity to defend themselves publicly in interviews and press conferences before deciding whether to pull the plug. Indeed, he encouraged Acosta to hold Wednesday's press conference laying out his thinking and involvement in the plea deal, according to a senior administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

Early reaction in the White House appeared to be positive, with one official saying the performance was likely enough to buy Acosta more time unless questions about his part in the 2008 case linger in the news. Vice President Mike Pence said he was "pleased to see Secretary Acosta step forward."

Trump has his own long personal history with Epstein, but has dissociated himself from the wealthy hedge fund manager, saying this week the two had a falling out 15 or so years ago and haven't spoken since.

Acosta told reporters that his relationship with Trump remains "outstanding," but also noted that every member of Trump's Cabinet serves at the president's pleasure.

Democratic presidential contenders and party leaders have been calling for Acosta to resign or be fired, and he has been called to testify in front of the House Oversight Committee on July 23. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz, D-Florida, welcomed that move, saying Acosta "has a disturbing record on sexual and human trafficking that stretches from the horribly permissive plea agreement he gave to Jeffrey Epstein,

up to his time now as Labor Secretary.”

Many Senate Republicans, meanwhile, have taken a wait-and-see approach.

Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Zeke Miller and Darlene Superville in Washington and Curt Anderson in Miami contributed to this report.

## Diplomats shaken for now after Britain's US ambassador quits

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The abrupt resignation of Britain's ambassador to the United States over leaked cables critical of the Trump administration may have jolted official Washington, but it's unlikely to have a lasting impact on the U.S.-British relationship or diplomatic practice.

Current and former diplomats say the leak of Ambassador Kim Darroch's sensitive reports is unfortunate and alarming, particularly given the apparent political motive behind it. Yet, they believe any complications will be temporary even as they create short-term turbulence in relations.

"It's a problem, but I don't know that it has a chilling affect over time because in the end people have jobs to do and they do their jobs," said Ronald Neumann, a retired three-time U.S. ambassador who is the president of the American Academy of Diplomacy. "It's wrong and it's too bad. Still, you move on because there's work to be done."

Darroch, a well-known figure in Washington, resigned on Wednesday amid an uproar over the candid cables, saying "the current situation is making it impossible for me to carry out my role as I would like." The resignation followed President Donald Trump's furious caustic response to the leaked cables in which Darroch offered candid negative views of his administration.

In the cables, Darroch called the administration's policy toward Iran "incoherent," said the president might be indebted to "dodgy Russians" and raised doubts about whether the White House "will ever look competent."

Trump's lambasting of Darroch on Twitter — he called the ambassador "a pompous fool" and "a very stupid guy" and criticized outgoing British Prime Minister Theresa May — drew condemnation from both sides of the Atlantic.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who is in the running to replace May, replied: "Allies need to treat each other with respect."

Others suggested that Trump's reaction proved Darroch's point.

"Trump's petty and vindictive overreaction not only reinforces the accuracy of Darroch's portrait of him in his leaked cables, but further erodes an already complicated bilateral relationship," said William Burns, a highly respected retired career diplomat who served as deputy secretary of state during the Obama administration and is president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

The State Department downplayed the fracas, saying: "The United States and the United Kingdom share a bond that is bigger than any individual, and we look forward to continuing that partnership. We remain committed to the U.S.-UK Special Relationship and our shared global agenda."

But Rep. Adam Schiff, the California Democrat who chairs the House intelligence committee, said Trump's comments make the work of American diplomats abroad harder than they already are.

"Diplomats the world over, including ours, are expected to provide candid assessments and advice to their home governments," he said. "If a foreign leader treated an American ambassador as President Trump treated the British ambassador, we would be up in arms, and justifiably so."

In fact, U.S. diplomats have already felt the consequences of leaked cables that laid out unvarnished and often unflattering impressions of foreign leaders and governments.

The 2010 publication by WikiLeaks of tens of thousands of classified and sensitive documents had a direct impact on at least three U.S. ambassadors, including one, Carlos Pascual, who resigned as envoy to Mexico over fallout from cables critical of then-Mexican President Felipe Calderon. Pascual was traveling Wednesday and not immediately available to comment on any similarities between his resignation and

Darroch's.

Carnegie's Burns, who was serving as the third-ranking U.S. diplomat at the time, recalled that the leaks had "negative practical implications" for the day-to-day conduct of embassies.

"The immediate impact was to make U.S. diplomatic missions more careful, so there is, at least initially, a dampening effect," he said. "But, we got over it in time."

In the long run, though, few believe damage to the "special relationship" caused this week will be severe or lingering.

"The state-to-state relationship is much more than one person, particularly with Britain," Neumann said. "This is probably one of the least ambassador-dependent relationships we have, which is why we are able to send whoever we want to London, including some who are not so able."

## **Dems preparing to question Mueller say it 'will not be easy'**

**By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some are watching old video of his previous testimony. Others are closely re-reading his 448-page report. And almost all are worrying about how they'll make the most of the short time they'll have for questioning.

Robert Mueller, the Democrats know, will be tough to crack.

The stern, reticent former FBI director has said he won't answer questions beyond what is in the report on Russia's election meddling and the Trump campaign and possible obstruction of justice when he comes to Congress on July 17.

Mueller is expected to testify in front of the Judiciary and intelligence committees for two hours each, with time split evenly between Republicans and Democrats, though that timing is still a subject of negotiations. That means Democrats will have to be efficient and targeted in their attempts to extract information from the former special counsel and spotlight what they say are his most damaging findings against President Donald Trump.

"It will not be easy," said Rhode Island Rep. David Cicilline, a Democratic member of the Judiciary Committee. He added: "We just have to be very smart about how we use the time and really give the special counsel the time to tell the story."

Cicilline says he's reading the report a second time, thoroughly, with an eye toward what he wants to ask.

Separately, a Democratic aide said staff members have been watching old videos of Mueller testifying as FBI director during the administrations of Presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama. They're looking to see how he'll act, the aide said, and they have noticed he gives minimal commentary when answering questions. The aide was not authorized to discuss internal preparations for the hearing and requested anonymity.

Wary of their challenging witness, Democratic members of the Judiciary Committee huddled Wednesday evening to discuss strategy for questioning Mueller, along with other topics. Exactly how the hearing will be structured is still being negotiated, members said as they emerged, but Democrats are expected to divvy up the questions in a methodical way.

Among the topics up for discussion as the hearing approaches: Should they work through the report step by step, or paint a general picture? Will every member be able to speak in the short time they have? And what can they do to best crystalize the findings of a report that they believe Americans haven't read or absorbed?

New York Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, a member of the panel, said before the meeting that he expects to discuss "what the team strategy is going to be as we begin an intensive phase of preparation."

Republicans seem to have given it less thought. Ohio Rep. Steve Chabot, a senior GOP member of Judiciary, said he hasn't started preparing and expects little news from the event. He said Democrats are just "chasing their tails" and are aiming to placate base voters who want to see the Democratic House majority take on the president.

"It's possible a few people could change their opinion, but overall I think it's not likely," Chabot said.

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The Judiciary Committee is expected to focus on the second half of Mueller's report, which details multiple episodes in which Trump attempted to influence the investigation. Mueller said he couldn't exonerate the president on obstruction of justice.

The House's intelligence panel, which will go second, will focus on the first half of the report, which details Russian interference in the presidential election. Mueller said there wasn't enough evidence to establish a conspiracy between Russia and the Trump campaign but detailed several contacts between the two as well as the Trump campaign's willingness to accept Russian help.

Under a deal struck with the committees, two of Mueller's deputies — James Quarles and Aaron Zebley — are expected to meet with the panels in separate closed sessions after Mueller's public hearing. But that might be in jeopardy as the Justice Department has pushed back on the arrangement, according to two people familiar with the negotiations. They requested anonymity to discuss the private talks.

The chairman of the intelligence panel, Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., said Tuesday said he wouldn't discuss the details of those negotiations, but that the deputies have agreed to appear and "I have no reason to believe that will be unsuccessful."

One issue that Judiciary members are expected to focus on is whether Mueller will state whether Trump would have been charged with a crime were he not president. Jeffries said that answer could "strike to the heart of why a prosecution or recommendation to prosecute wasn't included in the report."

Mueller said at a May news conference that charging a president with a crime was "not an option" because of longstanding Justice Department policy. But Democrats want to know more about how he made that decision and when.

It's unclear if Mueller will go beyond his previous comments. Mueller, who was reluctant to testify, has been firm that he will stick to what's already in the report.

Some lawmakers say that's OK and just want to reach a broader audience of Americans who they fear have tuned out.

"This isn't a question of creating a narrative," said Florida Rep. Ted Deutch, another Democrat on the Judiciary Committee. "The narrative is already out there. It's simply highlighting what is already there."

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Associated Press writer Michael Balsamo contributed to this report.

## Louisiana braces for slow-moving possible weekend hurricane

By KEVIN MCGILL and REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A potential tropical storm brewing in the Gulf of Mexico presents twin troubles for coastal Louisiana and Mississippi — the possibility that the flooded Mississippi River will be lapping at the tops of levees this weekend, and a danger of flash floods like the one that unexpectedly walloped New Orleans on Wednesday.

The Gulf of Mexico disturbance that dumped as much as 8 inches (20 centimeters) of rain just three hours in parts of metro New Orleans was forecast to strengthen into a tropical depression Thursday, then a tropical storm called Barry Thursday night, and, possibly, a weak hurricane by Friday.

The biggest danger in the days to come is not destructive winds, but ceaseless rain, the National Hurricane Center warned: "The slow movement of this system will result in a long duration heavy rainfall threat along the central Gulf Coast and inland through the lower Mississippi Valley through the weekend and potentially into next week."

Forecasters said Louisiana could see up to 12 inches (30 centimeters) of rain by Monday, with isolated areas receiving as much as 18 inches (46 centimeters). And the storm's surge at the mouth of the Mississippi could also mean a river that's been running high for months will rise even higher.

Southeastern Texas also was at risk of torrential rains.

New Orleans got an early taste Wednesday of what may be in store. News outlets said a tornado may have been responsible for wind damage to one home, while floodwaters invaded some downtown hotels and businesses as streets became small rivers that accommodated kayakers. The floods paralyzed rush-

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hour traffic and stalled cars around the city.

It all happened fast.

"I must have got to work about a quarter to 7," said Donald Smith, who saw his restaurant on Basin Street flood for the third time this year. "By 7:15, water was everywhere."

It brought memories of a 2017 flash flood that exposed major problems — and led to major personnel changes — at the Sewerage and Water Board, which oversees street drainage. City officials said the pumping system that drains streets was at full capacity. But the immense amount of rain in three hours would overwhelm any system, said Sewerage and Water Board director Ghassan Korban.

The Mississippi is already running so high that officials in Plaquemines Parish at Louisiana's southeastern tip ordered evacuations of some areas to begin Thursday. A voluntary evacuation was called on Grand Isle, the vulnerable barrier island community south of New Orleans. Gov. John Bel Edwards declared a statewide emergency in light of the gathering storm.

A spokesman for the Army Corps of Engineers in New Orleans said the agency was not expecting widespread overtopping of the levees, but there are concerns for areas south of the city. The weather service expects the river to rise to 20 feet (6 meters) by Saturday morning at a key gauge in the New Orleans area, which is protected by levees 20 to 25 feet (6 to 7.6 meters) high.

The Corps was working with local officials down river to identify any low-lying areas and reinforce them, spokesman Ricky Boyett said. He cautioned that the situation may change as more information arrives.

"We're confident the levees themselves are in good shape. The big focus is height," Boyett said.

Edwards said National Guard troops and high-water vehicles would be positioned all over the state.

"The entire coast of Louisiana is at play in this storm," the governor said.

New Orleans officials have asked residents to keep at least three days of supplies on hand and to keep their neighborhood storm drains clear so water can move quickly.

As the water from Wednesday morning's storms receded, people worried about what might come next.

Tanya Gulliver-Garcia was trying to make her way home during the deluge. Flooded streets turned a 15-minute drive into an ordeal lasting more than two hours.

"This is going to be a slow storm ... That's what I'm concerned about," she said.

Tourists Floyd and Missy Martin of Raleigh, North Carolina, were trying to make the best of it at a store with puddles on the floor where they were buying an umbrella, chips and peanuts, and two bottles of merlot.

"We could drown out our sorrows or make an adventure of it," Floyd Martin joked.

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Associated Press reporters Chevel Johnson and Janet McConnaughey contributed to this story.

## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. UK: IRANIAN VESSELS TRIED TO BLOCK BRITISH SHIP IN THE GULF

Britain say three Iranian vessels unsuccessfully tried to impede the passage of a British commercial vessel through the Strait of Hormuz; Iran's Revolutionary Guard denied the allegations.

2. WHO IS DEFENDING EPSTEIN DEAL

Labor Secretary Alex Acosta stood by his handling of a sex-trafficking case involving now-jailed financier Jeffrey Epstein, insisting he got the toughest deal he could at the time.

3. AIR FORCE GENERAL ACCUSED OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

A senior military officer accuses the Air Force general tapped to be the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of sexual misconduct, potentially jeopardizing his nomination.

4. DIPLOMATS SHAKEN, NOT STIRRED

The abrupt resignation of Britain's ambassador to the United States over leaked cables critical of the Trump administration is unlikely to have a lasting impact on the U.S.-British relationship.

5. "IT WILL NOT BE EASY"

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Democrats prepare for Robert Mueller questioning on July 17 as the former special counsel has made clear he's a reluctant witness.

## 6. WHICH STATE IS BRACING FOR POSSIBLE WEEKEND HURRICANE

A potential tropical storm brewing in the Gulf of Mexico presents twin troubles for parts of southeast Louisiana.

## 7. WHERE U.S. PRODUCTS ARE A FIXTURE

Whether at upscale restaurants or corner stores, American brands like Coca-Cola and Pepsi can be seen throughout Iran despite the heightened tensions between the two countries.

## 8. NEW HOLDING CENTER FOR MIGRANT CHILDREN OPENS IN TEXAS

A former oilfield worker camp off a dirt road in rural Texas has become the U.S. government's newest facility for detaining immigrant children.

## 9. WEINSTEIN OVERHAULS LEGAL TEAM 60 DAYS BEFORE TRIAL

Harvey Weinstein is recasting his defense team yet again, this time a mere 60 days before he's due to stand trial in New York on sexual assault charges.

## 10. AMERICAN BASEBALL LEAGUE GETS "ROBOT UMPIRES"

The independent Atlantic League became the first American professional baseball league to let a computer call balls and strikes at its All-Star Game.

## Britain says Iranian vessels tried to block tanker in Gulf

By **AYA BATRAWY** and **AMIR VAHDAT** Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The British navy said it prevented three Iranian paramilitary vessels from impeding the passage of a British oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz early Thursday, a day after Iran's president warned of repercussions for the seizure of its own supertanker.

Iran's Revolutionary Guard denied the allegations, saying if it had received orders to seize any ships it would have done so immediately.

The incident came at a time of heightened tensions over Iran's unraveling nuclear agreement with world powers. Iran recently began breaching uranium enrichment limits in response to the Trump administration's withdrawal from the agreement last year and its imposition of sweeping sanctions.

In recent months, the U.S. has dispatched thousands of additional troops, an aircraft carrier, bombers and advanced fighter jets to the region. Washington has blamed Iran for a series of mysterious attacks on oil tankers — charges denied by Tehran — and said it shot down an American drone in international airspace. Iran said it downed the drone after it veered into its own airspace.

The U.K. government said in a statement that British navy vessel HMS Montrose had been accompanying the commercial ship, British Heritage, through the narrow Strait of Hormuz.

"HMS Montrose was forced to position herself between the Iranian vessels and British Heritage and issue verbal warnings to the Iranian vessels, which then turned away," the government statement said.

"We are concerned by this action and continue to urge the Iranian authorities to de-escalate the situation in the region," it added.

The HMS Montrose is currently on a three-year mission at the British navy's support facility in Bahrain, the hub of Britain's naval operations east of the Suez Canal.

The U.S. 5th Fleet in Bahrain and Central Command declined to comment on the incident.

Maritime security risk firm Dryad Global described the British Heritage as an oil tanker operated by BP and registered in the Isle of Man. Lloyd's List, a publication specializing in maritime affairs, said Shell had chartered the ship from BP.

Lloyd's List said the British Heritage had diverted from its route to load its 140,000-ton cargo of crude at Basra, Iraq, as planned on July 4, the same day the Iranian tanker was intercepted off Gibraltar. It said the vessel instead headed to Saudi waters where it had remained for several days.

Since July 2, at least 20 British-flagged ships have sailed through the Strait of Hormuz, according to

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Lloyd's List Intelligence data.

BP issued a brief statement saying the company's "top priority is the safety and security of our crews and vessels" and thanking the Royal Navy for their support. The British multinational oil and gas firm declined to comment further on the incident.

Around 20% of all oil traded worldwide passes through the Strait of Hormuz from Mideast producers. Iran has periodically threatened to close the shipping lane if it is prevented from exporting its own oil. The U.S. sanctions have largely shut down its oil exports.

The U.S. has vowed to keep the strait open to commercial traffic. U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has asked Mideast allies like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to contribute financially and militarily to an idea the Trump administration is floating around called the Sentinel Program. The aim would be to have a coalition of nations working with the U.S. to preserve maritime security in the Persian Gulf and keep eyes on Iran.

The semi-official Fars news agency carried a statement from the Iranian Revolutionary Guard's navy early Thursday saying there were no clashes with foreign ships, "especially British boats."

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif dismissed the British allegations as "worthless," saying the claims "are being made to create tension," the agency reported.

Iran's president, Hassan Rouhani, had recently warned that Britain would face "repercussions" over the seizure of an Iranian supertanker last week that authorities in Gibraltar, a British overseas territory, suspect was breaching European sanctions on oil shipments to Syria.

Iran had also summoned the British ambassador over what it called the "illegal interception" of the ship.

The operation to seize the Iranian tanker took place exactly one week ago at the request of the United States. Gibraltar port and law enforcement agencies were assisted by Britain's Royal Marines in the ship's seizure.

The tensions are rooted in President Donald Trump's decision last year to withdraw from the landmark nuclear agreement negotiated by the Obama administration. Trump has since re-imposed crippling sanctions on Iran, including on its vital oil exports, exacerbating an economic crisis that has sent the currency plummeting.

The remaining parties to the nuclear deal — Russia, China, Germany, France, Britain and the European Union — have been unable to meet Tehran's demands for economic assistance to offset the American sanctions.

In recent weeks, Iran began breaching the limits of the deal, both on the permitted stockpile of low-enriched uranium and the permitted level of uranium enrichment.

It also set an early September deadline for world powers to save the agreement, saying it would otherwise take a third step in going beyond the deal's limits.

Iran maintains it is justified in breaching the limitations because the U.S. already broke the deal with its unilateral withdrawal last year.

Vahdat reported from Tehran, Iran. Associated Press writers Robert Burns in Washington and Andrew Drake in London contributed to this report.

## **AP Exclusive: Officer accuses general of sexual misconduct**

**By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — A senior military officer has accused the Air Force general tapped to be the next vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of sexual misconduct, potentially jeopardizing his nomination. Members of Congress have raised questions about the allegations and the military investigation that found insufficient evidence to charge him.

The officer told The Associated Press that Gen. John Hyten subjected her to a series of unwanted sexual advances by kissing, hugging and rubbing up against her in 2017 while she was one of his aides. She said that he tried to derail her military career after she rebuffed him.

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The Air Force investigated the woman's allegations, which she reported days after Hyten's nomination was announced in April, and found there was insufficient evidence to charge the general or recommend any administrative punishment. The alleged victim remains in the military but has moved to a different job.

"My life was ruined by this," she told the AP.

The woman asked to not be identified by name. The AP generally does not identify those who say they have been sexually assaulted.

The accusations against Hyten come at a time when the Pentagon has had an unusual amount of turmoil in its senior ranks, with only an acting defense secretary for the past six months. One of President Donald Trump's nominees for that position recently withdrew after details of his contentious divorce surfaced. On Sunday, an admiral selected to be the top Navy officer withdrew due to what officials said was an inappropriate professional relationship.

It's unclear when, or if, Hyten's confirmation hearing will move forward. It has not been scheduled, despite the fact that the current vice chairman, Gen. Paul Selva, is scheduled to retire at the end of the month.

Air Force Col. DeDe Halfhill, a Pentagon spokeswoman, said Wednesday that Hyten's nomination remains on course.

"With more than 38 years of service to our nation, Gen. Hyten has proven himself to be a principled and dedicated patriot," she said.

A senior Air Force official said investigators went through 10,000 pages of documents, conducted interviews with as many as 50 people and pursued every lead, but did not uncover evidence to support the allegations. The official, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss personnel matters, added that they also found no evidence that the woman was lying. The official said

Last month, Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Tammy Duckworth sent a letter to acting Defense Secretary Mark Esper asking why Hyten was not removed from his post amid the investigation. The letter, obtained by the AP, raised questions about whether he received special treatment.

The woman making the allegations said she, too, wonders if Hyten received special treatment because of his rank, and she fears her honesty and motives will be questioned because of the circumstances and timing of her allegations.

The woman began working for Hyten in November 2016. Though he is an Air Force general, she is in another military branch, which she asked the AP not to disclose.

The officer said the unwanted sexual contact, kissing and hugging began in early 2017 and recurred several times throughout that year when she was working closely with Hyten. She said she repeatedly pushed him away and told him to stop.

In December 2017, when they were in southern California for the annual Reagan National Defense Forum, Hyten came into her room wearing workout clothes and hugged her tightly and rubbed up against her, according to the woman. She said she told him to leave.

Hyten then asked the woman if she was going to report him. She said she told him no.

The woman said she didn't report the incidents at the time in order to avoid embarrassment, and out of fear of retaliation. She was also thinking about retiring, and believed Hyten was as well, so she concluded that he would not pose a risk to any other service members.

She later learned that she was under investigation by Strategic Command for what officials said was "toxic" leadership behavior.

That allegation surprised her, she says, because Hyten was familiar with her leadership style and "encouraged" it. He had given her glowing performance reviews, some of which were reviewed by the AP.

"I was not the most popular officer in the command. In fact, one could say I was not popular at all," she said. "But I was very successful in turning around an organization."

In her interview with the AP, she showed copies of performance reviews from Hyten in which she was ranked as the top officer out of 71 on his staff. Hyten wrote that she had "unlimited potential to lead and serve with distinction as a multi-star" general.

"Exceptionally competent and committed leader with the highest level of character," Hyten wrote, adding



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that "her ethics are above reproach."

The investigators issued her a letter of reprimand for her leadership and she was removed from her job at Strategic Command. She submitted her retirement.

But military officials in her branch of service determined her retirement was coerced and they rejected it. They then moved her to another senior job in the Washington area.

As she moved into her position, the officer received another negative evaluation by Hyten, which she appealed. During the appeals process, Hyten was nominated for the vice chairman position.

The woman said she decided she couldn't live with the idea that Hyten might assault someone else if he was confirmed for the job. She reported the sexual misconduct to the Defense Department inspector general.

Because the charges involved criminal sexual assault, the case was referred to the Air Force Office of Special Investigations and a formal investigation into Hyten was launched. Several weeks later, Gen. James Holmes, the officer in charge of the investigation, decided not to press charges.

Asked whether she has ever filed similar complaints, the officer said she was one of several who reported a commander for sexual harassment in 2007 in Iraq.

The woman told the AP she believes Hyten has committed "the perfect crime where no one will ever believe me."

"I've already completed a successful career," she said. "I had nothing to gain from doing this."

## In a divided Washington, British ambassador was a bridge

By **JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief**

WASHINGTON (AP) — In America's deeply divided capital city, British Ambassador Kim Darroch was often the bridge.

He had a direct line to President Donald Trump's top aides, as well as their predecessors from the Obama administration — and both often found themselves mingling at the same lavish parties Darroch hosted at his stately residence in Washington. He convened discussions on policy and politics with lawmakers, journalists and think tank scholars, sending dispatches on his conversations across the political spectrum back to London.

His private assessments were frank and unfiltered, describing the Trump White House as unpredictable, clumsy and inept. To communicate effectively with Trump, the ambassador said, "you need to make your points simple, even blunt."

When some of those cables were leaked to a British newspaper, it initially appeared that Darroch's strong ties to the Trump administration would inoculate him. White House officials were gracious and understanding when the British Embassy reached out to alert them to the leak. Darroch's staff greeted him with applause when he arrived at the embassy on Monday morning, according to a person with knowledge of the week's events — one of several who spoke with The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity in order to discuss private interactions with the ambassador.

Then Trump started tweeting about Darroch, calling him "wacky" and a "pompous fool," and the dynamic began to shift. By late Tuesday, when Boris Johnson — the front-runner to become Britain's next prime minister — pointedly did not defend Darroch, the ambassador concluded it was no longer tenable for him to stay on the job. He announced Wednesday morning that he was resigning his position.

It was a stunning end to Darroch's storied career as a diplomat and civil servant, and a reminder of how quickly fortunes can rise and fall in Trump's Washington.

"It's heartbreaking that the president undermines U.S. diplomacy and erodes our alliances, and Sir Kim was caught in the crossfire," said Andrew Overton, an American who served as Darroch's spokesman at the embassy until last year.

Darroch joined Britain's foreign office in 1976 and held positions in Tokyo, Rome and Brussels, then served as national security adviser. His appointment in Washington, one of the most sought-after diplomatic postings, was to be the capstone of his career.

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He arrived in January 2016, when Trump still looked like a longshot presidential candidate and a proposal for Britain to exit the European Union appeared unlikely to pass. But the political atmosphere quickly shifted on both sides of the Atlantic.

"He took the job at a very different moment," said Amy English, Darroch's former congressional foreign policy adviser. "By November of that year, it was a very different role. But Kim's calm and steady leadership was essential to steer U.S.-U.K. relations in this tumultuous time."

Although much of Washington expected Trump to lose to Hillary Clinton in the 2016 election, Darroch spent that summer and fall building relationships with the billionaire businessman's friends and advisers. He mingled on the floor of the Republican convention in Cleveland and got to know Trump's political advisers and longtime friends, including Newt Gingrich, the former House speaker, and Michael Cohen, Trump's longtime lawyer and fixer who is now in jail for campaign finance violations tied to hush money payments he made on Trump's behalf.

When Trump stunningly defeated Clinton, ambassadors and diplomats from other foreign embassies came to Darroch asking for his help getting to know the incoming administration.

Darroch's grand residence in northwest Washington became a go-to gathering spot for Trump administration officials. White House counselor Kellyanne Conway was a frequent guest at embassy parties. Then-acting Attorney General Matthew Whitaker and former White House press secretary Sean Spicer celebrated this past New Year's Eve at a black tie party. Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law and senior adviser, came for breakfast.

Ever the diplomat, Darroch often singled out prominent guests in his welcome remarks, frequently delivered in front of an Andy Warhol painting of Queen Elizabeth II that hangs in the residence's main hall.

Darroch's ties to the Trump administration extended beyond social calls. He developed a close relationship with former chief of staff John Kelly and spoke on a regular basis with current chief of staff Mick Mulvaney. He played a key role in organizing Trump's trip to Britain earlier this summer, a visit that was widely viewed in the White House and in London as a success.

Last month, during an interview with Darroch at the Aspen Ideas Festival, Richard Haass, the president of the Council on Foreign Relations, said British ambassadors are often so plugged into American politics that it appeared they had their own seat at the table for key discussions. And he praised the British Embassy for being one of the "very few safe spaces" for Democrats and Republicans to come together.

"In a city that's become increasingly balkanized, I actually thought the British ambassador played an important role," Haass said.

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Associated Press writer Deb Riechmann contributed to this report.

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Follow Julie Pace at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

## Fans celebrate World Cup champs, rally for equal pay

By ALI SWENSON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Adoring fans packed New York City's Canyon of Heroes on Wednesday amid a blizzard of confetti to praise the World Cup-winning U.S. women's national soccer team as leaders on the field and advocates for pay equity off it.

Crowds chanted "USA! USA!" and workers sounded air horns from a construction site as the hourlong parade moved up a stretch of lower Broadway that has long hosted so-called ticker tape parades for world leaders, veterans and hometown sports stars.

Co-captain Megan Rapinoe and her teammates shared a float with Mayor Bill de Blasio and U.S. Soccer Federation President Carlos Cordeiro. Rapinoe struck her now-famous victory pose, took a swig of Champagne and handed the bottle to a fan. Goalkeeper Alyssa Naeher held the World Cup trophy aloft.

Aly Hoover, 12, of Glen Ridge, New Jersey, stood at the sidelines with a poster of the face of Alex Morgan, another team star. "I just want to be like them," she said.

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Garret Prather brought his newborn son "to celebrate how the American women made us proud on and off the field."

The team sealed its second consecutive tournament win by beating the Netherlands 2-0 on Sunday. It will get \$4 million for winning the World Cup from FIFA, the international soccer governing body. The men's French team got \$38 million for winning last year.

The U.S. women's team has sued the U.S. Soccer Federation for gender and pay discrimination. The federation will give the women bonuses about five times smaller than what the men would have earned for winning the World Cup. The case is currently in mediation.

Kate Lane, who watched the parade, called the pay gap "massive" for the soccer players and "across the board" for most women.

"Especially in male-dominated professions," said Lane, of Limerick, Ireland. "Women put just as much commitment into their work as their male counterparts."

She's hopeful the younger generation is soaking up the message from the women's team, noting a girl about 7 years old wearing an "Equal Pay" T-shirt.

Earlier Wednesday, team members joined New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, a Democrat, as he signed a bill that expands gender pay equality in the state. He said women's soccer players should be paid the same as male players.

U.S. Sen. Joe Manchin, a Democrat, introduced a bill Tuesday that would bar federal funding for the men's 2026 World Cup until the U.S. Soccer Federation provides equal pay to the women's and men's teams.

At a City Hall rally after the parade, the presidential candidate de Blasio, also a Democrat, honored the team with symbolic keys to the city, saying it "brought us together" and "showed us so much to make us hopeful."

After chants for "Equal pay!" from the crowd, Cordeiro said women "deserve fair and equitable pay. And together I believe we can get this done."

At the rally, Rapinoe noted the diversity of the team: "We have pink hair and purple hair, we have tattoos and dreadlocks, we got white girls and black girls and everything in between. Straight girls and gay girls."

The parade is named for the strands of ticker tape that used to be showered down from nearby office buildings. The tape has since been replaced with paper confetti, which drifted down from office buildings throughout Wednesday's parade, along with documents and spreadsheets folded into paper airplanes.

The Department of Sanitation said it has assigned 350 workers to parade cleanup, with trucks, backpack blowers and brooms at their disposal.

The team had already started celebrating its record fourth Women's World Cup title. After touching down at Newark Liberty International Airport on Monday, players shared a toast and sang "We Are the Champions."

Team members appeared on ABC's "Good Morning America" in Times Square on Tuesday to show off their trophy and answer questions from cheering kids.

Rapinoe, the outspoken star who won the awards for the tournament's best player and top scorer, also appeared on CNN and MSNBC later Tuesday.

Rapinoe told CNN's Anderson Cooper that President Donald Trump's slogan "Make America Great Again" is "harking back to an era that wasn't great for everyone. It might've been great for a few people."

Rapinoe told MSNBC's Rachel Maddow that Trump had yet to invite the women's soccer team to the White House.

Trump had tweeted that he would invite the team, win or lose. Rapinoe has said she wouldn't be going to the White House. The team has accepted an invitation to visit Congress.

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Associated Press writers Melissa Murphy and David Bauder contributed to this report.

## China's largesse in Tonga threatens future of Pacific nation

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

NUKU'ALOFA, Tonga (AP) — The days unfold at a leisurely pace in Tonga, a South Pacific archipelago with no traffic lights or fast-food chains. Snuffing pigs roam dusty roads that wind through villages dotted with churches.

Yet even in this far-flung island kingdom there are signs that a battle for power and influence is heating up among much larger nations — and Tonga may end up paying the price.

In the capital, Nuku'alofa, government officials work in a shiny new office block — an \$11 million gift from China that is rivaled in grandeur only by China's imposing new embassy complex.

Dozens of Tongan bureaucrats take all-expenses-paid training trips to Beijing each year, and China has laid out millions of dollars to bring 107 Tongan athletes and coaches to a training camp in China's Sichuan province ahead of this month's Pacific Games in Samoa.

"The best facilities. The gym, the track, and a lot of equipment we don't have here in Tonga," said Tevita Fauonuku, the country's head athletic coach. "The accommodation: lovely, beautiful. And the meals. Not only that, but China gave each and everyone some money. A per diem."

China also offered low-interest loans after pro-democracy rioters destroyed much of downtown Nuku'alofa in 2006, and analysts say those loans could prove Tonga's undoing. The country of 106,000 people owes some \$108 million to China's Export-Import bank, equivalent to about 25% of GDP.

The U.S. ambassador to Australia, Arthur Culvahouse Jr., calls China's lending in the Pacific "payday loan diplomacy."

"The money looks attractive and easy upfront, but you better read the fine print," he said.

China's ambassador to Tonga, Wang Baodong, said China was the only country willing to step up to help Tonga during its time of need.

Graeme Smith, a specialist in Chinese investment in the Pacific, is not convinced China tried to trap Tonga in debt, saying its own financial mismanagement is as much to blame.

Nonetheless, he said it's worrying that the nation of 171 islands, already vulnerable to costly natural disasters, has little ability to repay.

Why is China pouring money into Tonga?

Teisina Fuko, a 69-year-old former parliament member, suspects China finds his country's location useful. "I think Tonga is maybe a window to the Western side," he said. "Because it's easy to get here and look into New Zealand, Australia."

"It's a steppingstone," he said.

For decades, the South Pacific was considered the somewhat sleepy backyard of Australia, New Zealand and the United States. Now, as China exerts increasing influence, Western allies are responding.

Experts say there hasn't been this level of geopolitical competition in the region since the U.S. and Japan were bombing each other's occupied atolls.

"We haven't seen anything like this since World War II," said Smith, a research fellow at Australian National University.

After Cyclone Gita destroyed Tonga's historic Parliament House last year, the government first suggested China might like to pay to rebuild it. Then Australia and New Zealand stepped in and are now considering jointly funding the project.

Elsewhere in the region, Australia is redeveloping a Papua New Guinea naval base while New Zealand has announced it will spend an extra \$500 million on overseas aid over four years, with most of it directed at South Pacific nations.

Rory Medcalf, the head of the National Security College at Australian National University, said the area could provide a security bridgehead for China's navy, which currently must sail through the U.S.-friendly islands of Japan, Taiwan and the Philippines to get to the Pacific.

Other possible explanations, Medcalf said, include the region's fisheries, seabed minerals and other natu-

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ral resources, as well as China's ongoing effort to lure away the few remaining countries that recognize Taiwan instead of China — several of them Pacific island nations.

"It's not entirely clear what China wants in the South Pacific," Medcalf said. "It's just clear that China is becoming very active and making its presence felt."

China has poured about \$1.5 billion in aid and low-interest loans into the South Pacific since 2011, putting it behind only Australia, according to an analysis by Australian think-tank the Lowy Institute. And that figure rises to over \$6 billion when future commitments are included.

China's use of loans and aid to gain influence in developing nations worldwide is nothing new, as illustrated by Chinese-financed projects from Africa to Latin America and the Asian subcontinent.

Some worry that these can become debt traps when nations can't repay. In Sri Lanka, for example, the government was forced to hand over control of its Hambantota port as it struggles to repay loans it got from China to build the facility — a move that has given Beijing a strategic foothold within hundreds of miles of rival India.

Wang said China has only benevolent intentions in Tonga and no hidden agenda. "Some people in the West are being over-sensitive and too suspicious," he said. "No need."

It's not just money flowing in from China. Chinese immigrants began arriving in the 1990s when Tonga started selling passports.

The passports, which went for about \$10,000 each, were aimed at attracting wealthy Hong Kong residents hedging their bets ahead of the former British colony's return to China in 1997. Instead, they were snapped up by rural Chinese looking for a better life — and who now compete with native Tongans for scarce jobs.

Chinese immigrants already run most of the dozens of hole-in-the-wall groceries dotting the islands, selling cheap imports like potato chips and canned meat. And Tongans worry they are now expanding into farming and construction.

Most Tongans live a subsistence existence in a nation where the king is revered and people take Christianity so seriously that working on Sundays is, with few exceptions, banned under the constitution. The economy relies on foreign aid and cash sent home by Tongans working abroad.

And the Chinese loans haven't changed that because the money went to Chinese-run projects, Fuko said. "They brought the money, they brought the workers, they brought the building materials," he said. "Maybe a few Tongans pulled wheelbarrows."

Wang acknowledged the criticism that Chinese immigrants run many businesses but said Tonga's leaders recognize the contribution they make and have even called on Tongans to learn from their hard-work ethic.

Tonga never benefited from the passport money, either. A former financial adviser to the government, American Jesse Bogdonoff, helped place about \$26 million into speculative investments and almost all of it evaporated.

The real threat to Tonga's future may lie in its crippling loans from China.

In December 2017, the International Monetary Fund increased Tonga's debt distress rating from moderate to high risk, citing its vulnerability to natural disasters and noting that the large upcoming loan repayments to China would reduce Tonga's foreign exchange reserves, double its debt-servicing costs, and could force the country to borrow yet more money.

Repayments were due to start last year, and panic crept in.

In August, Prime Minister 'Akilisi Pohiva called on other Pacific nations to join forces to demand debt relief, warning that China could snatch away buildings and other assets. But he reversed his position days later, saying Tonga was "exceedingly grateful" for China's help.

Within months Tonga announced it had been given a reprieve and didn't need to start repayments for another five years.

Tonga also said it was joining China's Belt and Road Initiative, the trillion-dollar global investment and lending program that is a signature policy of President Xi Jinping.

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Tongan officials don't seem eager to discuss the relationship with China. The prime minister withdrew from an interview with The Associated Press because of an illness, while Finance Minister Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa cancelled at the last minute due to "something urgent." The chief secretary to the prime minister's office, Edgar Cocker, agreed to meet but then quickly asked a reporter to leave, saying he wasn't authorized to speak for the government.

Cocker said all questions about China's loans and aid should be directed to Chinese officials.

Wang said there was no link between Tonga getting a break on its loans and joining the Belt and Road Initiative. He said Tonga had raised concerns about the loan, and China was willing to help.

Tonga's immediate financial crisis has been averted, but Fuko thinks the loans have given China the upper hand.

"I don't know how we are going to pay that back," the former lawmaker said.

An unintended consequence of Tonga's China loans could be a reduction in foreign investment and withering of the revenues needed to pay them back.

Take the Scenic Hotel. One of the few large hotels on the main island of Tongatapu, it abruptly closed its doors in March in a setback to the key tourism industry.

Brendan Taylor, managing director of the New Zealand-based Scenic Hotel Group, said one problem was the new Foreign Exchange Control Act Tonga introduced last year.

Designed to keep money in the country and protect its currency during financial emergencies, it was enacted as Tonga prepared to begin making the Chinese loan repayments.

"The issue you have got in Tonga is that no overseas companies are keen to go in," Taylor said. "They've cut out investors."

He said the hotel got a large insurance payout after it was hit by Cyclone Gita. But the new law created legal hurdles to move money out of Tonga to pay New Zealand suppliers for repairs and so the payout languished in a Tongan trust account, he said.

Tonga-based lawyer Ralph Stephenson said that while the law isn't being enforced, it's still spooking investors.

"The penalties for breaching the act are Draconian, in terms of fines that can be imposed, and also in so far as the act actually affords the courts the power to forfeit property," he said.

Wang said any suggestion that China might be engaged in a Pacific power struggle with the West or using Tonga to keep tabs or even spy on New Zealand and Australia is nonsense.

"Tonga is a small country. It's almost impossible to hide any secret," Wang said. "For some of our Western friends, personally, I think they should be confident in their relations and influence in this region."

If China sees any strategic importance to Tonga, it was the country's recognition that Taiwan is part of China, he said. Tonga switched from recognizing Taiwan and established formal diplomatic relations with Beijing in 1998.

China's economic success has allowed it to build new embassies around the world and too much shouldn't be read into the size of its new embassy in Tonga, Wang said.

He said that over the past 20 years, diplomatic relations between China and Tonga have widened to include infrastructure, trade, education and sports. He doesn't see it as a case of larger countries jockeying for influence.

"I don't think so," he said. "Just whoever is able to provide assistance for the goodness of the Tongan people."

But for Ola Koloi, who runs a tourist lodge, China's footprint is too pervasive, influencing what she can buy since so many goods for sale come from China.

She said the China loans should worry every Tongan.

"I feel like I'll be Chinese soon," she said.

## New holding center for migrant children opens in Texas

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

CARRIZO SPRINGS, Texas (AP) — A former oilfield worker camp off a dirt road in rural Texas has become the U.S. government's newest holding center for detaining migrant children after they leave Border Patrol stations, where complaints of overcrowding and filthy conditions have sparked a worldwide outcry.

Inside the wire fence that encircles the site are soccer fields, a giant air-conditioned tent that serves as a dining hall, and trailers set up for use as classrooms and as places where children can call their families.

The long trailers once used to house workers in two-bedroom suites have been converted into 12-person dorms, with two pairs of bunk beds in each bedroom and the living room.

The Department of Health and Human Services said about 225 children are being held at the site in Carrizo Springs, with plans to expand to as many as 1,300, making it one of the biggest camps in the U.S. government system.

The government said the holding center will give it much-needed capacity to take in more children from the Border Patrol and prevent their detention in stations like the one in Clint, Texas, where lawyers last month reported some 250 youngsters were being held in cells with inadequate food, water and sanitation. Of the children held at Carrizo Springs, 21 had previously been detained at Clint, HHS spokesman Mark Weber said.

HHS said the Carrizo Springs location is a comfortable environment for children while they wait to be placed with family members or sponsors in the U.S.

But immigrant advocates and others liken such places to child prison camps and worry that the isolated location 110 miles (180 kilometers) from San Antonio, the nearest major city, will make it more difficult to find lawyers to help the teenagers with their immigration cases.

Advocates have complained that HHS' largest holding centers — a facility in Homestead, Florida, a converted Walmart in Brownsville, Texas, and a now-closed tent camp at Tornillo, Texas — have traumatized children through overcrowding and inadequate staffing.

"All of this is part of a morally bankrupt system," said Rep. Joaquin Castro, a San Antonio Democrat.

There's also the huge cost: an average of \$775 per day for each child. HHS plans to pay the nonprofit Baptist Child and Family Services up to \$300 million through January to run the Carrizo Springs site.

The government allowed The Associated Press to visit on Tuesday and distribute photos and video, though the AP could not show children's faces because of privacy restrictions.

Boys and girls are kept in separate buildings and follow separate schedules. They have decorated their rooms with drawings of superheroes and the flags of their home countries, including Guatemala and El Salvador. Many children smiled and greeted visitors as they walked by. Several girls knitted yarn hats and armbands.

A series of tents serves as the infirmary, with nurses on hand treating a few children for lice and flu-like symptoms.

Breakfast is at 7 a.m., followed by soccer, then six hours of classes in reading, writing, social studies, science and math.

In reading class on Tuesday, the students were asked to practice reciting the Pledge of Allegiance in English. Many did so haltingly before the teachers called one student to the front to help lead them. After he finished, the whole class applauded.

HHS said the goal is to move the children through the holding center and others like it as quickly as possible. The department said it has sped up placing children with sponsors to an average of 45 days, down from 93 days last November. One key, HHS said, was lifting a requirement that all adult relatives be fingerprinted before they can take a child out of custody.

"This facility is all about unification," said Weber, the HHS spokesman.

The holding center is opening amid record numbers of family members apprehended at the border and thousands of children traveling without their parents as they flee violence and poverty in Central America.

Baptist Child and Family Services also ran the Tornillo camp, which opened last summer as thousands

of children were separated from their parents by Trump administration policy. Tornillo reached as many as 2,800 children until it was closed in January.

BCFS CEO Kevin Dinnin said he had refused in December to take more children at Tornillo because the camp was holding them for so long, a decision that led to its closing. Dinnin said he resolved never to open another emergency center like it, but the conditions reported in Border Patrol custody changed his mind. He said he also believes HHS is doing more to process children more quickly.

"At the end of the day, our philosophy has been ... to keep kids out of CBP jail cells," Dinnin said.

Jonathan Ryan, executive director of the legal group RAICES, said his organization is ready to send lawyers to Carrizo Springs but is waiting for the OK from the government.

"We just want to get inside and work with those kids," Ryan said. "Children who have been detained, who have gone through deprivation and cages in Border Patrol custody, are potentially being released without ever having had access to legal advice and screening."

## Tech worker charged with murder in death of college student

By LINDSAY WHITEHURST Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — A tech worker was charged Wednesday with murder and kidnapping in the death of a Utah college student whose body was found in a wooded area with her arms bound behind her.

Prosecutors said Ayoola A. Ajayi, 31, was the last person Mackenzie Lueck communicated with before she disappeared on June 17.

She died of blunt force trauma to the head, and her body was found with her arms bound with zip ties and ropes, District Attorney Sim Gill said while announcing the charges.

He declined to discuss a motive or the nature of the connection between Lueck and Ajayi. He also didn't say what kind of weapon was used.

Gill became emotional as he described the Lueck family's reaction to the charges.

"They asked me to express on their behalf the generosity of so many strangers and friends," he said. "They are genuinely appreciative and moved by the outpouring of love and compassion."

Lueck disappeared shortly after she returned from a trip to her California hometown for the funeral of her grandmother and took a Lyft from the airport to a park.

She exchanged text messages with Ajayi and met him there, apparently willingly, but her phone was turned off a minute after the last text "and never powered back on," Gill said.

Police later found the charred phone in the backyard of Ajayi's home in Salt Lake City, along with a bone, muscle tissue and part of Lueck's scalp, Gill said.

A neighbor reported a fire and a "horrible smell" coming from the yard on the day Lueck disappeared, Gill said.

Her body was later discovered in a shallow grave in Logan Canyon, 85 miles (138 kilometers) from Salt Lake City. The site is near Utah State University, where Ajayi had attended classes.

Gill said phone data puts him at the canyon a week after Lueck disappeared. Police obtained a search warrant for his home the next day.

Ajayi was arrested June 28 during the wide-ranging search for the 23-year-old University of Utah student that lasted nearly two weeks. Prosecutors did not strike a deal with Ajayi to find her, Gill said.

Ajayi was charged with one count each of aggravated murder, aggravated kidnapping, obstruction of justice and desecration of a human body. A court appearance was set for Monday.

Ajayi is represented by the public defender's office, which has refused to comment on the case.

The charges make Ajayi eligible for the death penalty, but Gill did not say whether prosecutors would pursue it.

Lueck has been remembered as a bubbly, nurturing person. She was a member of a sorority and a part-time senior at the university studying kinesiology and pre-nursing.

Ajayi is an information technology worker who had stints with high-profile companies and was briefly in the Army National Guard.



He has no formal criminal history but was investigated in a 2014 rape allegation and was arrested in a stolen iPad case at Utah State University in 2012. The arrest and the expiration of his student visa led to him being banned from the campus for about three years.

A native of Nigeria, Ajayi holds a green card that allows him to legally work and live in the U.S., Gill said.

## 'Orange is the New Black' leaves legacy for women of color

By LEANNE ITALIE AP Entertainment Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — From corrupt, brutal overseers to the fraught world of inmate hierarchy to unlikely friendships and romances, "Orange is the New Black" told deeply rich and complex stories about life for women behind bars that resonated far beyond prison walls.

While it was originally centered around the privileged white character of Piper Chapman (played by Taylor Schilling), the supporting characters — some quirky, some volatile, some comic, some tragic — became the show's breakout stars.

The award-winning Netflix series also became a showcase for actresses of color, thanks to nuanced story lines with depth that have often proved elusive.

It's no surprise that some of them went on to become the show's biggest draws.

Uzo Aduba won the dramedy's only acting Emmys, while Emmy-nominee Laverne Cox, Danielle Brooks, Samira Wiley and Dascha Polanco all gave masterful performances that lifted their careers far beyond life in Litchfield federal penitentiary.

As the hit dramedy winds down with the seventh and final season on July 26, those actresses take a look back at the profound impact the series had on their lives.

ADUBA (Suzanne "Crazy Eyes" Warren)

A not-so-funny thing happened to Uzoamaka Nwanneka Aduba on her way to audition for a different part on the show: She was late.

She thought maybe the faux pas was the universe trying to tell her that acting wasn't her destiny. Aduba, 38, had been trying professionally for about 10 years, with small victories, but she quit after her tardiness, thinking maybe a law career was the way to go as her parents, of Nigerian descent, preferred.

That's when the life-changing phone call came. There was bad news: She didn't get the part of track star-inmate Janae Watson. But there was also good: She was offered Crazy Eyes instead, though only for a couple of guest appearances. She wore the bantu knots that became the signature style of the character to the audition.

Thank goodness she didn't listen to the universe. Aduba's role was extended and she won two Emmys, two Screen Actors Guild Awards and a Golden Globe.

Like Crazy Eyes sometimes does, she let the muses rule.

"My phone wasn't ringing, with regards to film and television anyway, before our show came out," she told The Associated Press. "It just felt surreal, I think, for a lot of us to even be having this sort of experience."

Now, with her higher profile, she has a goal: "I am trying to tell the stories of the missing, the people and the voices that are missing in the tapestry."

For so many in the cast, the Medfield, Massachusetts-raised Aduba said, "We had been living on the Island of Misfit Toys and being made to feel as though there was no place for us when the truth of the matter is space just needed to be made."

WHAT'S NEXT: Upcoming projects include the film "Beats" and the FX series "Mrs. America."

COX (Sophia Buset)

The LGBTQ activist didn't quit her day job at the drag spot Lucky Cheng's in Manhattan until after the first season of Orange wrapped. But it wasn't long until she made history as the first trans person on the cover of Time magazine.

"I just cried," she said.

The magazine's story accompanying the cover on the transgender tipping point had her describing her

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childhood in Mobile, Alabama, growing up bullied and harassed for presenting as feminine. She came out as trans years later while working in New York City, where she took up acting.

Thanks to OINTB, where her character rode out cycles of acceptance, hatred and violence, Cox has used her star platform to educate the world and push for just treatment of LGBTQ people everywhere.

So much has changed for Cox in the show's seven-year run.

"Seven years ago I turned 40 and I had not had the big breakthrough in my acting career that I had wanted. I was in tons of debt. I thought it was time for me to do something else," she told the AP. "I was like, 'I should go back to graduate school' and I bought some GRE study materials from a friend of mine."

Then she auditioned for Orange, "and here we are."

Cox was the first openly trans person to be nominated for a Primetime Emmy Award in an acting category and the first to be nominated for any Emmy since composer Angela Morley in 1990.

For years at Lucky Cheng's she'd tell co-workers she wanted to be an actor and win awards, "and they'd be like, yeah, right whatever," Cox recalled. "A black trans woman in 2010 saying she wants to be a big star was like, 'Yeah right, yeah cool.' Who knew?"

WHAT'S NEXT: She has several projects pending, including the film "Promise Young Woman."

BROOKS (Tasha "Taystee" Jefferson)

As the brash Taystee, Brooks showed the way not just for other actors of color, but for women of size. "Cornbread fed, baby, cornbread fed," she laughed.

The Augusta, Georgia-born Brooks was well on her way doing theater when "Orange" happened after she graduated with a bachelor's from the Juilliard School.

Brooks is also a singer, earning a Tony nomination for Sofia (Oprah's film part) in the 2015 Broadway production of "The Color Purple." She dropped a music video in February for Black History Month featuring herself all glammed up and wet in a bathtub singing "Black Woman," which includes the lyrics: "The world tells me there is space for me, if I cinch it up and I sew it in, the world tells me it'll all be mine, with some lashes on and some lighter eyes."

The song, Brooks told the AP, was "my way of healing myself" while encouraging others to accept who they are.

Brooks' mom is a minister and her dad a church deacon. Church taught her a lot about how to present herself to the world and the importance of prioritizing self-love. Now, she wants to "show the industry, look what happens when you give people opportunity."

The 29-year-old Brooks was working as a waitress in New York City ("I was a horrible waitress") when her agent got her an audition for "Orange," though initially only two episodes were promised.

"I almost said no to it because I didn't get to read the script and when I saw the scene that I was going to be in I had to be topless. I was like, oh no. I'm from South Carolina. I grew up in a very religious household. I was nervous also about playing a stereotype, of the black woman who the world might consider sassy and loud and angry. To put that on TV, I was not sure about it."

She's obviously glad she did.

"It has completely changed my life," Brooks said. She believes it also opened doors for nontraditional shows featuring full casts of color on TV.

"How much has the world changed, how much has Hollywood changed where you can have shows like 'Pose,' you can have 'Insecure' and 'Atlanta' and a plethora of other shows out there where the lead can look different from what we've seen before?"

WHAT'S NEXT: She appears in the film "Clemency" and is working on an EP. She is also expecting her first child.

WILEY (Poussey Washington)

Wiley was a bartender for two and a half years after she, too, graduated Juilliard when she auditioned for Orange. There were no promises that lesbian character Poussey would be a recurring role. After she got the job, she stayed at Fred's Restaurant in Manhattan for the first couple of seasons.

"I didn't want to be stupid about it and quit my job and then end up nowhere," she told the AP.

Like her character, Wiley is gay. Raised in Washington, D.C., Wiley's sexuality was embraced by her liberal

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pastor parents, which she considers key to her success. She's now an advocate for LGBTQ, immigration and prison reform causes.

Wiley, 32, was not publicly out in those early seasons of Orange. She credits Poussey with giving her the strength and confidence to come into her own, both as an actor and a gay black woman. Wiley appeared on the cover of Out magazine for its 20th anniversary to seal the deal.

"I think deep down, the both of us, Poussey and I, are just like really open and honest people with our hearts," Wiley said. "There are real Pousseys out there, in prison, not in prison, being thrown away because people think they don't matter."

Wiley won three Screen Actors Guild Awards for Poussey. She went on to receive an Emmy nomination in 2017 for her portrayal of Moira in the Hulu series "The Handmaid's Tale" and won an Emmy for that part the following year.

WHAT'S NEXT: Wiley appears in the film "BIOS" and is working in a comedy, "Breaking News in Yuba County."

POLANCO (Dayanara "Daya" Diaz)

She had dreamed of becoming an actor as a child but thought her weight might hold her back, so she put herself through Hunter College instead, going to school as a teen mother raising a young daughter.

The Dominican Republic-born Polanco went on to earn a bachelor's in psychology and worked in a hospital as she studied to be a nurse (and eventually had a second child, a son). But over time, she decided to pursue acting.

After minor roles in two TV series, she was cast in OITNB in 2012.

"I had three jobs at the time and I was also finishing my nursing clinicals," she told the AP of life before "Orange."

"We are the reality," she added. "Hollywood has been very exclusive in who they consider an actor, who they want to depict on screens."

Polanco, who is also a songwriter, now values her versatility as an actor who doesn't fit the Hollywood mold, though the early years were nerve-wracking.

"We can all relate to that, not feeling enough. I was very fearful of going out to auditions and being told, well you have to lose weight, well your hair is curly," she said. "You come across this discrimination and this prejudice and you don't realize how much they affect you. ... It's learning how to embrace those scars and how we use it as foundation and not as identity."

It's not always easy. While acting and music are passions, "I'm still out here not getting roles," Polanco said.

WHAT'S NEXT: She plays Cuca in the film version of the stage musical "In the Heights" and worked in the film "iGilbert."

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Associated Press writers Ryan Pearson and Michael Cidoni Lennox in Los Angeles and Gina Abdy in New York contributed to this story.

## Woman says Jeffrey Epstein raped her when she was 15

By JIM MUSTIAN and JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A new accuser of Jeffrey Epstein said Wednesday that the wealthy financier raped her in his New York mansion when she was 15.

Jennifer Araoz filed court papers seeking information from Epstein in preparation for suing him, and she aired her allegations on NBC's "Today" show, though she said she hadn't discussed them with authorities.

The 32-year-old makeup artist told "Today" she never went to police because she feared retribution from the well-connected Epstein, who is now facing federal charges of abusing dozens of underage girls in New York and Florida in the early 2000s. He has pleaded not guilty.

"What hurts me even more so is that if I wasn't afraid to come forward sooner, then maybe he wouldn't have done it to other girls," Araoz said. "I feel really guilty to this day."

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Messages were left with Epstein's attorneys and New York police seeking comment on Aroz's claims. The U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan declined to comment on them.

One of Aroz' attorneys, Daniel Kaiser, declined to comment Wednesday afternoon on whether he'd heard from authorities after Aroz went public with her accusation.

It came two days after Epstein, a 66-year-old Wall Street master of high finance with friends in very high places, pleaded not guilty to sex-trafficking and conspiracy charges. The indictment could land him behind bars for up to 45 years if he is convicted.

Epstein has not been charged with assaulting Aroz. But her account contradicts his defense attorneys' contention that Epstein never used violence or coerced anyone who gave him massages.

"She was a child — a child on welfare, with no father, who was groomed, recruited and preyed upon," said Kimberly Lerner, who represents Aroz with Kaiser. Aroz's father died when she was 12.

U.S. Attorney Geoffrey Berman said Monday that many of Epstein's alleged victims "were particularly vulnerable to exploitation," for reasons he declined to detail. He and other law enforcement officials repeatedly urged other potential victims and people with information about Epstein to come forward.

Aroz, in her court filing and TV interview, said her first contact with Epstein came in 2001, when she was a 14-year-old high school freshman at a performing arts high school, aspiring to become an actress. She said she was approached outside her school by a woman who told her that Epstein was a caring person who would help her with her career.

Aroz found Epstein welcoming, showing her his mansion filled with exotic taxidermy and elaborately painted ceilings, while his staff offered her wine and cheese, she said.

After a few weeks of visits, each ending with a \$300 payment, she said she was escorted to a "massage room," with a ceiling painted to resemble angels in a blue sky. There, she said, she would give him massages that would often lead to sex acts.

"I take care of you, you take care of me," Epstein told her, according to her court papers.

She said Epstein had a painting of a naked woman that he said resembled her; she also recalled prosthetic breasts he would play with while bathing.

"It was very odd," she said on "Today."

The visits continued once or twice a week until she turned 15, when she said Epstein told her to remove her underwear and climb on top of him.

She said she told him she didn't want to but that he forcibly had sex with her anyway.

"I don't want to say I was screaming, or anything of that nature. But I was terrified. And I was telling him to stop," she said.

"He had no intentions of stopping," she said. "He knew exactly what he was doing."

Aroz said she was "terrified" after the assault and never returned to Epstein's home. She even left her high school because it was so close to his mansion.

Epstein's staff continued trying to contact her for about a year, Aroz said, but she didn't respond.

A once-secret agreement allowed Epstein to avoid a potentially lengthy prison sentence nearly a decade ago in a case involving nearly identical allegations of sexually abusing underage girls.

Epstein pleaded guilty to lesser state charges and spent 13 months in jail. That plea deal was supposed to protect Epstein from federal prosecution, his lawyers say. They argue the new federal charges should be dismissed.

They were brought by federal prosecutors in New York, who say the Florida deal does not apply to them. They said the new charges overlap with the earlier case but include new allegations and victims from New York.

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Associated Press writers Kiley Armstrong and Michael R. Sisak contributed to this report.

## **Powell's message to Congress: Rate cut is likely coming soon**

**By MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writer**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pointing to a weaker global economy, rising trade tensions and chronically low inflation, Chairman Jerome Powell signaled Wednesday that the Federal Reserve is likely to cut interest rates late this month for the first time in a decade.

Delivering the central bank's semiannual report to Congress, Powell said that since Fed officials met last month, "uncertainties around trade tensions and concerns about the strength of the global economy continue to weigh on the U.S. economic outlook." In addition, inflation has dipped further below the Fed's annual target level.

The chairman's remarks led investors to send stock prices up, bond yields down and the value of the U.S. dollar lower on expectations of lower interest rates. The S&P 500 index briefly traded over 3,000 for the first time.

Testifying to the House Financial Services Committee, Powell was asked, as he has been before, what he would do if President Donald Trump tried to fire or demote him. Powell offered the same terse reply he's given in the past when asked about Trump's attacks on his leadership and the president's insistence that he has authority to remove the chairman: Powell said he intends to serve out his full four-year term, which ends in early 2022.

The president has repeatedly accused Powell and the Fed of keeping credit too tight for too long and of thereby holding back the economy and the stock market. Most experts dispute Trump's assertion that he has authority to either fire Powell or demote him from the chairman's post, and his attacks have raised alarms that he's undermining the Fed's long-recognized independence from political pressure.

Powell's description Wednesday of a more downbeat economic landscape led most economists to conclude that a quarter-point rate cut is a virtual certainty at the Fed's meeting in three weeks, with many forecasting further rate cuts to come. Some characterized a likely rate cut late this month as an "insurance policy" against an economic downturn.

"I think it will be the start of a series of rate cuts," added Sung Won Sohn, economics professor at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. "Powell wants to provide fuel for the economy down the road."

Expectations of a pending rate cut drew additional support Wednesday when the Fed released the minutes of its June 18-19 meeting. The central bank held rates unchanged then, but the minutes showed that some officials felt looser credit could soon be needed to address economic weakness.

Investors have collectively put the odds of a rate cut this month at 100%. The Fed's benchmark rate stands in a range of 2.25% to 2.5% after it raised rates four times last year — action that incited the initial attacks on the Powell Fed from Trump.

In the prepared remarks he delivered Wednesday before taking questions from the House members, Powell made no mention of the president's criticism. He did thank Congress for the "independence" it has given the Fed to operate free of political intrusion. But later, in the question-and-answer period, several Democratic committee members offered support for Powell's leadership and a rejection of Trump's criticism.

Rep. Maxine Waters, who leads the committee, declared that "this president has made it clear that he has no understanding or respect for the independence of the Federal Reserve."

Waters and other Democrats urged Powell to stand up to Trump's attacks.

"Have no fear," Rep. David Scott, D-Ga., told the chairman. "We in Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, have got your back."

Powell's remarks Wednesday began two days of his testimony on Capitol Hill. On Thursday, he will address the Senate Banking Committee.

At the moment, the U.S. economic landscape is a mixed one: The job market appears resilient, but economic growth is slowing. Many forecasters predict that growth has slowed to an annual rate of around 2% in the just completed April-June quarter.

In his testimony, Powell said the economy has fared reasonably well over the first half of the year. But he noted that "crosscurrents, such as trade tensions and concerns about global growth, have been weighing on economic activity and the outlook."

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He said that growth in business investment “seems to have slowed notably,” possibly because of concerns over slowing global growth and the trade battle between the Trump administration and China.

The Fed chairman told the House committee that he thinks average worker pay isn’t rising fast enough to accelerate low inflation, even with the unemployment rate near a five-decade low. An absence of inflation pressure makes it easier for the Fed to cut short-term rates. Referring to rates, Powell repeated a pledge the Fed made in its June policy statement that officials would “act as appropriate to sustain the expansion.” But notably, he added that “many” Fed official saw that the case for a looser monetary policy “had strengthened.”

The Fed hasn’t cut rates since 2008 at the height of the financial crisis.

Trump and Chinese President Xi Jinping declared a truce last month in what had threatened to become an escalating U.S.-China trade war and agreed to resume talks toward a deal that would meet the administration’s demands to better protect U.S. technology. That step eased fears that Trump would extend punitive tariffs to an additional \$300 billion in Chinese goods, in the process inviting retaliation from Beijing on American exports and likely weakening both nations’ economies.

And last week the government reported that after a tepid job gain in May, U.S. employers sharply stepped up their hiring in June, an indication of the economy’s durability.

## Federer, Nadal to play at Wimbledon for 1st time since 2008

By **HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer**

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) — All these years later, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal will meet again at Wimbledon for the 40th installment of their terrific rivalry — and first at the All England Club since their memorable 2008 final.

“Such a long time,” Nadal said.

They moved on to the semifinal showdown everyone’s been thinking about since the tournament draw by each overcoming a tough opening set Wednesday.

A 4-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 victory over Kei Nishikori gave the No. 2-seeded Federer his 100th match win at the All England Club, the first man to reach that total at any Grand Slam tournament. Not long after that ended on Centre Court, the No. 3-seeded Nadal finished off Sam Querrey 7-5, 6-2, 6-2 at No. 1 Court.

Friday’s other semifinal will draw far less attention: No. 1 Novak Djokovic, the defending champion, against No. 23 Roberto Bautista Agut, never before this far at a major.

Looking ahead to what comes next for himself, Federer said: “Obviously, I know people always hype it up.”

Well, why shouldn’t they? These are, after all, two of the greatest players in tennis’ long history, winners of more Grand Slam titles than any other men. Of Federer’s 20, a record eight came at Wimbledon. Of Nadal’s 18, 12 came at the French Open, where he routed Federer in the semifinals last month.

That gave Nadal a 24-15 career edge head-to-head, including 10-3 at the Slams.

But that one was on the red clay Nadal rules. This one is on Federer’s territory: grass.

This is their fourth matchup at Wimbledon — and first that won’t come in the final. Federer beat Nadal for the 2006 and 2007 titles, but Nadal won the championship 11 years ago in a 9-7 fifth set as dusk descended.

“Well, we have a lot of information on Rafa, and so does he about us,” Federer said. “So you can either dive into tactics and all that stuff like mad for two days — or you’re just going to say: ‘You know what? It’s grass-court tennis and I’m going to come out there and play attacking tennis.’ And if he can defend that, that’s too good. And if he can’t, well, then, that’s good for me.”

It is the 13th time that the Big Three of Federer, Nadal and Djokovic are in the semifinals at a major tournament together. On 11 of the previous occasions, one of them claimed the title.

There were some shaky moments for each Wednesday.

“The beginning,” Federer said, “was brutal.”

The eighth-seeded Nishikori jumped out to an early edge by breaking in the very first game, enough to give him that set.

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But Federer quickly turned things around in the second, conjuring up whatever he wanted, exactly when he wanted it.

His approach shots were beyond reproach. His volleys vibrant. His returns were timed so well, and struck so violently, that one knocked the net-rushing Nishikori's racket plum out of his hands.

And Federer's serve? Sure, he faced break points, but he never allowed 2014 U.S. Open runner-up Nishikori to convert another.

"Overall, I'm just very happy how I'm hitting the ball," Federer said. "Feel good off the baseline, too, which is clearly going to be important, maybe, for the next match."

Yeah, maybe.

Nadal, of course, is still a ball-retrieving, shot-whipping machine at the back of the court.

He did have some trouble closing out the first set against Querrey, an American ranked 65th who was trying to reach his second Wimbledon semifinal.

Nadal wasted three set points at 5-3, then another before getting broken when serving for it at 5-4. Again serving for that set at 6-5, he erased a trio of break points for Querrey before holding — and finally was on his way.

"I definitely think he's a guy that can win it again," Querrey said about two-time Wimbledon champ Nadal.

Djokovic, eyeing a fifth trophy at the All England Club and 16th overall at Slams, used a 10-game run to transform what was shaping up as an even, entertaining quarterfinal into a 6-4, 6-0, 6-2 romp against 21st-seeded David Goffin.

"I felt," Djokovic said, "like I managed to dismantle his game."

Down an early break, the defending champion grabbed control midway through the opening set and never let go.

"He was everywhere," Goffin said.

Djokovic did to Goffin exactly what he does to so many men on so many surfaces and at so many tournaments: He takes their best shot, deals with it and then wears them down.

"I sincerely hope," Djokovic said, "that my opponent feels like he's got to work twice as (hard as) against any other opponent to win a point."

Bautista Agut, a first-time Grand Slam semifinalist, is supposed to be on the island of Ibiza right now, having a bachelor party with a half-dozen pals ahead of his November wedding. Instead, he will play on after beating No. 26 Guido Pella of Argentina 7-5, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3.

"Well," the 31-year-old Bautista Agut said, "it feels better to be here in London."

Federer and Nadal are surely pleased to still be around, too.

Everyone else will be thrilled to see them trade strokes on Centre Court once more.

"I know they haven't played here in a long time. It seems a little more exciting, more special, they are playing at Wimbledon, maybe, rather than outside of a Grand Slam," Querrey said. "I'll be watching on Friday."

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Follow Howard Fendrich on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/HowardFendrich>

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More AP tennis coverage: <https://www.apnews.com/apf-Tennis> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## 'A floodier future': Scientists say records will be broken

By WAYNE PARRY Associated Press

ATLANTIC CITY, N.J. (AP) — The federal government is warning Americans to brace for a "floodier" future. Government scientists predict 40 places in the U.S. will experience higher than normal rates of so-called sunny day flooding this year because of rising sea levels and an abnormal El Nino weather system.

A report released Wednesday by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicts that sunny day flooding, also known as tidal flooding, will continue to increase.

"The future is already here, a floodier future," said William Sweet, a NOAA oceanographer and lead

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author of the study.

The report predicted that annual flood records will be broken again next year and for years and decades to come from sea-level rise.

"Flooding that decades ago usually happened only during a powerful or localized storm can now happen when a steady breeze or a change in coastal current overlaps with a high tide," it read.

The nationwide average frequency of sunny day flooding in 2018 was five days a year, tying a record set in 2015.

But the East Coast averaged twice as much flooding.

The agency says the level of sunny day flooding in the U.S. has doubled since 2000.

Nationwide, the agency predicted, average sunny day flooding could reach 7 to 15 days a year by 2030, and 25 to 75 days a year by 2050.

"We cannot wait to act," said Nicole LeBoeuf, acting director of NOAA's Ocean Service. "This issue gets more urgent and complicated with every passing day."

Global sea levels are rising at a rate of about 3 millimeters a year, or about an inch every eight years, according to Rutgers University researchers, who predict that by 2050, seas off New Jersey will rise by an additional 1.4 feet (0.4 meters).

The study noted floods interfering with traffic in northeast states, swamping septic systems in Florida and choking Delaware and Maryland coastal farms with saltwater over the past year.

Baltimore experienced 12 days of high-tide flooding from 1902 to 1936. Within the last 12 months, it experienced an additional 12 days.

Robert Kopp, a leading climate scientist with Rutgers University, who was not involved in the study, said it confirmed many well-established trends.

"It's simple arithmetic: If you have higher sea level, you will have tides causing flooding," he said. "We're not talking about disaster flooding. We're talking about repetitive flooding that disrupts people's lives on a daily basis. It's sometimes called 'nuisance flooding,' but it has real impacts and costs."

The report cited the disruption of commerce in downtown Annapolis, Maryland, where parking spaces are lost to flooding. A 2017 study put the price tag on lost economic activity at as much as \$172,000. The water table has risen to ground level and degraded septic systems in the Miami region, and farmlands in the Delmarva Peninsula in Delaware and Maryland have been damaged by salt water encroaching into planted areas.

High-tide flooding is causing problems including beach erosion, overwhelmed sewer and drinking water systems, closed roadways, disrupted harbor operations, degraded infrastructure and reduced property values — problems which "are nearly certain to get much worse this century," the report read.

The report's statistics cover May 2018 through April 2019.

The agency forecasts sunny-day flooding this year in Boston at 12 to 19 days (it had 19 last year). It predicted sunny-day flooding this year in New York (8 to 13 days, compared with 12 last year); Norfolk, Virginia (10 to 15 days; compared to 10 days last year); Charleston, South Carolina (4 to 7 days, compared to 5 last year); Pensacola, Florida (2 to 5 days compared with 4 last year); Sabine Pass, Texas (6 to 13 days compared with 8 last year) and Eagle Point, Texas (29 to 40 days, compared to 27 last year).

West coast predictions included San Diego (5 to 9 days compared to 8 last year); Los Angeles (1 to 4 days compared to 5 last year); Humboldt Bay, California (6 to 12 days compared to 12 last year); Toke Point, Washington (9 to 21 days compared to 12 last year) and 2 to 6 days in Seattle, compared to 2 last year.

The report documented that 12 locations broke or ties their record of sunny day flooding last year, including 22 in Washington, D.C., 14 in Wilmington, North Carolina; and 12 each in Baltimore and Annapolis.

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Follow Wayne Parry at <http://twitter.com/WayneParryAC>

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This story has been corrected to show the organization is the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, not the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration.



## US appeals court sides with Trump in lawsuit involving hotel

By DENISE LAVOIE AP Legal Affairs Writer

RICHMOND, Va. (AP) — A federal appeals court threw out a lawsuit accusing President Donald Trump of illegally profiting off the presidency through his luxury Washington hotel, handing Trump a significant legal victory Wednesday.

A three-judge panel of the 4th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals unanimously overturned the ruling of a federal judge in Maryland who said the lawsuit could move forward.

The state of Maryland and the District of Columbia sued in 2017, claiming Trump has violated the emoluments clause of the Constitution by accepting profits through foreign and domestic officials who stay at the Trump International Hotel. The case is one of three that argue the president is violating the provision, which prohibits federal officials from accepting benefits from foreign or state governments without congressional approval.

In the case before the 4th Circuit, the court found the two jurisdictions lack standing to pursue their claims against the president, and granted a petition for a rare writ of mandamus, directing U.S. District Court Judge Peter Messitte to dismiss the lawsuit.

Trump heralded the decision in a tweet, saying, "Word just out that I won a big part of the Deep State and Democrat induced Witch Hunt." Trump tweeted that he doesn't make money but loses "a fortune" by serving as president.

Trump's personal attorney, Jay Sekulow, called the decision "a complete victory."

"We are pleased that the Fourth Circuit unanimously decided to dismiss this extraordinarily flawed case," Department of Justice spokeswoman Kelly Laco said in a statement.

During oral arguments before the panel in March, lawyers for Maryland and the District said Trump's status as president is a driving factor for foreign and domestic government officials to stay at his hotel.

Just blocks from the White House, the iconic Old Post Office quickly became a hot spot for lobbyists and foreign officials after it reopened in October 2016 as the Trump International Hotel. A public relations firm working for Saudi Arabia spent nearly \$270,000 on food and rooms. The Philippine and Kuwaiti embassies have also had parties there.

Maryland and the District claim they have suffered harm because more people would stay at hotels in their jurisdictions if they weren't eager to curry favor with the president by staying at his hotel.

The court, however, wrote that Maryland and the District's "interest in enforcing the Emoluments Clauses is so attenuated and abstract that their prosecution of this case readily provokes the question of whether this action against the President is an appropriate use of the courts."

Trump's legal team had argued that Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh and District of Columbia Attorney General Karl Racine — both Democrats — lack authority to sue the president in his official capacity. Trump's lawyers also argued that the emoluments clause only bars compensation made in connection with services provided in his official capacity or in "an employment-type relationship" with a foreign or domestic government.

The 4th Circuit's decision to hear the unusual mid-case appeal put the lawsuit on hold before deadlines to respond to subpoenas issued in December seeking tax returns, receipts and other records from more than 30 entities, including 13 Trump businesses and the federal agency that oversees the lease for Trump's hotel.

Racine and Frosh said in a joint statement that they would not abandon their efforts.

"Although the court described a litany of ways in which this case is unique, it failed to acknowledge the most extraordinary circumstance of all: President Trump is brazenly profiting from the Office of the President in ways that no other President in history ever imagined and that the founders expressly sought — in the Constitution — to prohibit," the attorneys general said.

Racine has previously said that if the panel ruled against Maryland and the District, the legal team would seriously consider asking for a rehearing before the full 4th Circuit. He has also said it wouldn't surprise him if the case ended up in the U.S. Supreme Court.

All three judges on the panel were nominated by Republican presidents: Paul Niemeyer, by George H.W. Bush; Dennis Shedd, by George W. Bush, and A. Marvin Quattlebaum, by Trump.

A similar case brought by nearly 200 congressional Democrats in the District of Columbia's federal court also deals with the idea that Trump is using the presidency for his personal profit, but that case is uniquely different in that the Congress is specifically mentioned in the emoluments clause itself. On Monday, the Justice Department petitioned for a writ of mandamus in the D.C. appeals court and asked for a stay on the 37 subpoenas issued in that case.

Associated Press writers Tami Abdollah in Washington and Sarah Rankin in Richmond, Virginia, contributed to this report.

## Scientists get peek into how some fish change sex as adults

By JEREMY REHM Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — If in the beginning there was male and female, fish seem to have forgotten the memo. For nearly 500 fish species, including the clownfish in "Finding Nemo," the great divide between sexes is more like a murky line: If circumstances call for it, the fish can swap their sex, with females turning into males in some species and males turning into females in others.

People think of sex as being fixed, said biologist Erica Todd from the University of Otago in New Zealand, "but there are so many fish that can push it in the other direction."

Scientists have known for decades about the sex trades, but they've had limited understanding of how the exchange happens. In a study published Wednesday in *Science Advances*, Todd and her colleagues detail the molecular events behind this ability, as well as what keeps mammals stuck as one sex or another.

The researchers looked at the bluehead wrasse, a reef fish that swims in small groups of a dominant blue-headed male and a posse of smaller yellow females. Normally the male and females stay as they are, feeding together and occasionally mating. But if a predator happens to snatch up the lead male, the dominant female in the group will become a male.

"The sex change in this species is remarkable because it's so quick," Todd said. It takes only minutes to a few hours for the female's behavior to become more territorial and aggressive like a male. In a few days, she courts other females. And after eight to 10 days, she's fully transitioned to a male.

Todd and her team removed the lead males from several wrasse groups in the Florida Keys. As the females changed sexes, the researchers took DNA from cells in the animal's brains and genitals so they could follow what was happening at the genetic level.

They found that removing the males likely stressed females. The hormones released from that stress dial back the activity of the gene that makes the female hormone estrogen, and eventually ovary cells start to die. At the same time, those hormones increase activity in the genes that produce male hormones, and later testicles form.

At a certain point, the reproductive gland "is mostly dying female cells and proliferation of early male cells," Todd said.

But hormones weren't the only thing switching around. The scientists also saw a complete rearrangement of chemical tags that attach to DNA. These tags turn genes on or off and have specific arrangements in males and females.

As female wrasse transitioned to a male, these tags were removed and reorganized, almost as if the fish was being reprogrammed.

"They're sort of poised and ready to go either direction" like a seesaw, she said. The hormones help push it to the male side.

Laura Casas, a biologist in Spain who was not involved in the study, called the results surprising. She expects the findings can apply to other sex-changing fish, including her study animal clownfish, which shift from male to female.

Matthew Grober, of Georgia State University, was more skeptical, especially of stress as the source that

triggers the change. He questioned how the fish avoid changing sex from day-to-day stress and suspects something else is at play.

All animals with a backbone, including humans, share these genes, raising the question of whether all of them have a deep-seated capability to switch sex.

That's unlikely. Our reproductive systems are more complex and would be far more complicated to rewire, Todd said. There's also cell machinery that aggressively opposes the seesaw from swinging the other way. "These fish are just able to go back and remove that suppression," she said.

Follow Jeremy Rehm on Twitter @jrehm\_sci

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## Sanders facing tougher 2020 competition for liberal support

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE AND JUANA SUMMERS Associated Press

Barbara Lee supported Bernie Sanders' 2016 presidential bid, helping him score one of his most decisive victories that year when he dominated the New Hampshire primary. But as he wages another bid for the White House, Lee is looking at a different candidate.

"I like him, I like his ideas," the 66-year-old retired massage therapist said of Sanders. "I just think right at the moment, Elizabeth Warren has better plans."

That sentiment is becoming a hurdle to the Vermont senator's effort to recreate the energy that fueled his insurgent 2016 campaign, when he emerged as the liberal alternative to Hillary Clinton. Democrats now have multiple options, including Warren, who had a strong debate performance and outraised Sanders by more than \$1 million during the second quarter in a sign of her growing grip over progressives.

Lacking the clear anti-establishment lane he had to himself in 2016, Sanders now must carve out a new one — and it's unclear exactly what that will look like.

"He has to be able to convince people that there's something distinctive about him," said veteran Democratic strategist Bob Shrum. "His speeches now, and what he says in the debates, are indistinguishable from what he said in 2016. In 2016, he was the new kid on the block, despite his age and he seemed fresh to a lot of people. Right now I think he's lost some of that sense of freshness."

Warren isn't the only Democrat on the rise who could potentially eat into Sanders' base. Voters making a generational choice have an alternative in a range of fresh Democratic faces who have only recently emerged on the national stage, including Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana, and California Sen. Kamala Harris.

And despite his talk of political revolution, Sanders risks being seen as part of the old guard, another politician in their late 70s like Joe Biden.

That's part of the reason John Jenkins, a 33-year-old public school teacher from Ames, Iowa, is considering other candidates.

"He's kind of a constant," said Jenkins, who supported Sanders in 2016 and recently attended one of his speeches.

His wife, Natalie Robinson, wore an "Our Revolution" t-shirt to come to see the senator — but she's also not sure if she'll support him this time around.

"They all agree on the issues," she noted, but "it's how they're going to make those issues better that matters."

Jenkins said he's considering Warren and Harris, whose "enthusiasm is very interesting to me."

And that, according to Charles Chamberlain, executive director of the progressive advocacy group Democracy for America, may be Sanders' biggest challenge — the fact that while some voters are interested in policy nuance, many are evaluating the candidates on personality.

"I don't think he should be changing his content," Chamberlain said. "What I do think would benefit him

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would be to think a little bit more about how to personalize his policy, so people can see he's not just an angry guy with a vision, he's also warm — like your grandpa."

Indeed, a number of the candidates have woven personal stories into their stump speeches and debate-stage performances in compelling ways. On the trail, Warren describes how the poverty she faced growing up informed her interest in banking reform. Harris made headlines — and won a bump in support — at last month's presidential debate after she attacked Biden in deeply personal terms over his opposition to busing .

For Alexis Falcone, a 27-year-old store manager from New Hampshire, the personal connection was what made her decide to shift her support from Sanders to Warren.

"I really feel like she's sincere and that she wants to help everybody," Falcone said.

Sanders' campaign has privately acknowledged they need to hold more intimate events and give him a chance to connect with voters personally, especially in early primary states like Iowa and New Hampshire, where retail politicking matters.

The senator took on a different format in Iowa last week, walking and greeting supporters in five parades; hosting a couple of ice cream socials and opening three new campaign offices across the state.

Still, he gave largely the same speech at an Ames office opening as he does at thousand-person rallies, railing against billionaires and corporate special interests while calling for his supporters to join his revolution. He left his own personal story out of it.

His campaign pushes back against any suggestion that he's losing support to other candidates. Jeff Weaver, a top Sanders adviser who served as his 2016 campaign manager, said he believed that while the field is more splintered this cycle, Sanders "has a strong base of active and motivated supporters and grassroots donors that are going to carry this campaign forward."

"Senator Sanders has always run in the same lane," Weaver said. "He has been working to uplift working people in every Zip code, and in marginalized communities. Regardless of what the race looks like, that will always be his lane. He's running to create a government and an economy that works for everyone, he was trying to do that in 2016, he's trying to do that today, he was trying to do that 20 years ago."

While other candidates may be competing for his voters, Sanders still saw strong enthusiasm during his recent Iowa trip, with overflow crowds at his Des Moines and Ames office openings and nearly 850 people at an Iowa City event that was planned to be much smaller.

After shaking his hand on the side of a Fourth of July parade in West Des Moines, Terri Steinmann, a 42-year-old real estate agent, said she was "verklemt" — a Yiddish word meaning "overcome with emotion." She says while she did think Sanders could move a bit more toward the center to appeal to moderate voters, she was still excited by his firebrand campaign, and still leaning toward supporting him in 2020.

"I kinda love him just the way he is," she said.

Jaffe reported from Des Moines, Iowa and Summers reported from Washington. Associated Press writer Hunter Woodall contributed from Peterborough, New Hampshire.

## Sturgeon, America's forgotten dinosaurs, slowly coming back

By **BEN FINLEY, PATRICK WHITTLE and JOHN FLESHER** Associated Press

CHARLES CITY, Va. (AP) — Sturgeon were America's vanishing dinosaurs, armor-plated beasts that crowded the nation's rivers until mankind's craving for caviar pushed them to the edge of extinction.

More than a century later, some populations of the massive bottom feeding fish are showing signs of recovery in the dark corners of U.S. waterways.

Increased numbers are appearing in the cold streams of Maine, the lakes of Michigan and Wisconsin and the coffee-colored waters of Florida's Suwannee River.

A 14-foot Atlantic sturgeon — as long as a Volkswagen Beetle — was recently spotted in New York's Hudson River.

"It's really been a dramatic reversal of fortune," said Greg Garman, a Virginia Commonwealth University

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ecologist who studies Atlantic sturgeon in Virginia's James River. "We didn't think they were there, frankly. Now, they're almost every place we're looking."

Following the late 1800s caviar rush, America's nine sturgeon species and subspecies were plagued by pollution, dams and overfishing. Steep declines in many populations weren't fully apparent until the 1990s.

"However, in the past three decades, sturgeon have been among the most studied species in North America as a result of their threatened or endangered status," said James Crossman, president of The North American Sturgeon and Paddlefish Society, a conservation group.

Scientists have been finding sturgeon in places where they were thought to be long gone. And they're seeing increased numbers of them in some rivers because of cleaner water, dam removals and fishing bans.

These discoveries provide some hope for a fish that is among the world's most threatened.

But the U.S. sturgeon population is only a tiny fraction of what it once was — and the health of each species and regional populations vary widely.

While some white sturgeon populations on the Pacific Coast are abundant enough to support limited recreational and commercial fishing, Alabama sturgeon are so rare that none have been caught for years.

Across America, dams still keep some sturgeon populations low by blocking ancient spawning routes. And the fish face newer threats such as rising water temperatures from climate change and the sharp propellers of cargo ships.

It will take decades to measure a population's recovery, experts say. Sturgeon sometimes live longer than humans. And they spawn infrequently, often requiring half a century to bounce back from overfishing.

Environmentalists warn that more conservation efforts are still needed.

"They've survived relatively unchanged for 200 million years," said Jeff Miller, a senior conservation advocate at the Center for Biological Diversity, which is planning a lawsuit seeking federal safeguards for sturgeon in the Great Lakes and Mississippi River watersheds. "If they're going to survive us, they're going to need additional protection."

Sturgeon swam with the dinosaurs. Bony plates line their bodies. Whisker-like barbels hang from their chins. Their toothless mouths telescope out and vacuum up anything from worms to mussels.

Their meat fed Native Americans, the starving settlers of Jamestown and the Lewis and Clark expedition. Delaware River shad fishermen would yank up their nets as thousands of sturgeons swam toward spawning grounds.

Then came caviar. The Russian delicacy of salt-cured sturgeon eggs became a fad for Europe's new middle class — and that took a heavy toll on American sturgeon.

"People just massacred them, just like we massacred the buffalo," said Inga Saffron, author of the 2002 history "Caviar."

"The difference being they were catching the sturgeon as they were migrating to spawn," she said. "Not only did they kill the fish, they killed future generations of fish."

By 1900, American sturgeon populations were collapsing. Dams were going up. Pollution sucked oxygen from rivers.

But as decades passed, fishing bans took effect, and environmental laws became stronger.

Among the species showing improvement is Atlantic sturgeon, whose range stretches from Florida to eastern Canada.

The population around the Chesapeake Bay was feared to be extinct in the mid-1990s. Now, thousands of are believed to be there, according to Virginia Commonwealth University scientists.

Last fall, Matthew Balazik, a sturgeon research ecologist with the university and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, netted more than 200 baby Atlantic sturgeon in the James River — the first seen there in years. "This could be a kind of a comeback generation," Balazik said.

Not every river is seeing improvement. Dewayne Fox, a fisheries professor at Delaware State University, said the Delaware River's population remains low, possibly because of collisions with cargo vessels or dredging on spawning grounds.

But overall, Atlantic sturgeon appear to be slowly recovering after a species-wide fishing moratorium went

into effect in 1998, according to a 2017 assessment by the Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission. The shortnose sturgeon also shows signs of bouncing back. In Maine, scientists have captured about 75 this decade on the Saco River, where they were previously never seen.

In Maine's Kennebec River, the shortnose population nearly doubled from about 5,100 in the late 1970s to more than 9,400 around 2000, and it has likely grown since, said Gail Wippelhauser, a fisheries biologist with Maine's Department of Marine Resources.

Wippelhauser credits cleaner water: "They used to just dump sewage into the river. There were paper mills that used to dump chemicals in."

Lake sturgeon are waging a slow but steady comeback. The largest group is in the river corridor linking Lakes Huron and Erie, said Ed Baker, a research biologist with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

The species is benefiting from fishing limits and stocking programs, some by Native American tribes. But dam construction over more than a century has slowed the recovery.

One solution has been a fish elevator and tanks that haul them around two hydroelectric dams on the Menominee River, which flows between Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

The number of Gulf sturgeon is also growing, particularly in Florida's Suwannee River. That population has at least doubled since the mid-1990s to about 10,000 fish.

The species still faces various threats including the Gulf Coast's ever-warmer waters, said Adam Kaeser, an aquatic ecologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Decimated by dams, only one Alabama sturgeon has been caught since 2007, but DNA tests of river water confirm some are still there.

"They're hanging on," said biologist Steve Rider with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. "But they're barely hanging on."

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Patrick Whittle reported from Biddeford, Maine; John Flesher from Traverse City, Michigan.

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## **Greek find called earliest sign of our species out of Africa**

**By MALCOLM RITTER AP Science Writer**

NEW YORK (AP) — Scientists say they've identified the earliest sign of our species outside Africa, a chunk of skull recovered from a cave in southern Greece.

Its estimated age is at least 210,000 years old, making it 16,000 or more years older than an upper jaw bone from Israel that was reported last year. It shows our species began leaving Africa much earlier than previously thought, researchers reported Wednesday.

The travelers to Greece evidently left no descendants alive today. Other research has established that the exodus from Africa that led to our worldwide spread didn't happen until more than 100,000 years later. The new work is the latest sign of earlier, dead-end exits from the continent where Homo sapiens evolved.

The fossil, from the rear of a skull, was actually found decades ago — excavated in the late 1970s from the Apidima Cave in the southern Peloponnese region of Greece and later kept in a University of Athens museum.

"Not a lot of attention was paid to it," said Katerina Harvati of the University of Tuebingen in Germany, who was invited to study the fossil.

Harvati and others report the results of their analysis in the journal Nature. To establish the age, they analyzed bits of bone from the fossil. To identify what species it came from, the researchers compared a virtual reconstruction to the shapes of fossils from known species.

Harvati said finding evidence that our species had reached Greece by that time was initially a surprise, though in hindsight "it's not that difficult to imagine that it would have happened."

Eric Delson of Lehman College in New York, who did not participate in the study, said the discovery was

somewhat surprising but that southeastern Europe “makes a lot of sense” for a finding that old. Now the question is what happened to these people, he said. Did Neanderthals out-compete them?

But some other scientists are not convinced the fossil’s reported age and identification are correct.

Warren Sharp, an expert on dating fossils at the Berkeley Geochronology Center in California, said the age of 210,000 years is “not well supported by the data.”

Ian Tattersall of the American Museum of Natural History in New York called the case for identifying the fossil as *H. sapiens* “pretty shaky.” Its shape is suggestive, but it’s incomplete and it lacks features that would make the identification firmer, he said in an email.

In response, Harvati said the back of the skull is very useful for differentiating *H. sapiens* from Neanderthals and other related species, and that several lines of evidence support the identification.

At a press conference, Harvati said it’s not clear whether scientists will be able to recover DNA or proteins from the fossil to confirm its identity.

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## Iconic glass-paned church converted to Catholic cathedral

By **AMY TAXIN Associated Press**

GARDEN GROVE, Calif. (AP) — An iconic glass-paned church in Southern California that once housed a booming televangelist ministry has been transformed into a cathedral to give the region’s Catholics a long-awaited and much larger place to congregate and pray.

The landmark, with a facade made up of nearly 11,000 glass panes, was long known as Rev. Robert H. Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral.

It appears unchanged from the outside. But the cavernous house of worship is covered on the inside with quatrefoil window shades that send sunlight cascading across a stone altar, wooden pews and prominent steel crucifix.

The changes are part of a \$77 million makeover to convert the space for Roman Catholic worship by adding features such as the Bishop’s chair and the geometric window shades that draw in light while keeping the 2,100-seat building now known as Christ Cathedral cool and airy under the glaring afternoon sun.

“Our hope is that through the beauty of this place people will be drawn closer to the divine,” said Father Christopher Smith, episcopal vicar and rector of Christ Cathedral. “Every time people have walked in here since we’ve opened it up to people to see it, that is exactly what’s happened.”

The July 17 dedication of the building opens a new chapter for the diocese of Orange, which was formed in the 1970s when the county’s population was much smaller. Since then, Orange County has grown into a densely-populated and diverse region between Los Angeles and San Diego that is home to more than a million Catholics.

For years, the diocese was planning to build a new cathedral to have a central place for special events such as ordinations. Auxiliary Bishop Timothy Freyer said he recalled being given a capped number of invitations when he was ordained three decades ago due to the limited seating at the county’s much smaller cathedral.

The proposal, however, carried a steep price tag, and when Schuller’s Crystal Cathedral went bankrupt in 2010 the diocese instead opted to buy the sprawling campus in Garden Grove for \$57.5 million. In addition to the cathedral, the campus has a school, cemetery and offices surrounded by scenic gardens and water features.

“It would have cost hundreds of millions to build from scratch, and this was a godsend when we were able to get this in bankruptcy,” Freyer said.

The diocese sought to reflect the community’s traditions in the new cathedral. The relics that will be placed in the altar of the church are from martyrs and saints from Vietnam, Mexico and South Korea in addition to North America, reflecting Orange County’s immigrant populations. They also are from St. John

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Paul II, who was pope from 1978 to 2005.

The building was designed by architect Philip Johnson and completed in 1980. At the time, it housed the ministry founded by Schuller, an Alton, Iowa-born pastor ordained by the Reformed Church in America who began preaching at a California drive-in movie theater in 1955 with his wife Arvella.

Schuller started the "Hour of Power" in 1970 to spread his message that "possibility thinking" and love of God overcome hardships. The program had millions of viewers at its peak but the church filed for bankruptcy after a disastrous leadership transition and a decline in viewership and donations.

Schuller died in 2015 after a battle with cancer. His grandson is a church pastor and has a television ministry in Orange County.

The new cathedral will be open for weekend Mass but closed weekdays until next year while the Hazel Wright pipe organ, the world's fifth-largest, is voiced and tuned.

The new space could put an end to overcrowded weekend worship in the parish, where some Mass times are standing-room-only, Smith said. It also holds meaning for churchgoers from other parishes who see the cathedral as a special place for the county's Catholics and faithful from all religions.

"What's the best part of it it's not only a cathedral, it's actually a center for the Catholic faith in Orange County," said Lorraine Fiori, a volunteer docent who gives tours of the campus. "We want it to be a welcoming center for people of all faiths."

## US urges world powers to reject Iran's 'nuclear extortion'

By KIYOKO METZLER and DAVID RISING Associated Press

VIENNA (AP) — The United States admonished world powers seeking to preserve a deal with Iran on its atomic program on Wednesday not to give in to "nuclear extortion" from Tehran, which has breached the pact's limitations in recent days in an attempt to get them to provide economic incentives to offset American sanctions.

The U.S. requested the special board meeting of the International Atomic Energy Agency after Iran announced last week that it had exceeded the amount of low-enriched uranium it is allowed to stockpile under limitations set in the 2015 nuclear deal. Since then, it also announced it has started enriching uranium past the 3.67% purity allowed, to 4.5%, and IAEA inspectors verified both developments.

By doing so, Tehran hopes to increase the pressure on the remaining members of the nuclear deal, known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, to provide economic relief for American sanctions. It has set an early September deadline until it pushes limits further.

Jackie Wolcott, the U.S. ambassador to international organizations in Vienna, told Iran and others in the room that Washington was open to "negotiation without preconditions" on a new nuclear deal, and that "the only path to sanctions relief is through such negotiations, not nuclear extortion."

"We are committed to denying Iran the benefits it seeks from these most recent provocations," she said. "It is imperative that this misbehavior not be rewarded, for if it is, Iran's demands and provocations will only escalate."

U.S. President Donald Trump underscored the comments later, tweeting that the nuclear deal was "terrible" and threatened that "sanctions will soon be increased, substantially!" Trump has long rejected the deal, saying it was too generous to Tehran and did not address its involvement in regional conflicts.

Russian delegate Mikhail Ulyanov fired back at the meeting that the U.S. could not both reject the deal and call for Iran's full implementation of it.

"Although for some reason they only refer to Tehran, in fact the United States, who are refusing to fulfill its own obligations under the nuclear deal, lost any right to demand this from others," he said.

Iran's representative, Kazem Gharib Abadi, stressed Iran's nuclear program was for "peaceful purposes" and said his country was prepared to resume full implementation of the JCPOA, "commensurate with the implementation of the commitments by all participants."

At the same time he slammed the U.S. decision to withdrawal from the deal and reinstate sanctions, saying it was "neither legitimate nor legal" and should not be accepted by the international community.



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"Due to costly and predictable consequences of sanctions, they should be seen as weapons of warfare and means of aggression," he said. "Economic sanctions are, in fact, collective punishment of the ordinary people, contrary to the objectives and purposes of human rights, and should be considered as crimes against humanity."

He later told reporters that if the U.S. was serious about wanting to negotiate with Iran, it should drop all sanctions.

"No country is ready to negotiate with a country that is putting a gun at its chest," he said. He added, however, that the JCPOA itself was "not renegotiable."

Since Trump withdrew from the nuclear accord, the restoration of heavy sanctions on Iran, including its oil industry, has exacerbated an economic crisis that has sent the currency plummeting.

Tensions between Iran and the U.S. have been on the rise. The U.S. has sent thousands of troops, an aircraft carrier, nuclear-capable B-52 bombers and advanced fighter jets to the Middle East, and fears are growing of a wider conflict after mysterious oil tanker attacks near the Strait of Hormuz blamed on Iran, attacks by Iranian-backed rebels in Yemen on Saudi Arabia, and Iran's downing of a U.S. military drone.

So far, the remaining parties to the nuclear deal — Russia, China, Germany, France, Britain and the European Union — have been unable to meet Tehran's demands for enough economic assistance to offset the American sanctions.

They have said they remain committed to preserving it, however, insisting it is the best way to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon — even though Iran says it is not interested in producing one.

Iran maintains it is justified in breaching the limitations because the U.S. already broke the deal with its unilateral withdrawal last year, and Ulyanov said its recent steps "are not a source of enthusiasm, but we treat them with understanding."

In its statement to the IAEA board, the European Union urged Iran to return to compliance but also added it "deeply regrets the U.S. withdrawal and calls on all countries to refrain from taking any actions that impede the implementation of the JCPOA commitments."

On the European side, French President Emmanuel Macron has taken a lead role in trying to save the deal, speaking Saturday with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, and separately Monday with Trump.

On Wednesday, his top diplomatic adviser, Emmanuel Bonne, met in Tehran with Iran's senior security official, Ali Shamkhani, a powerful figure in the Iranian hierarchy.

Despite the overture, however, Shamkhani said Iran will not reverse its decision to increase uranium enrichment beyond the limits set by the accord until it achieves its "full rights" under the deal.

Iran's official IRNA news agency reported that Shamkhani told Bonne the decision to increase enrichment is an "unchangeable strategy" and criticized European countries for their "lack of will" in providing relief from U.S. sanctions.

Rouhani, however, after meeting with Bonne said "Iran has fully left the path open for diplomacy and negotiation."

Rouhani told Bonne Iran seeks "full implementation" of commitments from all parties to the agreement, and "if signatories to the deal implement their commitments, Iran also will take new steps," according to Rouhani's website.

In other developments, Rouhani said Wednesday that Britain will face "repercussions" over the seizure of an Iranian supertanker last week that authorities in Gibraltar suspect was breaching European sanctions on oil shipments to Syria.

Rouhani called the seizure "mean and wrong" during a Cabinet meeting, IRNA reported.

"You are an initiator of insecurity and you will understand its repercussions," he warned the British government, calling for the "full security" of international shipping lanes.

Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif, meanwhile, denied the supertanker belonged to Iran, saying whoever owned the oil shipment and the vessel could pursue the case through legal avenues. Iran had earlier summoned the British ambassador over what it called the "illegal interception" of the ship.

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Associated Press writer Nasser Karimi in Tehran contributed to this report; Rising reported from Berlin.

## Asian shares advance after Fed signals US rate cut likely

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Shares rose Thursday in Asia, tracking gains on Wall Street after Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell suggested the U.S. central bank is ready to cut interest rates for the first time in a decade.

Hong Kong's Hang Seng jumped 1.2% to 28,542.82 while the Shanghai Composite index added 0.5% to 2,929.87. In Japan, the Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.4% to 21,609.08 while South Korea's Kospi advanced 1.3% to 2,085.60. Australia's S&P ASX 200 gained 0.2% to 6,702.60. Shares also rose in Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

"Local equity markets are reveling in the best of both worlds this morning as local investors love nothing more than lower U.S. interest rates and a weaker U.S. dollar," Stephen Innes of Vanguard Markets said in a commentary.

On Wall Street, technology stocks drove much of the gains, nudging the Nasdaq composite to an all-time high. The benchmark S&P 500 index briefly traded above 3,000 for the first time before pulling back to just below its most recent record high a week ago.

The market climbed early on after the Fed chairman told Congress in his semi-annual report that many Fed officials believe a weakening global economy and rising trade tensions have strengthened the case for a rate cut.

That allayed investors' concerns that unexpectedly strong U.S. jobs data reported Friday might give the Fed reason to stay put on interest rates.

The S&P 500 index rose 0.5% to 2,993.07. The index, which set three record highs last week, is now less than 0.1% below its all-time high set last Wednesday.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 0.3% to 26,860.20, while the Nasdaq climbed 0.7% to 8,202.53, a record. Its previous record high was also set last Wednesday.

The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks rebounded from a brief slide, gaining 0.2% to 1,565.05.

The U.S. stock market rallied through much of June after the Fed first signaled that it might cut rates if necessary to shore up the U.S. economy.

In his prepared statement, Powell said that since Fed officials met last month, "uncertainties around trade tensions and concerns about the strength of the global economy continue to weigh on the U.S. economic outlook." Meanwhile, inflation has fallen farther from the Fed's target.

The Fed's benchmark rate currently stands in a range of 2.25% to 2.5% after the central bank raised rates four times last year. Many investors have put the odds of a rate cut this month at 100%.

A quarter-point cut in interest rates, which many investors expect, isn't likely to have a big impact on consumers' credit cards or mortgage rates. But it would reassure markets that the Fed would be open to further rate cuts if more signs of weakness in the global economy emerge.

Powell is due to appear before the Senate Banking Committee on Thursday. In the meantime, U.S. consumer inflation data are a focus for traders later Thursday.

Investors will have to wait until the end of the month to see what action the Fed takes on interest rates at its next meeting of policymakers.

Retaliatory tariffs remain a persistent worry for markets.

While China-U.S. trade tensions have calmed with a resumption of talks by phone between top envoys, friction with France looms after President Donald Trump's administration launched an investigation into French plans for a special tax targeting big tech companies.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude oil picked up 21 cents to \$60.64 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. On Wednesday, it jumped \$2.60 to settle at \$60.43 a barrel, the highest level since late May.

Brent crude oil, the international standard, added 9 cents to \$67.10 per barrel. Overnight, it gained \$2.85 to close at \$67.01 a barrel.

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CURRENCIES: The dollar fell to 107.87 Japanese yen from 108.45 yen on Wednesday. The euro strengthened to \$1.1280 from \$1.1250.

AP Business Writer Alex Veiga contributed.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, July 11, the 192nd day of 2019. There are 173 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 11, 1972, the World Chess Championship opened as grandmasters Bobby Fischer of the United States and defending champion Boris Spassky of the Soviet Union began play in Reykjavik, Iceland. (Fischer won after 21 games.)

On this date:

In 1798, the U.S. Marine Corps was formally re-established by a congressional act that also created the U.S. Marine Band.

In 1804, Vice President Aaron Burr mortally wounded former Treasury Secretary Alexander Hamilton during a pistol duel in Weehawken, New Jersey. (Hamilton died the next day.)

In 1859, Big Ben, the great bell inside the famous London clock tower, chimed for the first time.

In 1914, Babe Ruth made his Major League baseball debut, pitching the Boston Red Sox to a 4-3 victory over Cleveland.

In 1915, the Chicago Sunday Tribune ran an article titled, "Blues Is Jazz and Jazz Is Blues." (It's believed to be one of the earliest, if not the earliest, uses of the word "jazz" as a musical term by a newspaper.)

In 1937, American composer and pianist George Gershwin died at a Los Angeles hospital of a brain tumor; he was 38.

In 1952, the Republican National Convention, meeting in Chicago, nominated Dwight D. Eisenhower for president and Richard M. Nixon for vice president.

In 1955, the U.S. Air Force Academy swore in its first class of cadets at its temporary quarters at Lowry Air Force Base in Colorado.

In 1960, the novel "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee was first published by J.B. Lippincott and Co.

In 1979, the abandoned U.S. space station Skylab made a spectacular return to Earth, burning up in the atmosphere and showering debris over the Indian Ocean and Australia.

In 1995, the U.N.-designated "safe haven" of Srebrenica (sreh-breh-NEET'-sah) in Bosnia-Herzegovina fell to Bosnian Serb forces, who then carried out the killings of more than 8,000 Muslim men and boys. The United States normalized relations with Vietnam.

In 2017, emails released by Donald Trump Jr. revealed that he'd been told before meeting with a Russian attorney during the presidential campaign that the Russian government had information that could "incriminate" Hillary Clinton. MSNBC "Morning Joe" host and former Republican congressman Joe Scarborough announced that he was leaving the Republican party, partly because of its loyalty to President Donald Trump.

Ten years ago: During a visit to sub-Saharan Africa, President Barack Obama addressed Ghana's Parliament, where he challenged the continent of his ancestors to shed corruption and conflict in favor of peace. Funeral services were held in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, for former NFL star Steve McNair, who had been shot to death in Nashville a week earlier by Sahel Kazemi (sah-HEHL' kah-ZEE'-mee), who then took her own life.

Five years ago: House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers, R-Ky., said that President Barack Obama's \$3.7 billion emergency request to deal with tens of thousands of unaccompanied children arriving at the U.S.-Mexico border was too big to get through the House, as a growing number of Democrats rejected policy changes Republicans were demanding as their price for approving any money. Tommy Ramone, 65, a co-founder of the seminal punk band the Ramones and the last surviving member of the original

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group, died in New York.

One year ago: At a NATO summit in Brussels, President Donald Trump declared that a gas pipeline venture had left Germany's government "captive to Russia," and questioned the necessity of the NATO alliance. John Schnatter, the founder of Papa John's, resigned as chairman of the board of the pizza chain, and apologized for using a racial slur during a conference call in May. Porn star Stormy Daniels was arrested at an Ohio strip club, accused of touching and being touched by patrons in violation of state law; prosecutors dropped the charges hours later, saying the law had been improperly applied.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Susan Seaforth Hayes is 76. Singer Jeff Hanna (Nitty Gritty Dirt Band) is 72. Ventriloquist-actor Jay Johnson is 70. Actor Bruce McGill is 69. Singer Bonnie Pointer is 69. Actor Stephen Lang is 67. Actress Mindy Sterling is 66. Former boxer Leon Spinks is 66. Actress Sela Ward is 63. Reggae singer Michael Rose (Black Uhuru) is 62. Singer Peter Murphy is 62. Actor Mark Lester is 61. Jazz musician Kirk Whalum is 61. Singer Suzanne Vega is 60. Rock guitarist Richie Sambora (Bon Jovi) is 60. Actress Lisa Rinna is 56. Rock musician Scott Shriner (Weezer) is 54. Actress Debbe (correct) Dunning is 53. Actor Greg Grunberg is 53. Wildlife expert Jeff Corwin is 52. Actor Justin Chambers is 49. Actress Leisha Hailey is 48. Actor Michael Rosenbaum is 47. Pop-rock singer Andrew Bird is 46. Country singer Scotty Emerick is 46. Rapper Lil' Kim is 44. Actor Jon Wellner is 44. Rock singer Ben Gibbard is 43. Rapper Lil' Zane is 37. Pop-jazz singer-musician Peter Cincotti is 36. Actress Serinda Swan is 35. Actor Robert Adamson is 34. Actor David Henrie is 30. Actor Connor Paolo is 29. Tennis player Caroline Wozniacki is 29. R&B/pop singer Alessia Cara is 23.

Thought for Today: "Life is a lot like jazz — it's best when you improvise." — George Gershwin (1898-1937).  
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