

Groton Daily Independent


Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 1 of 48

- [1- Mosquito Control Tonight](#)
- [2- ZEBRA MUSSELS CONFIRMED IN LAKE SHARPE](#)
- [2- Apartment for Rent](#)
- [2- City Police Officer Opening](#)
- [3- Hunt For Habitat "Super Tag" Raffle Offers Unprecedented Hunting Opportunity](#)
- [4- Brown County Commission Meeting Agenda](#)
- [5- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [6- Weather Pages](#)
- [7- "Color My World" Ad](#)
- [7- Groton School Positions Available](#)
- [9- Daily Devotional](#)
- [10- 2019 Groton Events](#)
- [11- News from the Associated Press](#)

Chicken Soup for the Soul

"Gratitude is a currency that we can mint for ourselves, and spend without fear of bankruptcy."

-Fred De Wilt Van Amburgh



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

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



The City of Groton will be doing adult mosquito control Tonight.

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Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 2 of 48

ZEBRA MUSSELS CONFIRMED IN LAKE SHARPE

PIERRE, S.D. – The South Dakota Department of Game, Fish & Parks (GFP) has confirmed the presence of zebra mussels in Lake Sharpe, a mainstem Missouri River reservoir in central South Dakota. Boaters enjoying Lake Sharpe should be aware that the waterbody is now classified as infested for zebra mussels and precautions must be taken to prevent spreading mussels to other waters.

"The mussels were initially discovered by members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers while performing maintenance at Big Bend Dam, at the lower end of Lake Sharpe," said Fisheries Chief John Lott. "They were positively identified as zebra mussels by GFP staff. Additional sampling efforts by GFP and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service have confirmed that adult zebra mussels are present in multiple areas in the lower portion of the lake."

In South Dakota Since 2015

Reproducing populations of zebra mussels were discovered in Lewis and Clark Lake and the Missouri River below Gavins Point Dam in 2015. The discovery of the mussels in Lake Sharpe indicates their continued spread upstream in the mainstem Missouri River system. Initial surveys conducted in Lake Francis Case, immediately below Big Bend Dam, have not shown the presence of adult zebra mussels. The elevation of Lake Francis Case is drawn down 20 feet each fall. Mussels less than 20-feet deep would dry out or freeze over the winter, meaning any existing mussels may be harder to find. Additional mussel surveys will be conducted in the coming weeks to determine the extent of the infestation in Lake Sharpe and if zebra mussels are also present in Lake Francis Case.

"The discovery zebra mussels in Lake Sharpe is a game changer for Aquatic Invasive Species management in South Dakota," said Lott. "Sharpe and Francis Case are two of the most used lakes in South Dakota. Many anglers and recreational boaters who use these lakes are from other areas and use their local lakes soon after being on Sharpe or Francis Case."

How to Help Stop the Spread

Every time they leave the water, boaters and anglers should:
Clean watercraft and trailers of all aquatic plants and mud
Drain all water by removing all drains, plugs, bailers, or valves that retain water
Dispose of unwanted bait in trash or fish cleaning stations when leaving the water



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

Completely draining a boat is the first step in making sure invasive species are not transferred to other waters. Boaters who have used any water body should clean their boats with hot water (140 degrees) or let them completely dry for at least 5 days before launching in other water bodies.

For more information on zebra mussels and other aquatic invasive species, visit sdleastwanted.com.

What is a Zebra Mussel?

Zebra mussels are small, invasive clams native to the Black and Caspian seas in Eastern Europe. Although usually less than an inch in size as adults, they can rapidly reproduce and spread under the right conditions. These mussels can attach to vegetation and hard surfaces, forming dense colonies that can clog intakes for hydroelectric dams, water supplies and irrigation pipes, causing significant economic damages. Zebra mussels may also compete with native species, alter water quality, damage boat motors and docks, and their sharp shells can wash up on shorelines in large numbers.



Zebra mussels can produce up to one million eggs per year, rapidly colonizing new waters. The larval stage of zebra mussels, called veligers, are smaller than the width of a human hair and nearly impossible to detect due to their size. This makes South Dakota's boat draining and fish and bait transportation laws even more critical in stopping the spread of this species. Veligers float in water for up to a month. This means they can be easily transported to new water bodies in even small amounts of water remaining anywhere in a boat, bait container, or gear used during a fishing or boating trip. While it is difficult to determine exactly how mussels entered Lake Sharpe, all boaters and anglers can help prevent introducing the mussels to new waters.

Hunt For Habitat "Super Tag" Raffle Offers Unprecedented Hunting Opportunity

PIERRE, S.D. –Outdoor enthusiasts looking for the hunt of a lifetime should look to a new opportunity in South Dakota called the Hunt for Habitat "super tag" raffle.

The raffle offers two prize options for 2019 with four total prize packages available.

Three winners will receive one "any elk", one "any deer" and one "any antelope" license. The winners of these packages will select either the 2019 or 2020 seasons to use each tag. These licenses are valid for any open season and location. Winners can also choose to hunt with any weapon that is legal and valid for the time period and location.

No more than one of the winners may be nonresident.

2. One winner will receive a Custer State Park Trophy Buffalo License. This license is good for either 2019 or 2020. This package is also open to nonresidents.

Tickets are \$10 for South Dakota residents and \$20 for nonresidents. There is no limit to the number of tickets that can be purchased by an individual.

The deadline to enter the Hunt For Habitat raffle is Aug. 15. Winners will be drawn Aug. 19.

The money raised by the Hunt for Habitat raffle will directly support habitat programs on both public and private lands in South Dakota.

To enter the Hunt for Habitat Raffle and for more information, visit: gfp.sd.gov/hunt-for-habitat/.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 4 of 48

**AGENDA
REGULAR MEETING
BROWN COUNTY COMMISSION
COMMISSIONER'S CHAMBERS, COURTHOUSE ANNEX
25 MARKET STREET, ABERDEEN SD**

**TUESDAY
JULY 16, 2019**

8:45a.m. - 8:50a.m. – First Reading of Ord. #138 – Patten Rezone
8:50a.m. – 8:55a.m. – Open & Review Hay Cutting Bids for Fairgrounds
8:55a.m. – 9:00a.m. – Ord. #139 – Public Hearing for possible adoption of Emergency Temporary Zoning Ordinance, Map & Subdivision Regulations
9:00a.m. – 9:05a.m. – Patricia Kendall, Museum Director – Discuss 2020 Budget
9:05a.m. – 9:15a.m. – Dirk Rogers, Highway Superintendent – Set Bid Date for Co. Rd. 13 CIR Project; R-O-W for Northern Valley; Dept. Update
9:15a.m. – 9:20a.m. – Chris White, State's Attorney – Discuss Personnel
9:20a.m. – 9:30a.m. – Paul Sivertsen, IT CFO – Discuss Equipment Purchases and Department Update
9:30a.m. – 9:40a.m. – Scott Madsen, GIS Coordinator – Spillman and Nextgen 911 GIS Update
9:40a.m. – 9:50a.m. - Judy Dosch, Building Superintendent – Discuss 24/7 Building

- Approve General Meeting Minutes from July 9, 2019
- Claims
- HR Report
- Fair Contracts
- Imprest Fund Increase
- Petty Cash
- Authorize Advertising requests for proposals for Brown County Race Track
- Auditor's Report of Accounts for June 2019
- 911 Call Center NextGen Quote
- Special Malt Beverage Licenses

Any other matters to come before the Commission for discussion

Budget Work Session following the meeting



CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



I Prefer Old Love



Reflections as I begin my 20th year of marriage to Jacquelyn (Dice) Johnson:

New love is fun. It's easy to enjoy the excitement, the rush, the sense of opportunity.

I prefer old love, though.

New love is perishable. It's easily distracted and fades quickly. Old love is abiding. It's stubborn, willing to ride out the inevitable storms and maelstroms of marriage.

New love is picky, and can be run off by any manner of shortcoming. Old love knows its every wart. For some blessed reason, old love sticks around.

You don't have to dress up for old love, but often you do, because you want to.

Old love doesn't keep score, because there's only one team. Old love laughs together, cries together, works together, disciplines children together.

New love is noisy. There are so many interesting stories to share and fun secrets to confide. Old love knows how to talk and advise and share and confide, but it has also learned how to be still. It is easy to use silence as a tool of anger or apathy, but old love knows silence can also mean comfort and happiness.

Old love comes from God, and you can feel him within it. New love brings more pleasure, but old love brings more joy.

Old love laughs at jokes no one else understands. Old love exchanges glances, tells stories with a single look, and reads minds.

Old love is a best friend, makes us better, and is a sincere blessing.

New love is fun, but I prefer old love.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 6 of 48

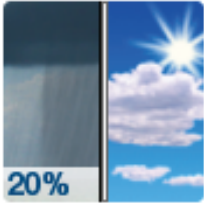
Today

Tonight

Sunday

Sunday
Night

Monday



Slight Chance
Showers then
Mostly Sunny

High: 89 °F



Mostly Clear

Low: 71 °F



Chance
T-storms

High: 91 °F



Chance
T-storms

Low: 72 °F



Hot

High: 94 °F



Hot Weather Ahead

Getting Hotter

Today



85-92°

Iso'd AM
Showers/Storms
Sunny Afternoon

Sunday



89-96°

Sct'd
Showers/Tstorms

Monday



90-96°

Partly Cloudy



Aberdeen, SD
National Weather Service

Updated: 7/13/2019 5:24 AM Centr

Published on: 07/13/2019 at 1:29AM

Highs above 90 expected through Monday. Unsettled weather this morning will become dry by afternoon. Showers and thunderstorms move back in on Sunday.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 7 of 48

Today in Weather History

July 13, 1964: Early morning low temperatures dropped into the lower to mid-30s across the northern half of the state. Some low temperatures include 32 degrees at Castlewood, 33 in Andover and 4 miles NW of Onida.

1895: A tornado that began in Cherry Hill, New Jersey made its way to Woodhaven and Long Island in New York.

1951: Rivers across eastern Kansas crest well above flood stage, causing the most significant destruction from flooding in the Midwestern United States at that time. Five-hundred-thousand people were left homeless, and 24 people died in the disaster.

1895 - A tornado struck Cherry Hill in New Jersey causing fifty thousand dollars damage. It also descended into the Harlem and Woodhaven areas of New York City killing one person, and finally ended as a waterspout in Jamaica Bay. (David Ludlum)

1975 - Dover, DE, was deluged with 8.50 inches of rain to establish a 24 hour record for the state. (The Weather Channel)

1977 - Lightning struck a key electrical transmission line in Westchester County of southeastern New York State plunging New York City into darkness. (David Ludlum)

1980 - Afternoon highs of 108 degrees at Memphis, TN, 108 degrees at Macon, GA, and 105 degrees at Atlanta, GA, established all-time records for those three cities. The high of 110 degrees at Newington, GA, was just two degrees shy of the state record. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Unseasonably cool weather prevailed across the Midwest. Ten cities reported record low temperatures for the date, including Casper, WY, with a reading of 39 degrees. By way of contrast, record heat was reported in the eastern U.S., with highs of 93 degrees at Burlington, VT, and 101 degrees around Miami, FL. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - There were just three reports of severe weather across the country, and just one record high temperature reported. Thunderstorms brought much needed rains to the Tennessee Valley area, producing nine inches at Senatobia, MS. (The National Weather Summary)

“Color My World”

Ladies' Luncheon & Program
Wednesday, July 17 at noon
Bethesda Lutheran Church,
Bristol

Silent Auction at 10:30 a.m.

Door prizes

Kristi Anderson, speaker

Advance tickets please: \$10

Call Kay Espeland 492-3507 or

**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
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.

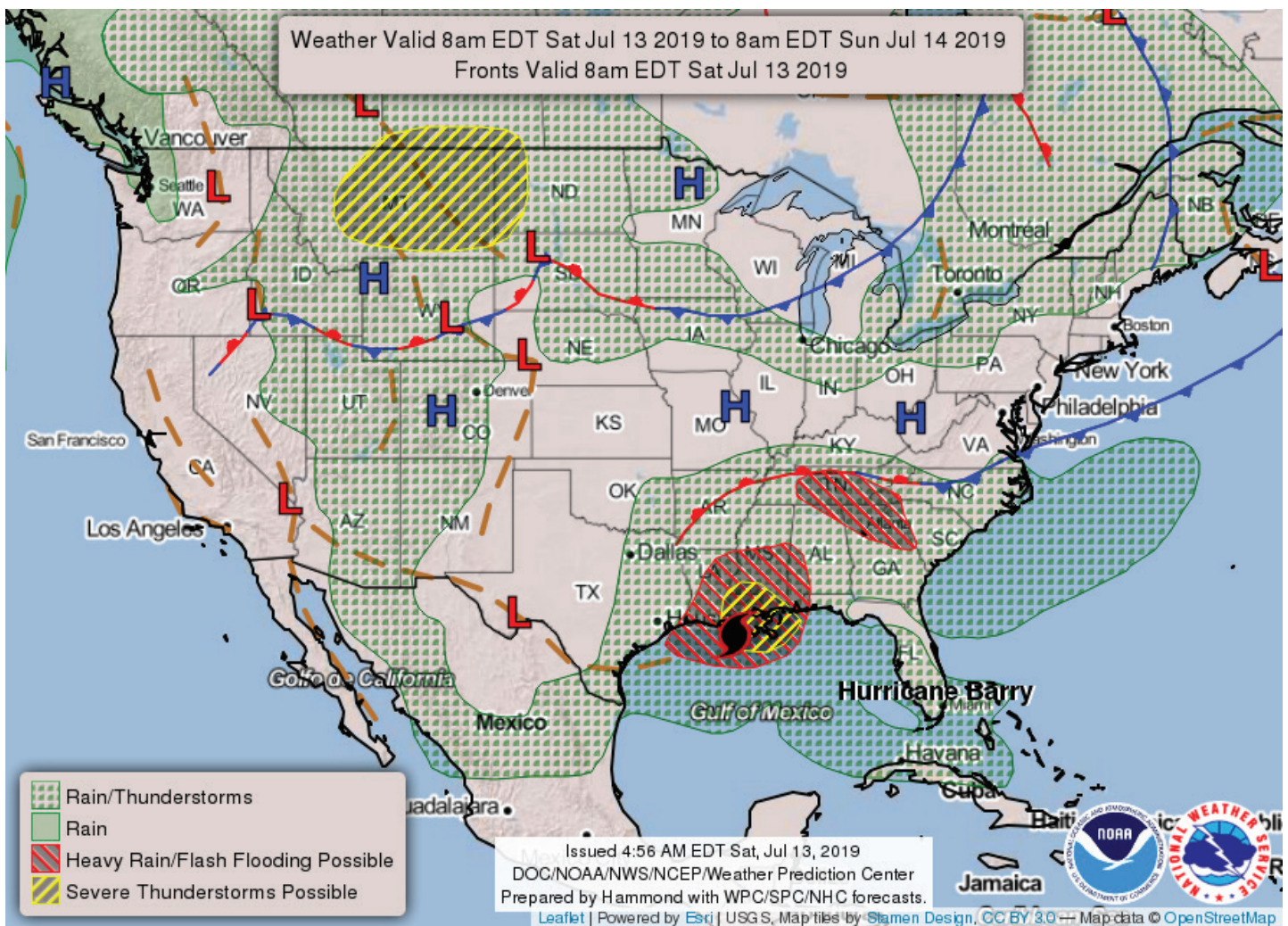
Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 8 of 48

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 88 °F at 4:50 PM
Low Temp: 67 °F at 6:12 AM
Wind: 13 mph at 2:01 AM
Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 106° in 1936
Record Low: 44° in 1987
Average High: 84°F
Average Low: 59°F
Average Precip in July.: 1.28
Precip to date in July.: 1.22
Average Precip to date: 12.12
Precip Year to Date: 13.94
Sunset Tonight: 9:21 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 5:59 a.m.





THE IMPORTANCE OF A TRUE FRIEND

A friend is someone who likes you in spite of anything you do and will do everything possible to keep you from making a mistake. Everyone needs someone like that in their lives. There have been times in my life when, if a friend had been available, my decisions would have been different and not ended up in disaster.

The purposes of a mans heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out. A friend gives us a place to begin when we are making difficult choices, serious decisions or intricate plans. More often than not we have stored feelings and thoughts, ideas and memories deep within our hearts. Over time we have forgotten them and their importance. Perhaps we have pushed them deep inside of us because we did not realize they would ever be important. Solomon calls them deep waters or wells of wisdom that have been covered up over time.

A man of understanding or a good friend who understands us will draw them out of us - much like bringing up a bucket of cold, refreshing water from a deep well. This friend or man of understanding forces us to examine our motives or unclear thoughts - whatever is within us - in light of Gods own wisdom. Our friend will not allow us to do what we intended to do without challenging our desires to make certain that they are pure, wholesome, and God-honoring.

This man of understanding must first admit that he is not the man of understanding. While that may sound contradictory, it isnt. This friend must first listen to Gods wisdom before he can impart it to another friend. Then, there is the requirement to pray for and with us as we seek and listen for Gods guidance. This man of understanding receives his understanding from God.

We all need a man or woman of understanding in our lives. We need someone who will force us to seek Gods wisdom. We can all recall times, sadly, when we refused to do this.

Prayer: Lord, grant us one friend who will force us to examine our motives and goals and make certain that they are consistent with Your truth. We all need Your insight. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 20:5 The purposes of a mans heart are deep waters, but a man of understanding draws them out.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 10 of 48

2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

2020 Groton SD Community Events

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

News from the Associated Press

A year after dealing with drought, farmers battle wet fields

By ELISA SAND Aberdeen American News

ABERBEEN, S.D. (AP) — While some have told Lannie Mielke that it's better to deal with too much water than not enough, he disagrees.

Mielke lives south of Aberdeen between Brentford and Mellette. That farmland is near the James River. It's handling the water well enough. His livestock operation near Conde, however, is another story.

"That's the land that's really wet," he said, adding that there's no way to compare the conditions at the two sites.

The Conde farm got 7 inches alone in the past week or so, he said, and half of it came from a day's storm. "Not many areas can handle that," he said. "It put us right back to square one."

He referred to square one as wet, spring thaw conditions.

Mielke said when weather conditions are too dry, a timely shot of rain can help in a hurry. But it takes months or even longer to get a field back in shape when it's too wet.

On an afternoon road trip to the Conde operation, Mielke pointed out one field after another that was holding water. A year ago, he said, those fields were filled with corn and soybean plants. Now, he pointed to planted fields with struggling corn and abandoned fields that won't be planted.

He said farmers expect to navigate through muddy conditions in the spring, followed by better field conditions as the weather improves. But, he said, this year has been a battle with the mud returning just about the time a field starts to dry out.

At his cattle operation, Mielke runs through a list of chores he'd like to get done if field conditions would allow.

Mielke said there have already been no-win situations this year. He was able to cut and bale his hay before it rained, but his relief was short-lived.

"Then the creek flooded and a lot of bales sat in water," he told Aberdeen American News. "You can't win."

Getting hay baled in time is key since the hay will spoil if it lays on the wet ground too long. Fortunately, he said, some of the bales are salvageable, but the part that sat in water is ruined.

A newly constructed hoop barn has helped this year, but, Mielke said, getting feed to the cattle has been the biggest challenge.

"We've got very good ways to feed them in a bunk," he said. "But you still have to get it to them."

Mielke said conditions this year remind him of the wet conditions in 2010.

A National Weather Service review of June weather shows Aberdeen received 4.7 inches, which is 1 inch above average. Meanwhile, Sisseton has had 2.56 inches, or 1.18 inches below average. Mielke said the Conde area has recorded even more rain than Aberdeen.

That rain, however, is on top of higher-than-average precipitation earlier this year. National Weather Service data for 2019 shows Aberdeen has recorded 14.09 inches of precipitation since January. That's historically higher than the average for the end of July.

Aaron Dorn, meteorologist for the National Weather Service, said the soil conditions today are vastly different from 2018 when the area was hindered by drought.

"Based on responses we're pretty saturated on soil," said Dorn, referring to rising creek and river levels after storms.

Scott Anderson, who has been farming since 2010 south of Brentford and north and south of Andover, has also dealt with varied field conditions. The most recent storm last week yielded an inch of rain near Andover and 3 inches south of Brentford.

"It's just bad," he said. "I would put this year on par with 2015 as far as the financial stress on farmers."

The 3 inches from earlier this week is just sitting on already saturated ground, Anderson said.

"Given that they're already saturated, the water will just pond on the field and drown the plants," he said. While some corn might hit "knee-high by the fourth of July," Anderson said many fields are behind schedule and some farmers simply didn't plant.

According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service crop progress reports from the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the last two weeks in June, 96% of the corn was planted by the week of June 23, which was up from 78% the week of June 16. Of the corn that was planted, 96% was above ground.

Soybean planting shows a similar trend. About 84% of beans were planted as of the week of June 23. By the following week, 97% were planted with 82% above ground.

Both crops are typically 100% planted by the end of June.

USDA reports show planting was slow to get started, with 6% of soybean fields planted by the week of May 26, and 25% of corn fields planted that same week. Between 2014 and 2018, 90% of corn and 64% of soybeans had been planted by the end of May.

"We really struggled to get things in on time," Anderson said. "We were late on some stuff. We wanted to do the best we can."

Anderson said he was able to plant 80 to 85% of his land this year.

Financially, he said, that means his overall cost per acre is going to increase because he's spreading it across fewer acres.

While crop insurance can cover instances in which fields aren't planted, Anderson said, farmers still have expenses, like rent, on acres that don't get planted.

"Financially, the biggest challenge for most farmers is you're still paying cash rent on those acres," he said. "You've got zero production on those acres you can't plant, and you still have to pay the rent."

Mielke and Anderson both said these wet conditions are just the beginning. The next issue will be weed control on the fields that didn't get planted. Anderson said one of the popular herbicides contains dicamba, a chemical known to volatilize after application. That's when it vaporizes after application and spreads to nearby fields.

Anderson said with more fields being sprayed, additional harm could be done to nearby fields.

Anderson and Mielke also say moisture levels will be high with harvested crops, which will lead to higher demand on propane for drying. But, Mielke said, planning ahead is a catch 22.

"We don't know, even the corn that looks good now, if it will make it to maturity," Mielke said.

Information from: Aberdeen American News, <http://www.aberdeennews.com>

Pups program brings joy to South Dakota State Penitentiary

By JACK WILLIAMS Sioux Falls Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Nala, a 1-year-old terrier mix, is a ball of energy.

Her tail wagged rapidly as she tried to hold back her excitement inside the visitors' room of the South Dakota State Penitentiary last month. There's a lot to be excited about with new people and other dogs around.

However, she was still sitting and listening to her handler, inmate Justin Goens. Nala likes people and wants to please them, something Goens knows very well and has used to his advantage.

"When she barks or nips, I just turn around and walk away," he said. "She really likes people, so when she's acting up, I just take away what she likes."

Growth, understanding and friendship are all a part of the Paroled Pups program inside the walls of the South Dakota State Penitentiary. Since 2004, the program has provided a home to unwanted dogs and a sense of joy to the inmates.

The program started 15 years ago with four dogs and only one handler. Now, six dogs at the penitentiary work and interact with a handful of inmates inside and outside the grounds of the institution.

Most dogs end up in the program because they need some sort of stability before adoption. Nala was an extremely jumpy dog and had a hard time focusing. Sioux Falls Area Humane Society Officer Andy

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 13 of 48

Oestreich said that sending dogs to the penitentiary helps with stability because they follow a set schedule.

From 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. daily, the dogs are out and about with the inmates. For one hour of the day, the dogs spend time learning simple commands such as sit and stay. Each week a report card is written by the inmate to Oestreich about the dog's progress.

The rest of the day is spent playing and walking around, inside and outside the walls of the prison. This helps the dogs develop a stronger social sense by being in different environments with different people. Oestreich said this aspect is key in developing the adaptability of the dog.

"People take dogs everywhere nowadays," Oestreich said. "Whenever a family is at a park or downtown, they want that dog to behave and not go crazy. The pen is always busy and always has people walking around, so it's a good environment for the dogs to adjust to."

After six months in Paroled Pups, these once un-adoptable dogs have a second chance. The majority of them will find homes with new families while others will continue training to become service dogs. The program offers a second chance many dogs won't receive, as well as giving inmates a friend.

"This program really makes the dog more desirable compared to when they first came to the Humane Society," Oestreich said. "It creates a pet that people want to enjoy and be proud of."

The relationship with the dogs goes far beyond the classroom as inmates look to build a bond.

"One of the things we do is sit in their kennels with them," Goens told the Argus Leader. "Some have been abused and are scared of people, so we sit with them and get them used to us. Once they get used to us, the goal is to bring them to others."

As the dogs begin to gain the trust of their handler, the inmates begin to warm up to the dogs as well. Goens said that even the toughest of inmates break down into a baby voice when a pup comes by.

The training process isn't always enjoyable. There's a lot of patience that comes into training a dog, especially one with behavioral issues.

It might take one dog an hour to learn how to sit, where another dog may need a week. It can be frustrating and take a toll on one's patience.

"Sometimes you expect them to be able to catch on a lot quicker, and they don't," Goens said. "A lot of people think they're doing that to spite you, but they're just being dogs."

The end product does have its benefits not only for the dog, but the handler as well.

"I like seeing them get better," said Kenneth Staab, an inmate and trainer with Paroled Pups. "It lets me know that I know what I'm doing and that I'm picking up what I am learning."

There is a bitter sweet feeling for inmates when a dog leaves the penitentiary at the end of the six month program. It's sad to see the pup leave, but they know that the dog is heading to a good home.

"You grow attached to them because you spend a lot of time with them," Goens said. "You build that relationship with them, and then they're gone. It's sad because you're losing your friend, but you're happy because they're going home."

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

08-25-38-56-59, Mega Ball: 7, Megaplier: 2

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

Estimated jackpot: \$121 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$194 million

Man who killed teen in 1980 released from prison

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man who killed an 18-year-old woman 39 years ago has been released from prison.

The South Dakota Department of Corrections has confirmed 54-year-old Nicholas Scherr was released Thursday after spending 23 years at the state penitentiary. He was granted parole in May.

The Argus Leader says Scherr pleaded guilty to first-degree manslaughter for fatally shooting Candace Rough Surface in 1980 when he was 15 years old. Scherr and his cousin, James Stroh, met the victim at a party in Mobridge and as they were leaving Rough Surface became upset and struck Stroh. Prosecutors say the boys dragged her into a field and raped her before Scherr shot her five times. The case went unsolved until Stroh's former mother-in-law said he had confessed to his ex-wife. Stroh was paroled in 2004.

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

Obama statue to be unveiled in Rapid City

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A life-size bronze statue of the United States' 44th president will be unveiled in Rapid City Saturday.

The likeness of Barack Obama will be added to the collection of 43 other presidential statues in the downtown area, beginning with George Washington. The City of Presidents is a privately funded project that has raised more than \$2.5 million to pay for the statues.

Obama's sculpture was created by Rapid City artist James Van Nuys. It took two years from concept to completion to create the statue.

Obama made a campaign stop in the city when he was running for president in 2008.

Barr: Justice Dept. is 'all in' on criminal justice overhaul

By MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

EDGEFIELD, S.C. (AP) — Leroy Nolan has spent the last 26 years behind bars at a federal prison for a drug conviction. In the prison factory, he works making T-shirts, backpacks and other products that are later sold to government agencies, nonprofits and others.

But what has become a decades-long routine for Nolan behind the barbed wire, steel gates and concrete walls of FCI Edgefield, a prison in rural South Carolina, will all change on Friday when he walks out the front door. The 67-year-old is among about 2,200 federal inmates who will be released that day by the federal Bureau of Prisons under a criminal justice reform measure signed into law last year by President Donald Trump.

The measure, known as the First Step Act, gives judges more discretion when sentencing some drug offenders, eases mandatory minimum sentences and encourages inmates to participate in programs designed to reduce the risk of recidivism, with credits that can be used to gain an earlier release.

On a visit this past week to Edgefield — a facility with a medium-security prison and minimum-security camp — Attorney General William Barr took a firsthand look at some of the programs in place, from computer skills to cooking, auto mechanic training and factory work. He met with prison staff and a handful of inmates, including some who will be released early under the First Step Act.

Barr's visit signaled a major policy shift since his first stint as attorney general in the early 1990s, when he exuded a tough-on-crime approach, advocating for more severe penalties, building more prisons and using laws to keep some criminals behind bars longer. Barr has said he will fully support and carry out the law.

Trump has touted the overhaul as a rare bipartisan effort to address concerns that too many Americans were imprisoned for nonviolent crimes as a result of the drug war. The president's son-in-law, Jared Kushner, helped persuade him to get behind the measure and clashed with former Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who did not see criminal justice reform as a top priority.

In the culinary skills class at Edgefield, the aspiring chefs told Barr about how they earn restaurant-level

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 15 of 48

food preparedness and safety certificates so they can immediately try to find work once they are released.

Inmate-chef Eddie Montgomery helped prepare a spread of chicken, blackened fish, green beans and mashed potatoes, which he offered to Barr, while explaining how the program was "top notch."

"It's delicious," the attorney general said, as he chomped down.

During a tour that lasted nearly three hours, Barr also met with a prison psychologist, inmates who act as mentors in faith and drug-treatment programs, and with instructors who help prisoners create resumes and participate in job fairs. Passing through the narrow hallways, Barr peeked through the windows of some classrooms where inmates were completing computer skills and GED programs. In one room, where older computers and typewriters lined the walls, Barr chatted about re-entry programs and heard from mentors who teach their fellow inmates how to prepare for the job interviews.

But some of the prison's programs — like the culinary arts and auto repair programs — tend to be very popular among inmates and have wait lists. As he walked through Edgefield, Barr told Hugh Hurwitz, the acting director of the Bureau of Prisons, they needed to make sure there were enough programs available to a wide swath of inmates.

"We're focusing on building on the programs, the re-entry programs we need, and getting the funding to do it," Barr said in an interview this past week with The Associated Press.

For inmates like Nolan, who was first sentenced in 1994 to life behind bars before it was reduced to more than 30 years, the First Step Act is a welcome reform. He's set to be released Friday after serving about 85% of his sentence.

"I made the mistake of getting into drugs," Nolan told Barr and the state's two senators, Tim Scott and Lindsey Graham, who accompanied the attorney general on the Edgefield tour. "You're good role models."

The Justice Department has been working to meet the deadlines set by Congress for the First Step Act and is expected to unveil a risk-assessment tool this week that will help to evaluate federal inmates and ultimately could speed up their release.

Barr said the Justice Department and the Bureau of Prisons are both "all in in terms of making it work."

"I'm impressed with how it's going," Barr said of the First Step Act's implementation. "While there are a few things I probably would have done a little bit different, I generally support the thrust of the First Step Act."

Under the resentencing provisions of the law, more than 1,600 inmates have qualified for a reduced sentence and more than 1,100 have already been released, a Justice Department official said. This is in addition to the 2,200 to be released Friday after earning credits.

Advocates have called for stronger oversight of the implementation by both the Bureau of Prisons and the Justice Department and say Congress and the Trump administration need to fully commit to providing the necessary funding.

"We have concerns it might not be implemented appropriately," said Inimai Chettiar, legislative and policy director at the Justice Action Network.

"The sentencing provisions are things that are much more clear cut," she said. "The people who are already put in prison and are trying to get out by participating in programs, those programs also need to be funded too. If there's no funding it is going to severely limit the ability for the federal government to reduce their prison population."

Tropical Storm Barry strengthens, with rain to soak millions

By KEVIN MCGILL and JANET MCCONNAUGHEY Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Heavy rains and gusty winds knocked out power on the Gulf Coast on Saturday as a strengthening Tropical Storm Barry churned a path to shore, threatening millions and testing flood-prevention efforts implemented after Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans 14 years ago.

Officials predicted Barry would make landfall as this year's first hurricane in the morning near Morgan City, west of New Orleans. The small town had an overnight curfew that expired Saturday morning, after on-and-off rain and power outages. People used cellphones to see in the dark, and opened doors and

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 16 of 48

windows to let the warm, sticky tropical air circulate.

More than 45,000 people in southern Louisiana had lost power, and some roads were underwater as the edges of the storm lashed Louisiana and coastal Mississippi and Alabama with rain.

Though expected to be a weak hurricane — just barely over the 74 mph (119 kph) wind speed threshold — Barry threatened disastrous flooding across a swath of the Gulf Coast. The storm was expected to inflict the most damage on Louisiana and parts of Mississippi, with wind and rain affecting more than 3 million people.

Late Friday night, residents received good news from forecasters: The Mississippi River is expected to crest in New Orleans at about 17.1 feet (5.2 meters) on Monday, not 19 feet (5.8 meters) as had been earlier predicted. The levees protecting the city range from about 20 to 25 feet (6 to 7.5 meters) in height.

On-again, off again rain hit New Orleans overnight. As day broke, streets in the normally raucous French Quarter tourist district were largely empty and barely damp. Dog walkers and a street sweeper rambled by. It was breezy, but flags on balconies overhanging the empty streets still occasionally fell limp. A few cars were out on roads. Some nearby homes had piled sandbags outside their doors.

"So far it's been really nice. It's been cool. It's been a little breezy," said Wayne Wilkinson, out with his dog in the French Quarter. He welcomed the pre-storm respite from July's normal heat, but said he was mindful things could change: "I know we have to be on the alert."

Baton Rouge, which was devastated by floods in 2016, was similarly quiet Saturday, with puddles left from overnight rains, wind shaking the trees and only a few cars and trucks on thoroughfare Interstate 10. In Alabama, rain pounded the eastern shore of Mobile Bay overnight, with scattered power outages in communities including Daphne, along Interstate 10.

Forecasters warned that most of the storm's rain remained over the Gulf of Mexico and would likely move into Louisiana and Mississippi later Saturday. There were predictions of 10 to 20 inches (25 to 50 centimeters) of rain through Sunday across a swath of Louisiana that includes New Orleans and Baton Rouge with some parts of the state possible getting 25 inches (63 centimeters).

"It's powerful. It's strengthening. And water is going to be a big issue," National Hurricane Center Director Ken Graham warned.

Governors declared emergencies in Louisiana and Mississippi, and authorities took unprecedented precautions in closing floodgates and raising the barriers around New Orleans.

Gov. John Bel Edwards said it was the first time all floodgates were sealed in the New Orleans-area Hurricane Risk Reduction System since Katrina. Still, he said he didn't expect the Mississippi River to spill over the levees despite water levels already running high from spring rains and melting snow upstream.

Authorities told at least 10,000 people in exposed, low-lying areas along the Gulf Coast to leave, but no evacuations were ordered in New Orleans, where officials urged residents to "shelter in place."

Before they did, people packed stores to stock up on bottled water, food and other essentials.

Lifelong New Orleans resident Terrence Watkins grabbed supplies at a Costco. He said he has a few simple big-storm rules: "Stock up on water. Stock up food. Get ready for the storm — ride it out."

Workers shored up and raised the levee system in places with beams, sheet metal and other barriers.

Rescue crews and about 3,000 National Guard troops were posted around Louisiana with boats, high-water vehicles and helicopters. President Donald Trump declared a federal emergency for Louisiana, authorizing federal agencies to coordinate relief efforts.

The impending storm also triggered a legal spat between neighboring parishes. East Baton Rouge Parish won a temporary restraining order against the AquaDams that Iberville Parish planned to deploy along Bayou Manchac. A federal judge ruled Friday night that the water-filled flood control barriers could cause substantial property damage and loss of life in East Baton Rouge.

Looking ahead, tracking forecasts showed the storm moving toward Chicago, swelling the Mississippi River basin with water that must eventually flow south again.

In Baton Rouge, people got a friendly warning to "stay inside and enjoy your extra hurricane snacks" from the twitter feed of Louisiana State University's current live tiger mascot, MikeVII.

Visiting Baton Rouge for the funeral an uncle next week, Comiea Robinson stood at the end of a line of

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 17 of 48

about two dozen people waiting to get in to a Walmart store early Saturday. A security guard was letting only one or two people in at a time.

Robinson, of Augusta, Georgia, said she doesn't know what will happen to plans for her uncle's memorial if Barry swamps the city.

"When I rode past the funeral home this morning, I was hoping that it doesn't flood," she said. "...I'm just praying that everything will be all right."

An earlier version of this story had an incorrect last name for one New Orleans resident. He is Terrence Watkins, not Terrence Williams.

Associated Press reporters Rebecca Santana in New Orleans and Sarah Blake Morgan in New Orleans, Jay Reeves in Baton Rouge, and Rogelio Solis in Morgan City contributed to this report.

For the latest on Tropical Storm Barry, visit <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

Toxic lake in Russia's Siberia becomes selfie sensation

MOSCOW (AP) — Residents of a city in Siberia don't need to fly off to tropical locales for picturesque selfies taken by pristine turquoise waters. Thousands of Novosibirsk residents — ranging from scantily clad women to newlyweds — have been busy instagramming near a bright blue lake nicknamed the "Siberian Maldives."

The lake is blue, however, due to a chemical reaction between toxic waste elements from a local power station. Environmentalists are warning people against coming into contact with the water.

"We can compare it only with photos of the Maldives," said Sergey Griva, a local who visited the lake, adding he's never been to the Maldives and couldn't find it on a map.

Dmitry Shakhov, a Russian environmentalist, warned that the water in the lake can cause allergic reactions or even chemical burns if ingested or touched.

"This water is saturated with heavy metals (and) harmful substances," he said.

The Siberian Generating Company said Friday it has deployed guards to keep trespassers at bay, but insists the lake presents no environmental danger.

Hong Kong protesters target mainland Chinese traders

By **DAKE KANG** and **NADIA LAM** Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Several thousand people marched in Hong Kong on Saturday against traders from mainland China in what is fast becoming a summer of unrest in the semi-autonomous Chinese territory.

Walking behind a banner that read "Strictly enforce the law, stop cross-border traders," the protesters passed by pharmacies and cosmetic shops that are popular with Chinese tourists and traders who bring goods back to sell in the mainland. Many of the stores were shuttered because of the protest.

In what has become a common scene, clashes broke out between police and some of the protesters toward the end of the otherwise peaceful march. Police used pepper spray and batons to disperse the crowd, public broadcaster RTHK reported.

Major demonstrations in the past month against a proposal to change extradition laws have reawakened other movements in Hong Kong. Thousands marched last weekend against middle-aged mainland women who sing loudly and dance somewhat provocatively in a public park. Some of the women receive tips from older men.

The protests have a common refrain: Hong Kong's government, led by a non-democratically elected chief executive, is not addressing the people's concerns.

Amy Chan, a 25-year-old bank employee who joined Saturday's march, called it a continuing action building on the momentum of the anti-extradition law protests.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 18 of 48

"There isn't an anti-extradition protest every day to keep us going," she said. "I hope that through today's action, people in Hong Kong will not forget that there are actually many other social issues waiting to be solved."

The city's leader, Carrie Lam, has pledged to do a better job of listening to all sectors of society, but many protesters want her to resign.

Her government proposed legislation in February that would have allowed suspects to be extradited to China to face trial. The proposal ignited concerns that the rights and freedoms guaranteed to the former British colony for 50 years after its 1997 return to China are being chipped away at by a pro-Beijing government in Hong Kong.

Lam suspended the legislation indefinitely after protesters blocked the legislature on June 12, preventing the Legislative Council from meeting to debate the extradition bill. Faced with continuing protests, she declared the bill "dead" on Tuesday, but protesters remain unsatisfied, demanding it be formally withdrawn.

The march Saturday took place in Sheung Shui, a district that lies across the border from the mainland city of Shenzhen. Organizer Ronald Leung, a leader of the North District Parallel Imports Concern Group, said residents have been complaining about the issue of Chinese traders for many years.

"Citizens are really angry," he said. "They want to come out and show their concern over the cross-border traders problem in the area, which is never solved."

Associated Press videojournalist Alice Fung contributed to this report.

As storm moved in, 1 couple moved up their wedding ceremony

By REBECCA SANTANA Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — As New Orleans hunkered down ahead of Tropical Storm Barry Friday, news photographers from across the city could be found together in a church, witnessing the wedding of one of their own.

Associated Press photographer Gerald Herbert and Lucy Sikes weren't supposed to get married Friday night. Invitations sent out months ago were for a Saturday night wedding at the Mater Dolorosa Catholic Church, followed by a reception at the art-deco-style restaurant at the city's Lakefront Airport.

The location was an homage to how Herbert had learned to fly so he could commute to Shreveport in northern Louisiana to visit his now-wife, an attorney. But the airport was also outside the city's floodwalls.

With Barry approaching the Louisiana coast, the restaurant called to say it would be closed Saturday. The storm also was making it difficult for other wedding vendors, Herbert said, and he and Sikes were worried about guests being able to travel Saturday.

After a little soul-searching, Herbert said, they decided to get married Friday night.

"We realized we had a marriage license, two rings ... and we didn't really want to wait any longer," he said.

So that's how Sikes, wearing an elegant white dress with silvery beading down the back, found herself walking down the aisle Friday evening toward Herbert, who wore a blue suit and a huge smile.

The Rev. Herbert Kiff Jr., who's known the groom for years, officiated. Looking out over the crowd of family and friends who had quickly gathered to celebrate, he said: "It goes to show how much you all love Gerald and Lucy."

New Orleans rhythm and blues musician Deacon John Moore had been scheduled to sing during the Saturday ceremony. He made it to Friday's ceremony, but the regular church musicians couldn't. He ended up bringing his brother to play guitar and another musician to play piano.

Sikes had worried her dress would get wet or her guests would be stuck in the rain. Neither happened, and she was happy everything came together.

"My friends rock!" she said. "They scrambled out at the last minute."

The church's wedding coordinator, Pam Eshleman, said that when the city flooded Wednesday she suspected that bad weather might end up affecting Saturday's plans. Sikes texted her Friday morning asking if they could hold the wedding at the church that evening. In the end, she said, it was "meant to happen

today.”

“I said, ‘For whatever reason, God didn’t want y’all to get married tomorrow,’” she said. “He wanted you to all be here today, and this just all worked out so well.”

For the latest on Barry, visit <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes> .

AP FACT CHECK: Trump and an eco legacy not his own

By CALVIN WOODWARD, HOPE YEN and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump and his aides this past week celebrated an environmental legacy that is not theirs to claim.

In large measure, the progress they cited pre-dates Trump’s presidency. And in some of the particulars, they were wrong. For example, the air is not cleaner under Trump.

The tendency to seek credit for things achieved by others or not achieved at all spread to other areas of federal policy. Trump’s veterans affairs chief cited improvements in waiting times and quality of care at VA health centers as examples of the good job he’s doing leading the department, despite the fact that the progress came before he took the position. The president repeated his familiar boast that more people than ever before are working, ignoring the main reason for that — there are more people than ever before.

A recap from the week on a variety of subjects:

ENVIRONMENT

ANDREW WHEELER, administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency: “From 1970 to 2018, U.S. criteria air pollution fell 74 percent. ... Under your administration, emissions of all the criteria air pollutants continue to decline. For example, the lead and sulfur dioxide have dropped by double-digit percentages over the last two years. Today, we have the cleanest air on record.” — remarks Monday.

THE FACTS: Air quality has not improved since Trump took office and air in the U.S. is not the cleanest on record.

Wheeler specifically is incorrect that emissions for all six of the “criteria” air pollutants tracked by EPA have declined during the Trump administration. Of the six, three actually increased in 2017: carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide and two measures of particulate matter pollution. The other three, ozone, lead and sulfur dioxide, did decline.

Indeed, after decades of improvement, progress in air quality stalled. Over the last two years the U.S. had more polluted air days than just a few years earlier , according to EPA data analyzed by The AP.

There were 15% more days with unhealthy air in America both last year and the year before than there were on average from 2013 through 2016, the four years when the U.S had its fewest number of those days since at least 1980, when the measurement started.

Records for the fewest air polluted days were set during the Obama administration.

It would be premature to blame Trump’s anti-regulatory policies for this setback. Scientists say it is too early to see the effects of changes in environmental policy of the Trump administration. Air quality is affected by complex factors, both natural and man-made; last year’s western wildfires may have contributed, for example. Along the same lines, Trump cannot plausibly claim that his policies have delivered clean air in a year or two when citing developments that have been trending for years.

How is U.S. air quality doing overall? The Health Effects Institute’s State of Global Air 2019 report ranked the U.S. 37th dirtiest out of 195 countries for ozone, also known as smog, worse than the global average for population-weighted pollution. Countries such as Britain, Japan, Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Albania, Cuba, Russia, Vietnam, New Zealand and Canada have less smoggy air. The U.S. ranks 8th cleanest on the more deadly category of fine particles in the air. It’s still behind countries such as Canada and New Zealand but better than the global average.

TRUMP: “We’ve refocused the EPA back on its core mission, and, last year, the agency completed more

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 20 of 48

Superfund hazardous waste clean-ups than any year of the previous administrations and set records in almost every year.” — remarks Monday.

WHEELER: “We’re making tremendous environmental progress under President Trump. ... There may be no better example than our renewed focus on Superfund — the federal program that cleans up large, hazardous sites. ...In fiscal year 2018, we deleted the most sites from the National Priorities List in one year since 2005.” — remarks Monday.

THE FACTS: The Trump administration is taking undue credit for cleanup of hazardous industrial sites that was largely done under President Barack Obama and previous administrations. In addition, Wheeler’s reference to a “renewed focus” on the Superfund program ignores the fact that the administration recommended cutting the program’s budget 15%.

It’s true that the EPA announced last year that it had deleted 22 Superfund toxic waste sites from the government’s national priorities list, the most since 2005. But it takes years, if not decades, to clean up a Superfund site before it is removed from the list. That means the construction work, such as removing soil or drilling wells to suck out contaminated groundwater, would have been largely done before the Trump administration.

For instance, an analysis of EPA records by The Associated Press found that at seven Superfund sites the EPA took off the list in 2017 and boasted about, the physical cleanup was performed before Trump took office.

Removing sites from the list is a procedural step that occurs after monitoring data show that remaining levels of harmful contaminants meet cleanup targets, which were often set by EPA decades ago.

There are currently more than 1,300 Superfund sites on EPA’s National Priorities List at various stages in the cleanup process.

TRUMP: “The previous administration waged a relentless war on American energy.” — remarks Monday.

THE FACT: This accusation is hard to sustain given the rise of U.S. energy under Obama. In 2013, the U.S. became the world’s top producer both of natural gas and petroleum hydrocarbons, says the government’s U.S. Energy Information Administration. As for crude oil specifically, the agency says the U.S. became the world’s top crude oil producer last year. That is largely attributed to the shale oil boom that began late in George W. Bush’s administration and proceeded apace during the Obama years.

The boom came because of fracking and other technology, such as horizontal drilling, that made it possible to find a lot more oil and gas without drilling more holes. (As a senator, Obama voted for a 2005 law that exempted fracking from a range of regulations.)

As president, Obama did impose fracking regulations on federal lands that were challenged by industry, then overturned by Trump, but he did little to slow the surge, especially on state and private lands. Altogether, the government issued permits for about 30,000 new oil and gas wells on federal lands during Obama’s presidency.

Perhaps the central paradox of the Obama energy policy is that, despite his keen focus on wind and solar power, the greatest energy revolution of the past half century happened on his watch as U.S. petroleum and natural gas production achieved pre-eminence.

TRUMP: “Today, the United States is ranked — listen to this — No. 1 in the world for access to clean drinking water — ranked No. 1 in the world.” — remarks Monday.

THE FACTS: True in this respect: The U.S. is tied with nine other countries as having the cleanest drinking water, according to one leading measure. Yale University’s global Environmental Performance Index finds 10 countries tied for the cleanest drinking water.

On environmental quality overall, the index puts the U.S. 27th, behind a variety of European countries, Canada, Japan, Australia and more. Switzerland was No. 1.

VETERANS

ROBERT WILKIE, secretary of veterans affairs, asked if he’s achieved progress in fixing VA since being

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 21 of 48

confirmed to the job one year ago: "Since that time, I can say yes. ...The Journal of the American Medical Association says our wait times are now as good or better than in the private sector. And the Annals of Internal Medicine say our care is as good or better than it is in the private sector, across the country. What that means is that morale is up, that VA is in a better place than it has been in the last few years." — interview Wednesday with Fox News.

THE FACTS: The progress he cites in waiting times and quality of care happened before he became VA secretary.

It's true that a study by the medical association that came out in January found veterans got into a VA facility for an appointment faster on average than if they went to a private facility. But the study tracked progress from 2014 to 2017. Wilkie became acting VA secretary in late March 2018 and was confirmed as permanent VA secretary that July.

Similarly, a study published last December in the Annals of Internal Medicine did find that VA facilities outperform private hospitals in most health care markets throughout the country. But the finding is also based on data from as early as 2014 through June 30, 2017.

Wilkie, in fact, credits the VA's "concerted" effort to improve access to care "since 2014" in a VA press release in January announcing the medical association study's results.

The wait time study covered four specialties, primary care, dermatology, cardiology and orthopedics.

It found that in 2014, the average wait to get into VA medical center was 22.5 days, compared with 18.7 days in the private sector, which was not statistically different. By 2017, the wait at VA improved to 17.7 days, while increasing to 29.8 days for private doctors. Waits at VA medical centers were shorter in all specialties except orthopedics.

RUSSIA INVESTIGATION

TRUMP, on special counsel Robert Mueller's upcoming testimony to Congress, now set for July 24: "They also want to interview the highly ... conflicted and compromised Mueller again." — tweets Thursday.

THE FACTS: Trump makes a groundless charge, as he often does, that Mueller was "highly conflicted and compromised." Mueller, a longtime Republican, was cleared by the Justice Department's ethics experts to lead the Russia investigation.

Trump typically cites a business dispute with Mueller and asserts that Mueller wanted the FBI director position, but that Trump rejected him.

But according to the special counsel's report, when Trump previously complained privately to aides that Mueller would not be objective, the advisers, including then-White House chief strategist Steve Bannon, then-White House counsel Don McGahn and Reince Priebus, chief of staff at the time, rejected his complaints of an alleged business dispute and possible bad feelings over the FBI job as not representing "true conflicts." Bannon called the claims "ridiculous."

Bannon told Mueller's investigators that while the White House had invited Mueller to speak to the president about the FBI and thought about asking him to become director again, Mueller did not come in looking for a job. Mueller was FBI director from 2001 to 2013.

ECONOMY

TRUMP: "Jobs — now more people working today than ever in the history of our country. Ever in the history of our country — think of that." — remarks Thursday at social media summit.

TRUMP: "We're up to almost 160 million jobs. ...If you think, more people working in the United States today than at any day ever in our history." — remarks Monday at dinner with emir of Qatar.

THE FACTS: He's omitting important context. There is a record workforce, but it's driven by population growth.

A more relevant measure is the proportion of Americans with jobs, and that is still far below record highs.

According to Labor Department data, 60.6% of people in the United States 16 years and older were working in June. That's below the all-time high of 64.7% in April 2000, though higher than the 59.9%

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 22 of 48

when Trump was inaugurated in January 2017.

Associated Press writers Matthew Brown in Billings, Montana, Nicky Forster in New York and Matthew Daly, Michael Biesecker, Ellen Knickmeyer and Kevin Freking in Washington contributed to this report.

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Apollo 11 at 50: Celebrating first steps on another world

By MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A half-century ago, in the middle of a mean year of war, famine, violence in the streets and the widening of the generation gap, men from planet Earth stepped onto another world for the first time, uniting people around the globe in a way not seen before or since.

Hundreds of millions tuned in to radios or watched the grainy black-and-white images on TV as Apollo 11's Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin set foot on the moon on July 20, 1969, in one of humanity's most glorious technological achievements. Police around the world reported crime came to a near halt that midsummer Sunday night.

Astronaut Michael Collins, who orbited the moon alone in the mother ship while Armstrong proclaimed for the ages, "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind," was struck by the banding together of Earth's inhabitants.

"How often can you get people around our globe to agree on anything? Hardly ever," Collins, now 88, told The Associated Press in a recent interview. "And yet briefly at the time of the first landing on the moon, people were united. They felt they were participants."

He added, "It was a wonderful achievement in the sense that people everywhere around the planet applauded it: north, south, east, west, rich, poor, Communist, whatever."

That sense of unity did not last long. But 50 years later, Apollo 11 — the culmination of eight years of breakneck labor involving a workforce of 400,000 and a price tag in the billions, all aimed at winning the space race and beating the Soviet Union to the moon — continues to thrill.

"Think of how many times you hear people say, 'Well, if we could land a man on the moon, we could certainly do blah, blah, blah,'" said NASA chief historian Bill Barry, who like many other children of the 1960s was drawn to math and science by Apollo. "It really, I think, has become a throwaway phrase because it gets used so often. It gets used so often because I think it had an impact."

For the golden anniversary, NASA, towns, museums and other institutions are holding ceremonies, parades and parties, including the simultaneous launch of 5,000 model rockets outside the installation in Huntsville, Alabama, where the behemoth Saturn V moon rockets were born. Apollo 11K and Saturn 5K runs are "go" at NASA's Kennedy Space Center.

In nearby Titusville, the American Space Museum and local businesses will mark the exact moment of the moon landing by lifting cups of Tang, the powdered orange drink that rocketed into orbit with the pioneers of the Space Age.

Armstrong, who expertly steered the lunar module Eagle to a smooth landing with just seconds of fuel left, died in 2012 at 82. Aldrin, 89, who followed him onto the gray, dusty surface, was embroiled recently in a now-dropped legal dispute in which two of his children tried to have him declared mentally incompetent. He has kept an uncharacteristically low profile in the run-up to the anniversary.

Many of the Apollo program's other key players are gone as well. Of the 24 astronauts who flew to the moon from 1968 through 1972, only 12 are still alive. Of the 12 who walked on the moon, four survive.

A vast majority of Earth's 7.7 billion inhabitants were born after Apollo ended, including NASA's current administrator, 44-year-old Jim Bridenstine, who is overseeing the effort to send humans back to the moon by 2024.

Back in 1961, NASA had barely 15 minutes of human suborbital flight under its belt — Alan Shepard's

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 23 of 48

history-making flight — when President John F. Kennedy issued the Cold War-era challenge of landing a man on the moon by decade's end and returning him safely.

At the time, the Soviets were beating America at every turn in the space race, with the first satellite, Sputnik, the first spaceman, Yuri Gagarin, and the first lunar probes.

JFK's challenge struck John Tribe, one of Cape Canaveral's original rocket scientists, as impossible.

"I was used to facing up to impossible things. We were in the rocket business, so we were doing some weird and wonderful things back in those days. But, yes, it was an unbelievable announcement at that time," he said. "It took a lot of guts."

NASA's Project Mercury gave way to the two-man Gemini flights, then the three-man Apollo program, dealt a devastating setback when three astronauts were killed in a fire during a 1967 test on the launch pad. The pace was relentless amid fears the Soviets would get to the moon first.

Cape Canaveral's Bill Waldron remembers working "seven days a week, 12 hours a day, six months at a clip" on the lunar modules.

"You know how we got to the moon as fast as we did is because we burned people out," said Homer Hickam, a retired NASA engineer whose autobiography, "Rocket Boys," became the 1999 movie "October Sky."

"Come to Huntsville, go to the cemetery, look at all those young men who are dead down there. They worked themselves to death," Hickam said. "Or better yet, go to the courthouse and look at all the divorce records. They abandoned their families."

The pressure was so intense leading up to the flight that Collins developed tics in both eyes.

Collins privately gave the mission 50-50 odds of total success.

Launch day — Wednesday, July 16, 1969 — dawned with an estimated 1 million people lining the sweltering beaches and roads of what had been renamed Cape Kennedy in memory of the slain president.

Among the VIPs: Vice President Spiro Agnew, former President Lyndon Johnson and wife Lady Bird, aviation legend Charles Lindbergh, science fiction writer Isaac Asimov and TV's Johnny Carson. Civil rights demonstrators who had descended on the launch site to question America's spending priorities temporarily stood down to gaze skyward.

The firing room was filled with 500 launch controllers and managers in white shirts and skinny ties, including Wernher von Braun, the German-born mastermind behind the Saturn V.

The Saturn V stood 363 feet (110 meters) tall, the largest, most powerful rocket ever flown. Unbeknownst to most of the world, just two weeks earlier, the Soviets' even mightier moon rocket exploded moments after liftoff, destroying the Kremlin's moon dreams.

At 9:32 a.m. EDT, the Saturn V roared off Pad 39A, its astronauts hurtling toward their destination and destiny 240,000 miles (386,000 kilometers) away. The command module, Columbia, and the attached lunar module, Eagle, reached the moon three days later. The next day, July 20, Armstrong and Aldrin descended to the surface in the lunar module.

Collins wasn't overly concerned about Armstrong and Aldrin getting down to the moon. Rather, he worried about them getting off the moon and back to the mother ship. He kept his fears to himself.

"If it was unthinkable, it was unsayable also," Collins told the AP. "We never discussed or hinted at their getting stranded on the moon. I mean, we were not fools, and we knew darn well that a lot of things had to go exactly right for them to ascend as they were supposed to do."

President Richard Nixon even had a speech prepared in case of disaster: "Fate has ordained that the men who went to the moon to explore in peace will stay on the moon to rest in peace."

As it turned out, descent proved more alarming than ascent.

With minutes remaining to touchdown, the Eagle was rattled by one computer alarm then another. Caution lights flashed. But flight controllers had rehearsed that very scenario right before the flight, and so guidance officer Steve Bales knew it was safe to proceed rather than abort.

Then a boulder-strewn crater the size of a football field appeared at the target landing site, and Armstrong had to keep flying, looking for somewhere safe to put down. Aldrin called out the distance to the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 24 of 48

surface — 75 feet, 40 feet, 30 feet — as Mission Control informed the astronauts of the fuel remaining. Sixty seconds left. Thirty seconds.

Finally came word from Armstrong: "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed."

The time was 4:17 p.m.

"You got a bunch of guys about to turn blue. We're breathing again," Mission Control's Charlie Duke radioed back. (He would walk on the moon three years later.)

Armstrong descended the nine-rung ladder first, his left boot, size 9½, touching the lunar surface at 10:56 p.m. Aldrin followed him out 18 minutes later.

Working in one-sixth Earth's gravity, they gathered rocks, set up experiments, planted an American flag stiffened with wires to make it look as if it were waving in the windless vacuum and took a congratulatory call from Nixon, who observed, "For one priceless moment in the whole history of man, all the people on this Earth are truly one."

Dave Waldrup of Reston, Virginia, watched on TV that day, his 15th birthday, and recalled thinking: "Wow! What are we going to do next? It's literally not just the sky, but outer space is the limit. And I can't wait to be part of it." He went on to become an Air Force pilot and is now a volunteer at the National Air and Space Museum.

The moonwalk lasted 2½ hours. The Eagle later reunited with Columbia, and the three astronauts headed home, splashing down July 24 in the Pacific.

After spending 2½ weeks in quarantine in case they brought back deadly moon germs, Armstrong, Aldrin and Collins were given a ticker-tape parade in New York, followed by a frenzied monthlong world tour in which they met kings, queens and Pope Paul VI.

Five more missions took men to the surface of the moon — Apollo 13 had to be aborted because of an explosion — before Project Apollo came to a premature end, the last three flights on the schedule scrapped. NASA put the entire Apollo tab at \$25 billion, equivalent to more than \$150 billion in today's dollars.

The first lunar landing, at least, lifted America's spirits — indeed, the planet's — when it needed it.

"The Vietnam War, civil strife, racial strife, all kinds of stuff going on that was bad, which I wasn't paying much attention to because I was working so hard in the space world. The Cold War and all of that," said JoAnn Morgan, Apollo 11's lone female launch controller. "It was such a demonstration of the power and the passion of our country."

She added: "I mean, literally, we did exactly what JFK said we would do."

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

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Apollo 11's 'amiable strangers' Armstrong, Aldrin, Collins

By **MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — Mission commander Neil Armstrong was the flying ace, Buzz Aldrin the scholar. Michael Collins was a crack test pilot, too, but also a wordsmith who described the trio as "amiable strangers."

Apollo 11's astronauts had six months to gel as a crew and prepare for humanity's greatest space feat. The three had never served together on the same spaceflight before, and the "almost frantic" preparation left little if any time for bonding, Collins said.

"Apollo 11 was a little different than some of the other flights," Collins explained. "We didn't cruise around in color-coordinated Corvettes or anything like that. We were all business. We were all hard work, and we felt the weight of the world upon us."

A brief look at each man:

Neil Armstrong was the first man to walk on the moon but the least inclined to talk about it.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 25 of 48

Last year's film, "First Man," captured his private nature; his two sons served as movie consultants. Such reticence merely reinforced the mystery surrounding the late astronaut, who by skill, hard work and chance became the first human to set foot on another world.

Armstrong was superbly qualified for the job: fighter pilot in Korea, X-15 test pilot, one of only two civilians selected for the second astronaut group in 1962, Gemini 8 command pilot, backup commander of Apollo 8 and, finally, commander of Apollo 11.

He'd proven his mettle again and again. He had to gain control of his tumbling Gemini 8 spacecraft in 1966 and bring it down early, and he ejected from a lunar lander training device in 1968 just before it crashed in flames in Houston.

Armstrong left NASA two years after Apollo 11 and taught engineering at the University of Cincinnati until 1979. He spent his remaining years in his home state of Ohio. He finally agreed to a biography: 2005's "First Man" by historian James Hansen, the basis for last year's film.

Armstrong died in 2012 at age 82.

Buzz Aldrin was the second man to walk on the moon, but the first astronaut to have a doctorate and dance with the stars.

Aldrin, now 89, had a long list of accomplishments by the time NASA chose him for the third astronaut group in 1963: third in his class at West Point, fighter pilot in Korea, Air Force officer, a doctorate in astronautics. He was dubbed Dr. Rendezvous for his expertise in orbital dockings.

He flew on Gemini 12 in 1966 and was on the backup crew for Apollo 8. Then came Apollo 11.

He later legally changed his name from Edwin E. Aldrin Jr. to his childhood nickname Buzz. His name was the inspiration for the character Buzz Lightyear in the animated "Toy Story" films. His mother's name: Marion Moon.

After Apollo 11, Aldrin spent years struggling with mental depression and alcoholism. He left NASA in 1971 and briefly headed the test pilot school at Edwards Air Force Base in California.

Drawn toward the spotlight, Aldrin portrayed himself in a 1994 episode of the TV program "The Simpsons" and took a spin in 2010 on TV's "Dancing with the Stars." He's traveled the globe, including the South Pole, pushing for Mars travel.

Last year, two of his three children sought to declare him mentally incompetent, then he sued them. Both sides dropped the case in March.

Aldrin moves between Satellite Beach, Florida, and Southern California.

Michael Collins was "The Forgotten Man" during the Apollo 11 lunar landing: While the two others were walking on the moon, he circled overhead in the command module.

For previous Apollo 11 anniversaries, Collins was content to be forgotten. But with the "huge gap" left by Armstrong's death, Collins, 88, feels compelled to speak up even though "my first inclination for celebrating the 50th anniversary ... is to go hide under a rock somewhere." His two daughters have helped him navigate the avalanche of requests.

The Air Force officer and former test pilot flew on Gemini 10 in 1966, three years after being accepted into the third astronaut group. He was supposed to be command module pilot of Apollo 8, the first manned flight to circle the moon, but was bumped because of a bone spur in his neck. Surgery corrected the problem, and he wound up on Apollo 11.

Collins was astounded when reporters later asked him about being lonely as he circled the moon by himself, especially on the lunar far side, out of radio contact. "I felt like I was Neil and Buzz's meal ticket home," he said. "I was in no way, shape or form lonely."

Collins left NASA six months after Apollo 11. He briefly served as assistant secretary of state for public affairs and was founding director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum.

In an updated preface to his 1974 autobiography "Carrying the Fire," Collins said he enjoys fishing, painting and reading near Florida's Everglades, and feels "lucky, lucky, lucky."

Pence tour of migrant center shows men crowded in cages

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Mike Pence toured two detention facilities on the Texas border Friday, including a Border Patrol station where hundreds of men were crowded in sweltering cages without cots. Some of the men said they were hungry and had been held there for 40 days or longer.

"Look, this is tough stuff," Pence acknowledged at a later news conference.

"I knew we'd see a system that is overcrowded," he added. "It's overwhelmed and that's why Congress has to act."

Pence's office said the tour was part of an effort to show the Trump administration is providing adequate care for migrants. But the scene the vice president witnessed is sure to spark new criticism of the conditions facing migrants in U.S. government facilities.

The caged migrants were being held in an area at the McAllen Border Patrol station. When detainees saw reporters arrive, many began shouting, saying they had been there for 40 days or more and they were hungry and wanted to brush their teeth. Agents guarding the cages were wearing face masks. The press pool covering the vice president was removed within 90 seconds.

The conditions were described by a pool reporter from The Washington Post, who said the fenced cages were so crowded that it was impossible for all the men to lie on the concrete.

The scene resembled what an inspector general found in a scathing report delivered last week based on trips to Border Patrol facilities near the Rio Grande, including the station Pence visited. The report quoted a senior government manager as calling the situation a "ticking time bomb."

Michael Banks, the agent in charge of the McAllen station Pence visited, said the men held there were allowed to brush their teeth once a day. He said they were given deodorant after showering, but conceded many of the men had not showered for 10 or 20 days. He also said the longest any man had been there was 32 days.

President Donald Trump said earlier Friday that he had dispatched Pence to the border to dispel reports of dire conditions at the migrant detention centers.

"They're crowded because we have a lot of people, but they're in good shape," Trump said. He complained about "phony" reporting on conditions by The New York Times.

Earlier in his tour, Pence visited another detention facility with a series of large white tents where most of the detainees were lying on kindergarten-like mats with thin, tinfoil-like blankets. Many of the families there were to be released within 72 hours. Pence told reporters every family he spoke to there said they were being well cared for.

"And while we hear some Democrats in Washington, D.C., referring to U.S. Customs and Border facilities as 'concentration camps,' what we saw today was a facility that is providing care that every American would be proud of," Pence said.

After visiting the second site, Pence had a more sober assessment. He stressed that he had called for more Department of Homeland Security spending because of the overcrowded situation, including a \$4.6 billion humanitarian aid package that Congress passed recently.

The Trump administration has also been under fire over conditions inside a Border Patrol station in Clint, Texas, where children were found in filthy conditions and keeping watch over younger kids amid the overcrowding. Five immigrant children have died since late last year after being detained by the government.

Central American families fleeing violence, poverty and drought have been coming to the U.S. in record numbers this year, peaking in May, when the Border Patrol made nearly 133,000 apprehensions. Facilities to detain adults and children quickly filled up, forcing many migrants to languish in unsuitable Border Patrol facilities much longer than the 72 hours normally required by law.

Dem infighting on race spills into 2020 presidential contest

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — The highly public, racially charged rift between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and a clutch of freshmen congresswomen led by Rep. Alexandra Ocasio-Cortez has spilled into the 2020 Democratic presidential contest. The intramural conflict is threatening to overshadow President Donald Trump's history of race-baiting and xenophobia.

Seizing an opportunity to rile his opponents, Trump on Friday offered a finger-wagging rebuke to Ocasio-Cortez and a defense of Pelosi. "She is not a racist," he said of the speaker, who rarely hides her contempt for the president and certainly was not seeking his support.

While many Democrats had hoped to use the president's history on race against him, the party's 2020 hopefuls are finding they first need to reconcile the matter internally.

Former Vice President Joe Biden cited Trump's tacit support for white supremacists as the primary motivation for his White House bid. Yet Biden has struggled in recent weeks to explain his own record on race, including his work with segregationist lawmakers in the early 1970s, support for a crime bill that disproportionately hurt minorities and racially insensitive comments about school desegregation decades ago.

In the first Democratic presidential debate last month, California Sen. Kamala Harris skewered Biden's record on race, and his support in public polls has declined since.

Now that debate is also playing out on Capitol Hill in the feud between two prominent congresswomen: Pelosi, the most powerful Democrat in Washington, and Ocasio-Cortez, a 29-year-old self-described democratic socialist who in one of four members of a high-profile "squad" of newly elected women of color.

Pelosi sought to minimize Ocasio-Cortez's influence in recent days, while Ocasio-Cortez called the speaker "disrespectful" and accused her of marginalizing women of color.

The friction has forced the party's presidential candidates to weigh in. And so far, no one wants to pick sides.

Harris described Ocasio-Cortez as "bold and smart as anything" but declined to criticize Pelosi in a Friday interview with The Breakfast Club, a New York-based radio show.

"She's not going to go with status quo because that's the way it's always been done, she questions it. I think that's healthy," Harris said of Ocasio-Cortez. "I think that when you have anyone who is as smart and as bold as her questioning the system and doing it in such an effective way, it can throw people off their game."

Harris also disputed Ocasio-Cortez' criticism of Pelosi: "I've known her to be very respectful of women of color and very supportive of them. So I have a different experience."

South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, who has struggled to attract minority support early in his underdog presidential bid, was even more cautious when asked to address the rift as he campaigned Friday in New Hampshire.

"I'm not going to pick sides in a House caucus tussle," he said. "What I will say is that the diversity of opinions in the party right now is pretty healthy. And one of the best ways that we hash out what we believe as a party is through something like a Democratic primary nominating process for the presidency."

The fight within the party could limit the efforts to highlight Trump's hardline rhetoric and policies on race and immigration.

Congressional Democrats released a report this month on the 2,648 children the Trump administration separated from their families last year along the U.S.-Mexico border. At least 18 children under age 2 — half of whom were just months old — were kept from their parents up to half a year.

Trump famously called Mexican immigrants rapists and murders in his campaign announcement speech. He has since promoted social media posts from white nationalists. And he said there were "very fine people" on both sides of a white supremacy rally in Virginia last summer that left one protester dead.

But Democrats are talking more about themselves more than Trump. And the conversation is not an easy one. They want the grassroots energy that Ocasio-Cortez can provide along with the institutional heft that Pelosi routinely delivers.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 28 of 48

Among the 2020 candidates, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren have been the most prominent Ocasio-Cortez allies in recent months. Sanders and the young congresswoman headlined a rally for the Green New Deal together in May, while Warren wrote that “millions are taking cues from her” in an essay outlining Ocasio-Cortez’ place on Time Magazine’s list of the 100 Most Influential People of 2019.

Neither has spoken out on the Pelosi-Ocasio-Cortez dispute in recent days, however.

Liberal activist Adam Green, a Warren ally, said that with the exception of the Democratic Party’s eventual presidential nominee, no Democrat will command more attention in national politics in 2020 than Ocasio-Cortez.

“She and her allies in the squad are redefining the debate,” he said.

He may be overstating her reach. Democrats also know that they regained the majority in the House by winning far more suburban districts with more centrist candidates in the very places they need to retake the White House.

The debate will likely continue this weekend when Ocasio-Cortez’s squad members — Reps. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., and Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich. — attend a gathering of progressive activists this weekend in Philadelphia.

A handful of Democratic presidential contenders, including Warren and New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, will speak later in the day.

As she kicked off a bus tour in Pittsburgh earlier in the week, Gillibrand showed a dexterity designed to not offend.

“I think the Democratic Party is a large, diverse party ... and we’re up against a president whose trying to take away healthcare rights, who won’t stand up to the drug companies, who won’t stand up to the special interests,” Gillibrand said Thursday of the Pelosi-Ocasio-Cortez feud. “And so I think we’ll figure it out, and I have great faith in our new members of Congress as well as the speaker to find the common ground to move us forward.”

Associated Press writers Hunter Woodall in Manchester, New Hampshire, and Juana Summers in Washington contributed to this report.

FTC approves record \$5B fine for Facebook

By BARBARA ORTUTAY AP Technology Writer

At \$5 billion, the fine the U.S. Federal Trade Commission is about to levy on Facebook is by far the largest it’s given to a technology company, easily eclipsing the second largest, \$22 million for Google in 2012.

The long-expected punishment, which Facebook is well prepared for, is unlikely to make a dent in the social media giant’s deep pockets. But it will also likely saddle the company with additional restrictions and another lengthy stretch of strict scrutiny.

Multiple news reports on Friday said the FTC has voted to fine Facebook for privacy violations and mishandling user data. Most of them cited an unnamed person familiar with the matter.

Facebook and the FTC declined to comment. The 3-2 vote broke along party lines, with Republicans in support and Democrats in opposition to the settlement, according to the reports.

The case now moves to the Justice Department’s civil division for review. It’s unclear how long the process would take, though it is likely to be approved. A Justice Department spokeswoman declined to comment on the Facebook matter.

For many companies, a \$5 billion fine would be crippling. But Facebook is not most companies. It had nearly \$56 billion in revenue last year. This year, analysts expect around \$69 billion, according to Zacks. As a one-time expense, the company will also be able to exclude the amount from its adjusted earnings results —the profit figure that investors and financial analysts pay attention to.

“This closes a dark chapter and puts it in the rearview mirror with Cambridge Analytica,” said Wedbush analyst Daniel Ives. “Investors still had lingering worries that the fine might not be approved. Now, the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 29 of 48

Street can breathe a little easier.”

Facebook has earmarked \$3 billion for a potential fine and said in April it was anticipating having to pay up to \$5 billion.

But while Wall Street — and likely Facebook executives — may be breathing a little easier, the fine alone has not appeased Facebook critics, including privacy advocates and lawmakers.

“The reported \$5 billion penalty is barely a tap on the wrist, not even a slap,” said Senator Richard Blumenthal, a Democrat from Connecticut. “Such a financial punishment for a purposeful, blatant illegality is chump change for a company that makes tens of billions of dollars every year.”

He and others questioned whether the FTC will force Facebook to make any meaningful changes to how it handles user data. This might include limits on what information it collects on people and how it targets ads to them. It’s currently unclear what measures the settlement includes beyond the fine.

Privacy advocates have been calling on the FTC to come down on Facebook for a decade, but over that time the company’s money, power and Washington influence has only increased.

“Privacy regulation in the U.S. is broken. While large after-the-fact fines matter, what is much more important is strong, clear rules to protect consumers,” said Nuala O’Connor, president and CEO of the Center for Democracy and Technology. The CDT is pushing for federal online privacy legislation.

Some have called on the FTC to hold Facebook CEO Mark Zuckerberg personally liable for the privacy violations in some way, but based on the party line vote breakdown, experts said this is not likely.

Marc Rotenberg, president of the nonprofit online privacy advocacy group Electronic Privacy Information Center, said he was “confused” as to why the Democratic commissioners didn’t support the settlement and said he suspects, without having seen the actual settlement, that this was due to the Zuckerberg liability question.

“But I thought that was misguided,” he said, adding that EPIC instead supports more wholesale limits on how Facebook handles user privacy.

Since the Cambridge Analytica debacle erupted more than a year ago and prompted the FTC investigation, Facebook has vowed to do a better job corralling its users’ data. That scandal revealed that a data mining firm affiliated with President Donald Trump’s 2016 campaign improperly accessed private information from as many as 87 million Facebook users through a quiz app. At issue was whether Facebook violated a 2011 settlement with the FTC over user privacy.

Other leaky controls have also since come to light. Facebook acknowledged giving big tech companies like Amazon and Yahoo extensive access to users’ personal data , in effect exempting them from its usual privacy rules. And it collected call and text logs from phones running Google’s Android system in 2015.

Wall Street appeared unfazed at the prospect of the fine. Facebook’s shares closed at \$204.87 on Friday and added 24 cents after hours. The stock is up more than 50 percent since the beginning of the year. In fact, Facebook’s market value has increased by \$64 billion since its April earnings report when it announced how much it was expecting to be fined.

Rep. David Cicilline, a Democrat from Rhode Island, said in a statement that the fine gives Facebook “a Christmas present five months early. It’s very disappointing that such an enormously powerful company that engaged in such serious misconduct is getting a slap on the wrist. This fine is a fraction of Facebook’s annual revenue.”

Cicilline leads the House Judiciary subcommittee on antitrust, which is pursuing a bipartisan investigation of the big tech companies’ market dominance.

The fine, however, doesn’t spell the end of Facebook’s troubles. The company faces a slew of other investigations, both in the U.S. and overseas, that could carry their own fines and, more importantly possible limits to its data collection. This includes nearly a dozen by the Irish Data Protection Commissioner, which oversees privacy regulation in the European Union.

Tropical storm, river flooding hammer Gulf environment

By JOHN FLESHER AP Environmental Writer

Tropical Storm Barry could affect the environment of the Gulf coast and Lower Mississippi Valley in numerous ways, from accelerating runoff of farmland nutrients to toppling trees and damaging wildlife habitat and fisheries, scientists say.

But the extent of the damage — and whether it will be at least partially offset by benefits such as disruption of the notorious Gulf of Mexico “dead zone” — is hard to predict, they say. That’s because the region faces a rare one-two-three punch : the storm’s anticipated tidal surge and torrential downpour, combined with record-high water levels in the Mississippi River.

“We don’t know how the system is going to respond to all this because it’s so unusual,” said Melissa Baustian, a coastal ecologist with the Water Institute of the Gulf in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

One of the wettest-ever springs in the nation’s heartland engorged the Mississippi, sending massive volumes of water southward toward the Gulf. Levees and dams were breached and millions of acres of cropland flooded in the Midwest. Barry threatens to hurl a storm surge of up to 3 feet (1 meter) onto coastal regions. And forecasters said the storm could stall inland and dump up to 2 feet (61 centimeters) of rain.

Rainfall washes manure and chemical fertilizers from Midwestern corn and soybean fields into streams, smaller rivers and eventually the Mississippi. The nutrients — especially nitrogen — overfeed aquatic plants that eventually die and decompose, leaving a large section of the Gulf with little or no oxygen each summer. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration predicted that this year’s dead zone will be roughly the size of Massachusetts.

Large storms can shrink the zone by churning the water column and replenishing oxygen levels in deeper areas. That could be a positive, if short-lived, outcome of Barry’s rampage, Baustian said.

Yet even if this year’s oxygen-depleted area winds up smaller than expected, historical data suggests that Barry — like other big storms — will flush additional nutrients into the Mississippi and other Gulf tributaries, leading to bigger dead zones in the long run, said Anna Michalak of the Carnegie Institution for Science in Stanford, California.

“If you get a few sprinkles over time, the water has time to infiltrate and there’s not much runoff,” said Michalak, who studies effects of climate change on water quality. “But a single extreme event overwhelms the capacity of the soil and the ecosystem to absorb it, and much of it ends up flowing down the rivers and ultimately off to the coast.”

Even if Barry’s wind speeds aren’t powerful enough to make the storm a hurricane, they could topple lots of trees, their roots weakened by the saturated ground, said Tim Carruthers, coastal ecology director with the Water Institute. Also vulnerable are Louisiana’s famed coastal marshes, already hammered by development and flood control measures that prevent natural coastal shoreline replenishment.

Scientists also will keep watch for stranded dolphins. About 290 have been found along the Gulf coast since Feb. 1 — triple the usual number — and nearly all have died.

It’s unclear why, although one possibility is exposure to fresh water coursing into the Gulf from flooding rivers and a Louisiana spillway that diverts overflow from the Mississippi, said Teri Rowles, head of a NOAA program on stranded marine mammals.

The spillway, built in 1938 to provide a safety valve during flooding, has been open for a record number of days this year, said David Muth of the National Wildlife Federation’s Gulf Restoration Program.

The surge of fresh water also endangers oysters, brown shrimp, speckled trout and other fish that require particular salinity levels, he said. Barry’s deluge could make things worse — especially in light of more intense and frequent storms brought on by global warming.

“There are going to be short-term effects on the ecosystem,” Muth said. “But what’s out of whack is that this amount of rainfall is linked to a longer-term trend because of climate change, and that’s disturbing.”

_____ Follow John Flesher at <http://www.twitter.com/johnflesher>

_____ For the latest on Tropical Storm Barry, visit <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

'It's powerful': Tropical storm starts lashing Louisiana

By KEVIN MCGILL and JANET McCONNAUGHEY Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Homeowners sandbagged their doors and tourists trying to get out of town jammed the airport Friday as Tropical Storm Barry began rolling in, threatening an epic drenching that could test how well New Orleans has strengthened its flood protections in the 14 years since Hurricane Katrina.

With the storm expected to blow ashore early Saturday near Morgan City as the first hurricane of the season, authorities rushed to close floodgates and raise the barriers around the New Orleans metropolitan area of 1.3 million people for fear of disastrous flooding.

The storm was expected to inflict the most damage on Louisiana and parts of Mississippi, with wind and rain affecting more than 3 million people.

About 3,000 National Guard troops, along with other rescue crews, were posted around Louisiana with boats, high-water vehicles and helicopters. Drinking water was lined up, and utility crews with bucket trucks moved into position.

"This is happening. ... Your preparedness window is shrinking," National Hurricane Center Director Ken Graham warned. He added: "It's powerful. It's strengthening. And water is going to be a big issue."

Late Friday night, residents received good news from forecasters: the Mississippi River is expected to crest in New Orleans at about 17.1 feet (5.2 meters), not 19 feet (5.8 meters) as had been earlier predicted. The levees protecting the city range from about 20 to 25 feet (6 to 7.5 meters) in height.

While 10,000 people or more in exposed, low-lying areas along the Gulf Coast were told to leave, no evacuations were ordered in New Orleans, where officials instead urged residents to "shelter in place" starting at 8 p.m.

"My concerns are just hoping it's not going to be another Katrina," said Donald Wells, a restaurant cook in New Orleans.

Forecasters said slow-moving Barry could unload 10 to 20 inches (25 to 50 centimeters) of rain through Sunday across a swath of Louisiana that includes New Orleans and Baton Rouge, as well as southwestern Mississippi, with pockets in Louisiana getting 25 inches (63 centimeters).

The storm's leading edges lashed the state with bands of rain for most of the day, and some coastal roads were already underwater.

Barry was expected to arrive as a weak hurricane, just barely over the 74 mph (119 kph) wind speed threshold. But authorities warned people not to be fooled.

"Nobody should take this storm lightly just because it's supposed to be a Category 1 when it makes landfall," Gov. John Bel Edwards said. "The real danger in this storm was never about the wind anyway. It's always been about the rain."

Authorities took unprecedented precautions: The governor said it was the first time all floodgates were sealed in the New Orleans-area Hurricane Risk Reduction System. Still, he said he didn't expect the river to spill over the levees.

Workers also shored up and raised the levee system in places with beams, sheet metal and other barriers.

Barry's downpours could prove to be a severe test of the improvements made to New Orleans' flood defenses since Katrina devastated the city in 2005. The Mississippi River is already running abnormally high because of heavy spring rains and snowmelt upstream, and the ground around New Orleans is soggy because of an 8-inch (20-centimeter) torrent earlier this week.

"The river should be taken seriously. It's a really powerful river," said Nadia Jenkins of New Orleans. She hadn't yet decided whether to leave but wasn't taking any chances: "We're prepared. We've got stuff stocked up. Car is gassed."

Employees at a Costco in New Orleans said bottled water was selling quickly. Lifelong resident Terrence Williams was getting supplies and said he has a few simple rules for big storms.

"Stock up on water. Stock up food. Get ready for the storm — ride it out," he said.

A Walmart Neighborhood Market in Lake Charles, in the southwestern part of the state, was packed with shoppers and much of the bread was gone by Friday afternoon.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 32 of 48

Scientists say global warming is responsible for more intense and more frequent storms and flooding, but without extensive study, they cannot directly link a single weather event to the changing climate.

Late Friday night, Barry was about 75 miles (120 kilometers) south of Morgan City, with winds of 65 mph (100 kph). Tracking forecasts showed the storm moving toward Chicago, swelling the Mississippi River basin with water that must eventually flow south again.

Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant signed an emergency declaration while President Donald Trump declared a federal emergency for Louisiana, authorizing the Department of Homeland Security and the Federal Emergency Management Agency to coordinate relief efforts.

In Baton Rouge, where severe flooding caused billions of dollars in damage three years ago, Kaci Douglas and her 15-year-old son, Juan Causey, were among dozens filling sandbags at a fire station. She planned to sandbag the door of her townhouse.

"I told my son, it's better to be safe than sorry," she said.

In New Orleans, a group of neighbors cleaned out the storm drains on their street. Working as a team to lift the heavy metal covers off, they discovered that most of the drains were full of dirt, leaves and garbage.

All over town, people parked their cars on the city's medians — referred to around here as "neutral grounds" — in hopes their vehicles would be safe on the slightly elevated strips.

Tourists converged on the airport in hopes of catching an early flight and getting out of town ahead of the storm. At least one convention — that of the Delta Sigma Theta sorority — was cut short by a day. A Rolling Stones concert was postponed from Sunday to Monday.

Katrina caused catastrophic flooding in New Orleans 14 years ago and was blamed for more than 1,800 deaths in Louisiana and other states, by some estimates.

In its aftermath, the Army Corps of Engineers began a multibillion-dollar hurricane-protection system that isn't complete. The work included repairs and improvements to some 350 miles (560 kilometers) of levees and more than 70 pumping stations.

Contributing to this report were Associated Press reporters Chevel Johnson and Rebecca Santana in New Orleans; Sarah Blake Morgan in Plaquemines Parish; Jay Reeves in Baton Rouge; and Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Trump citizenship plan will face logistical, legal hurdles

By COLLEEN LONG, MARK SHERMAN and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — After failing to get his citizenship question on the census, President Donald Trump now says his fallback plan will provide an even more accurate count — determining the citizenship of 90 percent of the population "or more." But his plan will likely be limited by logistical hurdles and legal restrictions.

Trump wants to distill a massive trove of data across seven government agencies — and possibly across 50 states. It's far from clear how such varying systems can be mined, combined and compared.

He directed the Commerce Department, which manages the census, to form a working group.

"The logistical barriers are significant, if not insurmountable," said Paul Light, a senior fellow of Governance Studies at New York University with a long history of research in government reform. "The federal government does not invest, and hasn't been investing for a long time, in the kind of data systems and recruitment of experts that this kind of database construction would require."

Trump says he aims to answer how many people are here illegally, though there already are recent estimates, and possibly use such information to divvy up congressional seats based on citizenship. It's also a way for Trump to show his base that he's not backing down (even as he's had to back down) from a battle over the question on his signature topic, immigration.

The administration faced challenges last year when it was tasked by a federal judge with quickly creating a system to track migrant families that had been separated by immigration officials. They found agency systems weren't compatible.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 33 of 48

"Information-sharing is not a habit of federal agencies," Light said.

Trump's plan is aimed at yet-again circumventing legal challenges on an immigration related matter, as courts have barred him from inquiring about citizenship on the 2020 census. But it could spark further legal action, depending on what his administration intends to do with the citizenship information.

His executive order announced Thursday requires highly detailed information, including national-level files of all lawful permanent residents, Customs and Border arrival and departure data and Social Security Administration master beneficiary records. Plus information on Medicaid and children's health systems and refugee and asylum visas.

The order states that "generating accurate data concerning the total number of citizens, non-citizens and illegal aliens in the country has nothing to do with enforcing immigration laws against particular individuals," and that information would be used "solely to produce statistics" and would not be used to "bring immigration enforcement actions against particular individuals."

Dale Ho, the director of the ACLU's Voting Rights Project who argued the citizenship question case at the Supreme Court, said the main privacy concern now would be disclosure of individuals' citizenship status.

Federal law bars the Census Bureau from disclosing an individual's responses to the census. But Ho said that if the bureau can produce citizenship information in small geographical bites, it could inadvertently expose a person's citizenship status.

The bureau has methods in place that are designed to prevent such disclosures, but "we don't know enough yet to know the answers," Ho said.

In March, the Associated Press reported that even before the outcome of the census question litigation, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, which maintains some of the requested data, had been working on a data-sharing agreement that would give census access to names, addresses, birth dates and places, as well as Social Security numbers and alien registration numbers.

The possibilities worried immigrant rights advocates, especially given Trump's hardline stance on immigration.

Samantha Artiga, a Medicaid expert with the nonpartisan Kaiser Family Foundation, said she is concerned that Trump's directive will discourage some immigrants from applying for health benefits they'd be entitled to.

"It is likely that this policy will further enhance already heightened fears among families about applying for Medicaid or the Children's Health Insurance Program for lawfully present immigrants or citizen children in immigrant families, potentially leading to fall-offs in coverage," she said.

But to some degree, Trump's directive reflects what was already being put into place before the controversy about a citizenship question on the census. The Census Bureau had stressed that it could produce better citizenship data without adding the question and had recommended combining information from the annual American Community Survey with records held by other federal agencies that already include citizenship records. The survey polls 3.5 million U.S. households and includes questions about citizenship.

"It's a retreat back to what he should have done from the beginning," said Kenneth Prewitt, a former Census Bureau director.

Transferring the data from other agencies to the Census Bureau is not necessarily difficult, but some, like Customs arrivals data, contain hundreds of millions of entries and it will take time to compile, maybe years. Getting the information to match up with census data will be the main challenge.

Prewitt said government records tend to be highly accurate for some purposes and less so for others. It's essential for the Social Security Administration, for instance, to know the age of Americans accurately, but it isn't as concerned with addresses.

According to a 2018 report, the Census Bureau already has access to data from the IRS, Social Security, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Postal Service, the Selective Service System, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Indian Health Service. The agency also gets data from some states that administer federal programs such as food stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families and the Women, Infants, and Children nutrition program.

Virtually all federal social programs are open only to citizens or to immigrants who have been lawfully

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 34 of 48

present for at least five years.

"I think the executive order will just hurry up negotiations about data-sharing that are already in the works," said Julia Gelatt, a senior policy analyst with the nonpartisan Migration Policy Institute think tank.

Commerce Secretary Wilbur Ross, who is in charge of the Census Bureau, insisted on adding the citizenship question and a legal challenge ensued, ending with a ruling by the Supreme Court temporarily barring its inclusion on the grounds that the government's justification was insufficient.

He had offered multiple explanations for why he believed the question was necessary to include in the once-a-decade population count that determines the allocation of seats in the House of Representatives for the next 10 years and the distribution of some \$675 billion in federal spending.

Even after the Supreme Court ruled against him, Trump insisted he was pushing forward, contradicting government lawyers and Ross, who had conceded the case was closed, as well as the Census Bureau, which had started printing the 2020 questionnaire without the controversial query.

Trump toyed with the idea of halting the constitutionally-mandated survey entirely while the court battle played out. But by Thursday evening, he gave up on including the question in the census and announced the executive order.

Associated Press Writer Geoff Mulvihill in Trenton, New Jersey contributed to this report.

Special counsel Mueller's testimony delayed until July 24

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Special counsel Robert Mueller's testimony to Congress has been delayed until July 24 under an agreement that gives lawmakers more time to question him.

Mueller had been scheduled to testify July 17 before two house committees about the findings of his Russia investigation. But lawmakers in both parties complained that the short length of the hearings would not allow enough time for all members to ask questions.

Under the new arrangement, Mueller will testify for an extended period of time — three hours instead of two — before the House Judiciary Committee. He will then testify before the House intelligence committee in a separate hearing. The two committees said in a statement that all members of both committees will be able to question him.

The agreement will also give Mueller more time to prepare for the rigorous questioning. The statement said the postponement was "at his request."

House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., and House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., announced the terms after days of negotiations and questions over whether the testimony would be delayed. In the joint statement, the panels said the longer hearings "will allow the American public to gain further insight into the special counsel's investigation and the evidence uncovered regarding Russian interference in the 2016 presidential election and President Trump's possible obstruction of justice and abuse of power."

Mueller has expressed his reluctance to testify and said he won't go beyond what's in his 448-page report. But Democrats have been determined to highlight its contents for Americans who they believe have not read it. They want to extract information from the former special counsel and spotlight what they say are his most damaging findings against Trump.

Democrats are expected to ask Mueller about his conclusions, including that he could not exonerate Trump on obstruction of justice after detailing several episodes in which Trump tried to influence the investigation. Mueller also said there was not enough evidence to establish a criminal conspiracy between Trump's presidential campaign and the Kremlin.

One thing Judiciary members want to focus on in questioning Mueller is whether Trump would have been charged with a crime were he not president. Mueller said in 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.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 35 of 48

A separate closed-door session with two of Mueller's deputies is expected to be canceled, for now. An official for the intelligence panel said that they are still negotiating the appearance of the two Mueller team members, James Quarles and Aaron Zebley.

The official, who declined to be named to discuss the confidential negotiations, said that the committee had recently heard almost five hours of testimony from another member of Mueller's team.

The official did not name that person. A separate person familiar with that testimony said that the person is David Archey, the senior FBI official who was involved in Mueller's probe. That person also declined to be named because the committee had not announced it.

The closed-door interviews with the deputies had appeared to be in doubt for several days after the Justice Department has recently pushed back on the arrangement.

As the hearing neared, members of both parties had complained about the lack of time for questioning. While every member of the smaller Intelligence panel was expected to be able to question Mueller, fewer than half of Democrats and Republicans on the Judiciary panel would have been able to do so in the original two-hour timeframe. At a separate hearing on Thursday, several Republicans complained about the setup.

"I have been elected just like anyone else here," said Arizona Rep. Debbie Lesko, a junior GOP member of the panel.

After Nadler and Schiff's announcement, the top Republican on the Judiciary panel, Georgia Rep. Doug Collins, said: "I appreciate news the chairman has taken seriously the concerns Judiciary Republicans raised this week. The new format will allow all Judiciary Republicans to question the special counsel on July 24."

It's unclear whether Mueller's testimony will give Democratic investigations new momentum. In the news conference, Mueller indicated that it was up to Congress to decide what to do with his findings. But Democrats have had little success so far in their attempts to probe his findings as the White House has blocked several witnesses from answering questions.

That means the committees may have to go through a lengthy court process to get more information. Around 80 Democrats have said they think an impeachment inquiry should be launched to bolster their efforts, but House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has so far rebuffed those calls.

Dems, Republicans air warring views on migrants' conditions

By ALAN FRAM Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Four House Democratic freshmen who recently toured detention stations for migrants along the Texas border told a House committee Friday of jam-packed, fetid holding areas "in front of the American flag" and accused President Donald Trump of intentional cruelty to discourage future arrivals.

Firing back, a quartet of Republicans from border states told the same panel that Democrats weren't doing anything to ease the crisis and blamed them for posturing that one said was aimed at "Twitter followers and cynical politics."

Meanwhile, Vice President Mike Pence was touring detention facilities in Texas. After seeing one site where almost 400 men were being held in cages in the sweltering heat, Pence acknowledged, "This is tough stuff."

Friday's House Oversight and Reform Committee hearing offered a microcosm of the nation's red-blue chasm and, perhaps, a chance for each side to vent. But ultimately, it underscored each party's starkly warring views about Trump's hardline anti-immigration policies, suggesting they're destined to be a leading issue for the 2020 presidential and congressional campaigns.

The hearing came as the number of families, children and other migrants entering the U.S. from Mexico has surged above 100,000 monthly since March, overwhelming federal agencies' ability to detain them in sanitary conditions or move them quickly to better housing. It also came days before Trump-ordered nationwide raids targeting people in the U.S. illegally are expected to begin, according to administration officials and immigrant activists, actions that would further inflame the issue.

Before Friday's session began, panel Chairman Elijah Cummings, D-Md., released a report providing new details on 2,648 of the children the Trump administration separated from their families last year before

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 36 of 48

abandoning that policy under widespread pressure. Unknown numbers of others were also separated.

The report, using data the panel demanded from federal agencies, found that 18 children under age 2 — half who were just months old — were kept from their parents up to half a year. Hundreds were held longer than previously revealed, including 25 kept over a year, and at least 30 remain apart from their parents.

The figures reflect “a deliberate, unnecessary and cruel choice by President Trump and his administration,” the report said.

Congress approved \$4.6 billion last month to help improve conditions. But that measure angered liberals who felt it lacked requirements forcing better treatment of migrants, prompting internal frictions that have yet to fully play out.

Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., the 29-year-old progressive icon, was among the four Democrats — all women — who testified. After being sworn in at her request, a practice the committee generally eschews for fellow lawmakers and seemed a taunt at dubious Republicans, she described migrant women telling her they had to sleep on the concrete floor and drink from the toilet because their cell’s sink was broken.

“I believe these women,” she said. “What was worst about this was the fact that there were American flags hanging all over these facilities, that children were being separated from their parents in front of the American flag,” she said.

Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., was near tears as she displayed a picture she said was of a 7-year-old Guatemalan girl — the same age as her son — who died in U.S. custody. She criticized harsh policies “intentionally and cruelly created by a Trump administration dead set on sending a hate-filled message that those seeking refuge are not welcome in America.”

Tlaib added, “It’s a dangerous ideology that rules our nation right now.”

Departing the White House, Trump told reporters without evidence that Ocasio-Cortez’ account of women being told to drink from a toilet was “a phony story she made it up.”

As if in counterpoint to Democrats’ testimony, Pence and eight GOP lawmakers toured a border station Friday in Donna, Texas, a vast collection of air-conditioned, interconnected tents built in May to temporarily handle 1,000 migrants and currently holding 800. Many lay on mats on the floor, covered by foil blankets as children watched TV.

With Sen. Mike Lee, R-Utah, and Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan translating into Spanish, two children told Pence they’d walked two and three months to arrive. He responded, “God bless you” in English and “gracias” in Spanish.

“Every family I spoke to said they were being well cared for,” Pence said, criticizing Democrats’ “harsh rhetoric.”

Later Friday, though, Pence visited an outdoor portal at the McAllen Border Station, where 384 single men were being held in cages with no cots.

“I was not surprised by what I saw,” Pence said. “I knew we’d see a system that was overwhelmed.”

Back at the House committee, four border state Republicans sat at the same rectangular witness table as their Democratic counterparts and blamed Democrats for migrants’ problems.

Rep. Chip Roy, R-Texas, mocked Democrats’ border trip, accusing them of posing “next to an empty parking lot while making up hyperbole for clips, Twitter followers and cynical politics.” Ocasio-Cortez has 4.7 million Twitter followers.

Roy said by not toughening immigration laws, Democrats have “created the very magnet” that attracts migrants to the U.S. and said the House “cowardly sits in the corner, doing nothing” to address the problems that result.

Last week a report by the Department of Homeland Security’s inspector general found children at some Texas border facilities who faced clothing shortages and lacked hot meals, while some adults were held for a week in a cell so crowded they had to stand.

The House will soon vote on one bill by Rep. Veronica Escobar, D-Texas, tightening oversight of the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 37 of 48

Homeland Security Department and another by Rep. Raul Ruiz, D-Calif., establishing care standards for seized migrants. Senate Democratic legislation would curb family separations and set health and treatment standards.

Also testifying Friday were Escobar and Rep. Ayanna Pressley, D-Mass., who said federal treatment of migrants has "exceeded a level of degradation we should be ashamed is occurring on American soil."

Other Republicans who appeared were Arizona Reps. Debbie Lesko and Andy Biggs and Rep. Michael Cloud, R-Texas.

Trump pushes trade deal in formerly blue Wisconsin

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

MILWAUKEE (AP) — President Donald Trump barnstormed for his new trade deal with Mexico and Canada during a visit to Wisconsin on Friday, hoping that its economic impact will help him to retain a battleground state vital to his re-election effort.

Trump told workers at Derco Aerospace the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, which has yet to pass Congress, would be "vital to the future" of the nation's manufacturing economy and would provide "the strongest protections yet for American workers."

"I want you to have a level playing field because when you have a level playing field, nobody can beat you," he said.

Trump in 2016 became the first Republican to win Wisconsin since Ronald Reagan in 1984, defeating Democrat Hillary Clinton by just 22,748 votes. Along with Michigan and Pennsylvania, the Rust Belt state was meant to be part of the Democrats' safety net against Trump, but Clinton failed to visit the state even once during the general election campaign — a fact the president misses few chances to mention.

Trump opened his Milwaukee speech by reminiscing about his Wisconsin victory on Election Day, then did a quick segue to promoting the trade pact.

"The deal will have a tremendous impact on your state," said Trump. "After years of rebuilding foreign nations, we are finally rebuilding our nation. It's as simple as that."

Wisconsin was one of two Midwest stops Friday designed to warm up Trump's 2020 campaign engine with fundraisers expected to bring in a combined \$7 million, according to the Republican National Committee.

But his public focus was the USMCA, whose fate is uncertain in Congress, and of particular interest in Wisconsin.

Canada and Mexico are Wisconsin's top two foreign export markets. Last year, the state exported \$31 million worth of products to Canada and \$15.2 million worth of products to Mexico, according to census data.

Wisconsin imported \$15.5 million worth of goods from Canada in 2018, behind only China. The state imported \$9.3 million worth of goods from Mexico last year, the fourth highest amount of imports among the state's foreign trade partners.

Proponents of the deal believe it could also help the state's dairy farmers and Wisconsin's manufacturing sector, which contributes to nearly 20 percent of the state's gross domestic product.

"In Wisconsin, we have a trade surplus with Mexico and Canada," said Sen. Ron Johnson, R-Wisconsin, who traveled Friday on Air Force One with the president. "I am happy to have NAFTA updates but we need to get it ratified. This is important for Wisconsin."

Johnson was referring to the North American Free Trade Agreement, which the new trade deal is meant to replace.

But while Trump took credit for the state's economic gains, Wisconsin remains starkly divided over the president and appears a toss-up again in 2020.

The latest Marquette University Law School poll in April found 52% of respondents disapproved of how Trump is handling his job, while 46% approved. The poll also found that 54% of respondents said they would definitely or probably vote for someone else in 2020, while 42% said they would definitely or probably vote to re-elect him.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 38 of 48

The Trump campaign plans an all-out blitz again in the state, one of a handful most analysts believe will determine the White House next year. Democrats also aren't ignoring the state this time: a half-dozen campaigned in Wisconsin this week and the party scheduled its nominating convention for Milwaukee next year.

Republicans have been seeking a vote on USMCA before the August recess to get in front of the presidential campaign season, but it's looking more likely that any vote, if one occurs at all, will have to wait at least until September. House Democrats want to strengthen enforcement of the agreement's labor and environmental obligations.

They also object to USMCA's 10-year exclusivity period for new biologic drugs that shields them from competition. More than 100 House Democrats wrote United States Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer this week encouraging him to amend the agreement "to increase competition and enhance patient access to more affordable prescription drugs."

Trump urged Democrats to view the USMCA "as a bipartisan bill" and to abandon their investigations into his administration in favor of sending the trade bill to "my desk today."

After Air Force One touched down in Wisconsin on Friday, Trump was greeted by cheering onlookers, including a woman who asked him to sign her Christian Louboutin heel. The president obliged.

Derco Aerospace was accused of fraud in a 2014 lawsuit by the federal government that alleges it and two related companies schemed to overbill on a Navy contract for airplane maintenance. The case is pending in federal court in Milwaukee. The companies have denied wrongdoing.

After visiting Wisconsin, Trump traveled to Ohio for a fundraising dinner near Cleveland. Democrats criticized the president for appearing with Brian Colleran, a nursing home magnate who was forced to pay \$19.5 million by the Justice Department for his role in a Medicare fraud nursing home scheme.

Associated Press reporters Todd Richmond in Madison, Wisconsin, Julie Carr Smyth in Cleveland and Kevin Freking in Washington contributed to this report.

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Paul Ryan's public support of Trump masked GOP struggle

By LISA MASCARO and DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — What's so stunning about former House Speaker Paul Ryan's new admissions regarding President Donald Trump is that his story is now so ordinary.

Ryan decided to leave Washington, as relayed in a new book, "American Carnage," by Tim Alberta, rather than endure two more years of the Trump presidency.

The disclosures portray the once rising GOP star as deeply conflicted in the age of Trump, saying one thing in public but thinking another in private, as he tried — and ultimately failed — to serve alongside the president.

"I'm telling you, he didn't know anything about government," Ryan says in the book. "I wanted to scold him all the time. What I learned as I went on, to scratch that itch, I had to do it in private. So, I did it in private all the time. And he actually ended up kind of appreciating it."

Ryan's story is remarkable, but not rare. Trump's critics in the GOP are increasingly unwilling, or unable, to speak their minds publicly about the president for fear of enduring his wrath, or that of his constituents.

The silence of Republicans takes on new significance as Trump seeks a second term, potentially deepening his hold on the party.

"Those of us around him really helped to stop him from making bad decisions. All the time," said Ryan, who stepped down after nearly two decades in Washington, in the book. "We helped him make much better decisions, which were contrary to kind of what his knee-jerk reaction was. Now I think he's making some of these knee-jerk reactions."

Trump shot back Friday, lashing out at the former speaker as a "baby" and a "terrible speaker."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 39 of 48

Trump unleashed his criticism on one of Wisconsin's favorite sons just before leaving Washington to visit the state, which he wants to win again in 2020. He called the retired congressman's record "atrocious" despite Ryan's work in securing Trump's main domestic policy achievement, the GOP tax bill.

"Paul Ryan let us down. Paul Ryan was a terrible speaker," Trump told reporters on the South Lawn. "He didn't know what the hell he was doing."

This is the dilemma facing Republicans in the age of Trump. If they disagree with the president, they face consequences. If they stay close, they often must contort their political preferences to fit his unpredictable actions. If they decide to leave, as Ryan did, they lose part of their platform to influence and shape the White House.

One Republican congressman said Friday that on Capitol Hill and beyond, "everyone is in on the joke." They take the good with the bad with this president, and find their own way in Trump's party, said the congressman, who was granted anonymity to discuss the private thinking.

But the style and substance of Trump's mercurial presidency has so disrupted political norms and standard operations that some of the party's once ascending members are, like Ryan, taking leave.

"He's not alone," said Flake, who retired early rather than run for reelection alongside Trump.

"I could not stand on a campaign stage with the president when people shouted, 'Lock her up!' — and I'm not alone in that," the Arizonan said by phone Friday. "The problem isn't just Trump. It's Trumpism. Unfortunately, it's a virus that's infected not just the Republican party, but the Democratic Party, as well."

Trump's allies scoff at those who struggle to find their way in today's GOP, saying the White House has an open door and welcomes wide-ranging views.

"There's room for a difference of opinion, and to be passionate about it," said Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., a Trump confidant. "But you don't have to be personal with your attacks. And I think that's the difference."

Meadows said voters back home are watching to see if what lawmakers say when they campaign beside Trump is backed up by their work in Congress. "Some members enjoy running as a pro-Trump Republican only to not support that title when they're here in Washington, D.C.," he said.

Rep. Patrick McHenry, R-N.C., who had been part of the House GOP's leadership team, said: "If you want to have an adversarial role, then this administration will treat you as an adversary. And if you want to be a friend of the administration and have constructive criticism, they will take it. They will listen."

Ryan is now well into his retirement, having handed over the speaker's gavel to Nancy Pelosi and decamped for his Wisconsin hometown of Janesville. The party's 2012 vice presidential nominee, alongside Mitt Romney, he was often considered a future presidential contender. When he announced his retirement in 2018, he said he doubted any political run was in his future. Now he hits the speaking circuit and serves on the board of Fox.

Ryan was an early skeptic of Trump's 2016 presidential bid, holding out as one of the last GOP leaders to back him. Ryan finally did endorse, only to backtrack after the disclosures that Trump bragged about sexually assaulting women. Ryan was booed at a rally back home after disinviting Trump.

At one point, Alberta writes, Ryan was among GOP leaders considering a Plan B to Trump's nomination as their party's 2016 presidential candidate.

Ultimately, Ryan came on board in the waning days of election, saying his was a binary choice between Trump and Hillary Clinton, who he said would be a continuation of Democratic power in Washington.

"Can we handle four years of this?" Ryan wrote.

It turns out, Ryan couldn't stomach more than two years of Trump. Rather than stick around, he left.

Associated Press writer Andrew Taylor contributed to this report.

Acosta exits; Trump's big Cabinet turnover keeps growing

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Adding to the lengthy list of departures from President Donald Trump's Cabinet, Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta said Friday he's stepping down amid the tumult over his handling of a

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 40 of 48

2008 secret plea deal with wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein, who is accused of sexually abusing underage girls.

Trump, with Acosta at his side, said Friday he did not ask his secretary to leave and "I hate to see this happen." The president, who publicly faults the news media almost daily, said Acosta put the blame there, too.

Acosta "informed me this morning that he felt the constant drumbeat of press about a prosecution which took place under his watch more than 12 years ago was bad for the Administration, which he so strongly believes in, and he graciously tendered his resignation," Trump tweeted later in the day.

Trump said Patrick Pizzella, deputy secretary since April 2018, would succeed Acosta on an acting basis. Pizzella served in the administrations of Republican George W. Bush and Democrat Barack Obama. A coalition of civil rights, human rights, labor and other groups opposed his nomination by Trump to the department's No. 2 slot, citing Pizzella's record on labor rights.

Acosta was the U.S. attorney in Miami when he oversaw a 2008 non-prosecution agreement that allowed Epstein to avoid federal trial but plead guilty to state charges and serve 13 months in jail. Similar charges filed against Epstein by federal prosecutors in New York this week had put Acosta's handling of the 2008 agreement with the now-jailed financier back in the spotlight.

Years ago, Epstein had counted Trump and former President Bill Clinton among his friends, but Trump said this week he was "not a fan."

Acosta said he didn't want his involvement in Epstein's case to overshadow the president's agenda and said his resignation would be effective next week.

"My point here today is we have an amazing economy, and the focus needs to be on the economy," he said.

Top Democratic lawmakers and presidential candidates had demanded that Acosta resign. But Acosta had defended his actions, insisting at a news conference Wednesday that he got the toughest deal on Epstein that he could at the time.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., said he should never have been appointed by Trump and confirmed by the Senate. "Thank God he's gone," she said.

Acosta had also frustrated some conservatives who wanted him gone long before the Epstein uproar. Among their objections were his decisions to proceed with several employment discrimination lawsuits and to allow certain Obama administration holdovers to keep their jobs.

His resignation extends record turnover at the highest levels of Trump's administration, with acting secretaries at key departments, including the Pentagon and Homeland Security. Roughly two-thirds of the Cabinet has turned over by the two-and-a-half year mark of Trump's term.

Only the departments of Treasury, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, Education, Energy, Commerce and Agriculture continue with the leaders that were first confirmed.

The high rate of turnover also extends to the White House, where 76% of those given the title of "assistant to the president" in Trump's first year had left by the beginning of July 2019, according to Martha Joynt Kumar, director of the White House Transition Project. The percentages were substantially lower under Obama (61, Bush (50%) and Clinton (42%), according to Kumar's research.

Epstein, 66, reached the plea deal in Florida in 2008 to secretly end a federal sex abuse investigation involving at least 40 teenage girls that could have landed him behind bars for life. He instead pleaded guilty to Florida state charges, spent 13 months in jail, paid settlements to victims and registered as a sex offender.

A federal judge has said Acosta violated federal law by keeping Epstein's victims in the dark about the plea arrangement, and the Justice Department has been investigating. The deal came under scrutiny earlier this year after reporting by The Miami Herald.

Trump had defended Acosta earlier this week while saying he'd look "very closely" at his handling of the 2008 agreement.

Acosta had attempted to clear his name and held a news conference — encouraged by Trump — to

defend his actions. In a 50-plus-minute lawyerly rebuttal, he argued his office had secured the best deal it could and had worked in the best interests of Epstein's victims.

"We did what we did because we wanted to see Epstein go to jail," he said.

Pressed on whether he had any regrets, Acosta repeatedly said circumstances had changed since then.

"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."

After federal attorneys in New York announced the new charges against Epstein this week, Acosta tweeted that he was pleased by their decision.

"The crimes committed by Epstein are horrific," Acosta tweeted. "Now that new evidence and additional testimony is available, the NY prosecution offers an important opportunity to more fully bring him to justice."

Acosta took office as the nation's 27th labor secretary in early 2017, leading a sprawling agency that enforces more than 180 federal laws covering about 10 million employers and 125 million workers. The department also plays a role in combatting human trafficking.

Before he was named a U.S. attorney, Acosta was an assistant attorney general for the civil rights division in President George W. Bush's first term. Before joining the Trump administration, he was dean of the Florida International University law school.

AP Legal Affairs Writer Curt Anderson in Miami, AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro and Associated Press writer Jill Colvin in Washington contributed to this report.

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As Barry approaches, New Orleans residents debate evacuation

By REBECCA SANTANA, KEVIN MCGILL and JANET McCONNAUGHEY Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Go or stay?

It is a question people in and around New Orleans ask themselves every time a threatening storm lurks in the Gulf: a major hurricane like Katrina, which devastated the area in 2005 when levees failed, and now Tropical Storm Barry, which forecasters said was unlikely to become a ferocious hurricane but could still bring historic levels of rain and devastating floods.

The dilemma is one that confronts people anywhere, but New Orleans has a unique set of circumstances: It's particularly susceptible to hurricanes and flooding and, as underscored by Katrina 14 years ago, many of its people are poor. They don't have the financial means or transportation to leave, and after a storm, they lack the resources to rebuild and recover.

Many remember the heartaches and hardships that befell victims of Katrina — whether they fled or rode it out: the deplorable conditions of the overcrowded Superdome that served as an inadequate shelter; and the harrowing experience of residents who clung to their rooftops as floodwaters swirled around them, sweeping many to their deaths.

Maria Thomas, a self-described housewife and soprano with the Symphony Chorus of New Orleans who lives in the suburb of Metairie with her wife, a local chef, is among those who recall the trauma that accompanied the decision to evacuate during Katrina.

Back in 2005, the couple fled to the house of Thomas' now-mother-in-law north of Lake Pontchartrain, only to have a tree fall into it. But staying wouldn't have been any better: They discovered later that their second-floor apartment was heavily damaged when the apartment above collapsed on top of it.

"Prior to Katrina, storms were fun," says Thomas. "You got to play with flashlights and eat cold soup. It was an adventure. Not long into my adulthood, Katrina happened. It was like everything changed as soon as I became an adult."

Thomas said she will evacuate again this time, but only because she has to: She has multiple sclerosis and can't risk being without air conditioning in the event of a prolonged power outage.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 42 of 48

Herman Grady, 72, also evacuated during Katrina. This time, though, he isn't going anywhere.

"I'm tired of running," Grady said.

The city has not called for a mandatory evacuation as happened during Katrina. Mayor LaToya Cantrell has said the storm formed too quickly to prepare for one and won't reach the dangerous Category 3 strength that would trigger an evacuation. But she added that people are free to leave.

"They know their situation better than anyone else," she said.

Nadia Jenkins said she has stocked up on supplies she'll need if she stays and gassed up the car in case she decides to go.

"The river should be taken seriously," she said, adding that she was taking time "to educate myself about the levee system and figuring out the game plan ... if I have to leave."

The reality for many people here is that the choice of staying or going is not really theirs to make. New Orleans was a poor city before Katrina — and still is — and some residents simply can't afford to leave. Many don't have cars. Others have vehicles but are hard-pressed to come up with the money needed to make a long trip or pay for a hotel. Such residents also work in low-paying tourism and service industry jobs that require them to stay in town. With numerous hotels and restaurants still open Friday, many were working right up until the storm's arrival.

"I really don't have any other options," Paul Hughes, a cook at Polly's Bywater Cafe, said of his decision to ride out the storm. He came to New Orleans from Massachusetts five years ago. A motorcycle is his chief mode of transportation.

"My only option would be to get on the bike and go until I get into a cheap motel," Hughes said. "And then I'd have to come back again."

This story has been edited to correct the spelling of Metairie.

Associated Press reporter Sarah Blake Morgan contributed to this report.

11 years after epic, Federer tops Nadal in Wimbledon semis

By **HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer**

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) — After waiting 11 years to get another shot against Rafael Nadal at Wimbledon, Roger Federer was so, so close to the finish line.

One match point slipped away when Federer missed a forehand return. A second came and went on a backhand return. Later, serving for a spot in a record 12th final at the All England Club, Federer shanked a leaping overhead off the top edge of his racket frame, giving Nadal a break point. After Nadal wasted that chance, Federer earned two more match points — and failed to convert those, either, as his wife, Mirka, peeked through the fingers covering her face.

Federer knew it wouldn't be easy against his great rival. Never is, really, no matter where they play. Eventually, Nadal pushed a backhand long on match point No. 5, bringing an anticlimactic close to the otherwise classic contest and allowing Federer to win their semifinal 7-6 (3), 1-6, 6-3, 6-4 on Friday.

"I'm exhausted. It was tough at the end," Federer said. "I'm just very relieved it's all over."

Federer closed in on a ninth championship at the All England Club and 21st Grand Slam trophy in all. To get to those numbers in Sunday's final, Federer must get past Novak Djokovic, who is the defending champion and seeded No. 1.

"We all know how good he is anywhere," Djokovic said about Federer, "but especially here."

Djokovic isn't too shabby himself. He reached his sixth final at the grass-court major by beating 23rd-seeded Roberto Bautista Agut 6-2, 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 earlier Friday. Djokovic is eyeing a fifth championship at Wimbledon and 16th major title.

As entertaining as that first semifinal was — including a 45-stroke point won by Djokovic — it was merely a tasty appetizer ahead of the day's delectable main course.

Not only was this the 40th installment of Federer vs. Nadal, but it also was their first meeting at Wimble-

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 43 of 48

don since the 2008 final. In a match many consider the best in the sport's lengthy annals, Nadal edged Federer 9-7 in a fifth set that ended after 9 p.m., as any trace of daylight disappeared.

How excited, then, were the spectators for the rematch? When Federer and Nadal strode out into the sunshine at 4:30 p.m. Friday, they were welcomed by a standing ovation before ever swinging a racket.

Quickly, that greeting was justified. These are, of course, two of the greats of all-time — maybe the two greatest — and they lived up to that status for stretches.

One key, for Federer, was that his rebuilt backhand, hit strong and flat more frequently than it used to be, held steady against Nadal's bullwhip of a lefty forehand. Another was that Federer was able to withstand Nadal's serve, which has improved a ton over the years. Federer amassed 10 break points, and though he succeeded on just two, that was enough, with the last, vital conversion making it 2-1 in the fourth set. And then there was this: Federer won 25 of the 33 points when he went to the net.

"I didn't play well enough," said Nadal, who lost a five-set semifinal to Djokovic a year ago at Wimbledon.

There was something of an "Anything you can do, I can do, too" vibe to Friday's proceedings. Federer would kick up chalk with an ace to a corner, and Nadal would do the same in the next game. When Nadal jumped out to a 3-2 lead in the first-set tiebreaker, Federer used sublime returning to reel off five points in a row to claim it.

Who else but Federer could strike a serve so well that Nadal's wild reply would be caught by someone in the Royal Box behind him, as happened early in the second set? Who else but Nadal could attack Federer's generally unassailable forehand in such a manner as to draw one so off the mark that it landed in the third row?

"I thought probably the biggest points in the match went my way. There were some tight ones and long rallies," Federer said. "He plays with such velocity and spins and everything, you're not always sure you're going to connect the right way."

No one ever has managed to reduce Federer to mid-match mediocrity quite the way Nadal can, part of why the Spaniard entered Friday with a 24-15 overall lead head-to-head, including 10-3 at Grand Slam tournaments.

This was the second major in a row where they've faced off: Nadal won their windy French Open semifinal last month en route to his 12th championship on the red clay and 18th Slam overall. But Wimbledon is Federer's dominion: He's won 101 matches at the place — more than any other man at any other Slam, even Nadal at Roland Garros — and all of those trophies.

Djokovic, meanwhile, leads his series with Federer 25-22, including 9-6 in Grand Slam matches.

"I hope I can push him to the brink and hopefully beat him. But it's going to be very difficult, as we know," Federer said. "He's not No. 1 just by chance."

On Friday, Djokovic was as animated as ever. When Bautista Agut's shot hit the net tape, popped in the air and slid over for a winner that tied their semifinal at a set apiece, Djokovic motioned to the roaring fans, sarcastically encouraging folks to get louder. When Djokovic ended that 45-stroke point — the longest on record at Wimbledon, where such stats date to 2005 — with a backhand winner, he cupped his ear while glaring into the stands.

"I had," Djokovic said, "to dig deep."

Even Bautista Agut didn't really expect his visit to the All England Club to last this long: The Spaniard was supposed to meet a half-dozen of his buddies on the island of Ibiza this weekend for his bachelor party. Instead, those pals were sitting in a guest box at Centre Court on Friday.

Eventually, Djokovic took control with his enviable ability to return serves, track down balls and go from defense to offense.

Now he's Federer's problem.

This version of the story corrects that Wimbledon's longest point statistics date to 2005.

More AP tennis coverage: <https://www.apnews.com/apf-Tennis> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

UK counter-terror police probe leak of ambassador's cables

LONDON (AP) — British police opened a criminal investigation on Friday into the leaking of confidential diplomatic memos that cost the U.K. ambassador in Washington his job.

The probe is being led by the Metropolitan Police Counter Terrorism Command because it is responsible for investigating breaches of Britain's Official Secrets Act

The Mail on Sunday published cables from Ambassador Kim Darroch describing the Trump administration as dysfunctional, clumsy and inept. The president hit back by branding the ambassador a "pompous fool," and Darroch resigned, saying it had become impossible for him to do his job.

Counterterrorism police chief Neil Basu said Friday that the leak had damaged U.K. international relations and there was "a clear public interest" in prosecuting the perpetrator or perpetrators.

He urged the culprits: "turn yourself in at the earliest opportunity, explain yourself and face the consequences."

British officials have said they have no evidence hacking was involved in the documents' release, and that the culprit is likely to be found among U.K. politicians or officials.

The Official Secrets Act bars public servants from making "damaging" disclosures of classified material. Breaching the act carries a maximum sentence of two years in prison, though prosecutions are rare.

After earlier calling Darroch a "very stupid guy," Trump said Friday that he wished Britain's soon-to-be-ex envoy well.

"Some people just told me ... he actually said very good things about me," Trump said.

He added that the British have "got to stop their leaking problems there just like they have to stop them in our country."

VW, Ford team up to make autonomous, electric vehicles

By CATHY BUSSEWITZ and TOM KRISHER AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — Volkswagen will invest \$2.6 billion into a Pittsburgh autonomous vehicle company that's mostly owned by Ford as the automakers who were once rivals deepen their partnership to develop driverless and electric vehicles in an ultra-competitive landscape.

The two automakers will become equal owners of Argo AI, and they plan to put autonomous vehicles on the roads in the U.S. and Europe as early as 2021, the companies said Friday.

The deal also includes a plan for Ford to use VW's electric vehicle platform to build zero-emissions cars for the European market starting in 2023.

Auto companies have been teaming up with each other as well as with big technology firms over the past few years to try to spread out the enormous costs of developing self-driving and electric vehicles. Ford CEO Jim Hackett expects the large crowd of players to be narrowed down.

"The stakes are high here," Hackett said at a news conference Friday. "There's only going to be a few winners who create the leading platforms for the future. We cannot be late, Ford can't be late, and we have to be great."

The decision to team up helps Ford and Volkswagen share the steep costs — and risks — of developing technology for driverless vehicles, and gives Argo AI more cash to attract talented engineers, crucial to success. It also will help the automakers pivot from cars that compete on engine performance to those where the unique characteristics of the driver experience will be driven by software.

"The auto industry, in the past we've been criticized for a lack of interest in working together, and what you're seeing with Volkswagen and Ford is a commitment to doing that on a number of projects," said Joe Hinrichs, president of automotive for Ford.

What it comes down to for both the auto and technology companies is time and money. Driverless cars may not become commercially viable or generate revenue for years. There are also enormous up-front costs to change plants to produce electric vehicles.

Among the combinations announced in recent years:

— In May, a group of investors poured \$1.15 billion into GM Cruise LLC, the autonomous vehicle unit of

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 45 of 48

Ford's main competitor, General Motors. Cruise already had attracted investments from Honda and Japan's SoftBank and is valued by the companies at around \$19 billion.

- Ride-hailing company Uber joined with Toyota to build autonomous vehicles last year.
- Chip maker Intel bought Israeli self-driving technology firm Mobileye for about \$15 billion in 2017.
- In April, Ford said it would invest \$500 million in electric vehicle startup Rivian to build a Ford vehicle on Rivian's underpinnings.

Auto and tech industry experts say partnerships like Ford and VW will become more common.

"One company cannot bankroll the development alone," said Akshay Anand, executive analyst for Kelley Blue Book. "Partnerships will continue to ramp up in coming years, crossing boundaries most would not have envisioned even 10 years ago."

With electric vehicles, manufacturers are under pressure to release zero-emission cars in markets such as China and Europe to meet tougher pollution limits. Ford already has its own platform which it will continue to use for the majority of its electric vehicles, but the relationship with Volkswagen will help Ford to develop smaller electric vehicles that are desired in the European market.

Ford hopes to sell 600,000 vehicles in Europe using VW's technology over six years starting in 2023. VW, the world's largest automaker measured by sales, already has invested \$7 billion in its new platform, which it plans to use to build 15 million electric vehicles worldwide in the next decade.

"Ford has taken flack for years for not having a robust EV strategy and VW has had its own fair share of challenges, but this can help both companies reinvent themselves as innovative technology leaders," said Jessica Caldwell, executive director industry insights for Edmunds.com. Edmunds provides content for The Associated Press.

As for Ford and Volkswagen, Hackett and VW CEO Herbert Diess left the door open to more collaboration between the companies, but they did not say whether there were specific additional partnerships in the works.

The Ford-VW alliance vaults Argo into one of the highest-valued autonomous vehicle development companies in the world.

The VW investment includes \$1 billion in cash and the \$1.6 billion value of VW's 200-person autonomous intelligent driving company. Ford already has committed to putting \$1 billion into Argo, which the companies now value at \$7 billion.

The two companies announced plans in January to collaborate on developing commercial vans and medium-sized pickup trucks while exploring electric and autonomous vehicles together. They said Ford would develop larger vans and pickups while Volkswagen would develop a smaller van for crowded cities.

Shares of Ford rose 2.6 percent in afternoon trading Friday.

Krisner reported from Detroit.

House Democrats lead push to restrict Trump on Iran strikes

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Democratic-controlled House voted Friday to put a liberalized stamp on Pentagon policy, including a bipartisan proposal to limit President Donald Trump's authority to make war against Iran.

The measure passed along party lines after a series of votes that pushed it further to the left. Among them was a 251-170 tally to require Trump get authorization from Congress to conduct military strikes against Iran, along with a repeal of a 2002 law authorizing the war in Iraq.

More than two dozen Republicans joined with Democrats on the Iran vote. Trump last month came within minutes of launching a missile strike against Iran in retaliation for Iran's downing of a U.S. drone.

The broader measure passed by a 220-197 vote after several other provisions were tacked on by the Democratic Party's progressive wing, which had been upset by leadership's handling of a border bill last month.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 46 of 48

"On the floor, the bill has taken a radical left turn," said Texas Rep. Mac Thornberry, the top Republican on the House Armed Services Committee. "There's good and bad in this bill ... but it's moving in a direction that does make America less safe."

The Trump administration has promised to veto the House measure. The Senate passed its own bill last month. Lawmakers will try to reconcile the competing versions in what could be lengthy negotiations given the differences.

The House measure, which cuts Trump's request for the military by \$17 billion, is still too rich for some progressives. They also balk at its continued funding of overseas military operations.

But the measure includes Democratic priorities such as a ban on transferring new detainees to the Guantanamo Bay prison and a denial of Trump's request for \$88 million to build a new prison at the base. It removes a ban against transferring detainees from Guantanamo Bay to the United States that was enacted when Democrats controlled Congress in the early years of the Obama administration.

Republicans are less critical about the measure's overall cost than with its contents, especially in military readiness accounts.

It would ban the deployment of a new submarine-launched low-yield nuclear missile and block the administration from shifting military money to a U.S.-Mexico border wall.

"It's a bill that I think Democrats should be happy with," said the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Rep. Adam Smith, D-Wash. "It's not everything they want but we need to pass it to say, 'This is our position,' to move the ball in the direction we want."

Other provisions are broadly popular, including a 3.1% pay raise for military service members and authorization to procure new weapons systems, and expanded health and child benefits for military families. Another provision would deliver 12 weeks of paid family leave to all federal workers.

China imports from US plunge 31% in June amid tariff war

By **JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer**

BEIJING (AP) — China's trade with the United States plunged last month as a tariff war battered exporters on both sides of the Pacific Ocean.

And there's no letup in sight: Tensions between the world's two biggest economies continue to simmer even though President Donald Trump and his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, called a ceasefire two weeks ago.

Data out Friday showed that the hostilities are taking a toll.

Chinese imports of U.S. goods fell 31.4% from a year earlier to \$9.4 billion, while exports to the American market declined 7.8% to \$39.3 billion, according to Chinese customs data. China's trade surplus with the United States widened by 3% to \$29.9 billion.

The two countries are fighting over U.S. allegations that China deploys predatory tactics — including stealing trade secrets and forcing foreign firms to hand over technology — in a headlong drive to challenge American technological dominance.

The U.S. has imposed tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese imports, drawing retaliatory sanctions from Beijing on \$110 billion in U.S. products. China also directed importers to find non-U.S. suppliers.

The dispute won't be easy to solve. Mistrust between Washington and Beijing runs high. And a substantive solution likely would require China to scale back its ambitions to become a world leader in advanced technologies such as artificial intelligence and electric cars.

Envoys talked by phone Tuesday in their first contact since Trump and Xi met last month in Japan, the Chinese Commerce Ministry said. It gave no details or a date for more contacts.

"Our base case remains that trade talks will break down again before long," said Julian Evans-Pritchard of Capital Economics in a report.

Trade weakness has added to pressure on Xi's government to shore up economic growth and avoid politically dangerous job losses.

The Trump-Xi truce calmed jittery financial markets. But the cease-fire is under strain: Each side has

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 47 of 48

complained the other isn't living up to commitments made when the leaders met June 29 at the Group of 20 summit in Osaka, Japan.

The chairman of Huawei said Friday that his company has yet to see any benefit from Trump's promise to ease restrictions on sales of components to the Chinese tech giant, which was put on a U.S. national security blacklist in May.

"So far we haven't seen any tangible change," chairman Liang Hua told a news conference.

Liang's complaint came a day after Trump accused Beijing of "letting us down" by not promptly buying more U.S. farm products.

"They have not been buying the agricultural products from our great Farmers that they said they would," the president said on Twitter. "Hopefully, they will start soon."

Trump's statement "highlighted how more speed bumps may remain in the road ahead," said Craig Orlam of OANDA in a report. "While a deal makes sense for both sides this year, it's far from guaranteed and could hit many more snags."

AP Economics Writer Paul Wiseman in Washington contributed to this story.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, July 13, the 194th day of 2019. There are 171 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 13, 1985, "Live Aid," an international rock concert in London, Philadelphia, Moscow and Sydney, took place to raise money for Africa's starving people.

On this date:

In 1863, deadly rioting against the Civil War military draft erupted in New York City. (The insurrection was put down three days later.)

In 1960, John F. Kennedy won the Democratic presidential nomination on the first ballot at his party's convention in Los Angeles, outdrawing rivals including Lyndon B. Johnson, Stuart Symington and Adlai Stevenson.

In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson nominated Thurgood Marshall to be U.S. Solicitor General; Marshall became the first black jurist appointed to the post. (Two years later, Johnson nominated Marshall to the U.S. Supreme Court.)

In 1972, George McGovern received the Democratic presidential nomination at the party's convention in Miami Beach.

In 1973, former presidential aide Alexander P. Butterfield revealed to Senate Watergate Committee staff members the existence of President Richard Nixon's secret White House taping system. (Butterfield's public revelation came three days later.)

In 1977, a blackout hit New York City in the mid-evening as lightning strikes on electrical equipment caused power to fail; widespread looting broke out. (The electricity was restored about 25 hours later.)

In 1978, Lee Iacocca was fired as president of Ford Motor Co. by chairman Henry Ford II.

In 1990, the romantic fantasy "Ghost," starring Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore, was released by Paramount Pictures.

In 1999, Angel Maturino Resendiz (ahn-HEHL' mah-tyoo-REE'-noh reh-SEHN'-deez), suspected of being the "Railroad Killer," surrendered in El Paso, Texas. (Resendiz was executed in 2006.)

In 2005, A suicide car bomb exploded next to U.S. troops handing out candy and toys in Iraq, killing more than two dozen people, including 18 children and teenagers and an American soldier.

In 2006, Israel imposed a naval blockade against Lebanon and blasted the Beirut airport and army air bases; Hezbollah fired dozens of rockets into Israel.

In 2013, a jury in Sanford, Florida, cleared neighborhood watch volunteer George Zimmerman of all

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 13, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 013 ~ 48 of 48

charges in the shooting of Trayvon Martin, the unarmed black teenager whose killing unleashed furious debate over racial profiling, self-defense and equal justice. Actor Cory Monteith, who'd shot to fame in the hit TV series "Glee" but was beset by addiction struggles, was found dead in a hotel room in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; he was 31.

Ten years ago: Sonia Sotomayor, the first Hispanic Supreme Court nominee in history, vowed loyalty to "the impartiality of our justice system" at the start of her Senate confirmation hearing. President Barack Obama, back from his overseas trip, stepped forcefully back into the health care debate as he presented his nominee for surgeon general, Dr. Regina Benjamin.

Five years ago: Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Matthews Burwell met privately with dozens of governors as the Obama administration tried to get support from states that would host thousands of Central American children who had crossed the Mexican border on their own. Germany scored a 1-0 victory over Argentina to win the World Cup final. Death claimed conductor Lorin Maazel, 84; Nobel Prize-winning author Nadine Gordimer, 90; author Thomas Berger, 89.

One year ago: A grand jury indictment, sought by special counsel Robert Mueller, alleged that the Russian government was behind a sweeping conspiracy to interfere in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The grand jury indicted 12 Russian military intelligence officers on charges that they had hacked Hillary Clinton's campaign and the Democratic Party, releasing tens of thousands of stolen and politically damaging communications. President Donald Trump wrapped up a turbulent 30-hour visit to England, dropping by Windsor Castle for tea with the queen and lavishing praise on Prime Minister Theresa May after earlier questioning May's leadership in an interview. Thousands crammed the streets of London to vent their anger over Trump's first official visit to Britain. A suicide bomber killed 149 people at an election rally in Pakistan; hours later, disgraced former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was arrested on corruption charges upon his return from London.

Today's Birthdays: Game show announcer Johnny Gilbert (TV: "Jeopardy!") is 95. Actor Patrick Stewart is 79. Actor Robert Forster is 78. Actor Harrison Ford is 77. Singer-guitarist Roger McGuinn (The Byrds) is 77. Actor-comedian Cheech Marin is 73. Actress Daphne Maxwell Reid is 71. Actress Didi Conn is 68. Actor Gil Birmingham is 66. Singer Louise Mandrell is 65. Rock musician Mark "The Animal" Mendoza (Twisted Sister) is 63. Actor-director Cameron Crowe is 62. Former tennis player Anders Jarryd is 58. Rock musician Gonzalo Martinez De La Coteria is 57. Comedian Tom Kenny is 57. Country singer-songwriter Victoria Shaw is 57. Bluegrass singer Rhonda Vincent is 57. Actor Kenny Johnson is 56. Roots singer/songwriter Paul Thorn is 55. Country singer Neil Thrasher is 54. Actor Ken Jeong is 50. Bluegrass musician Mike Barber (The Gibson Brothers) is 49. Singer Deborah Cox is 46. Actress Ashley Scott is 42. Rock musician Will Champion (Coldplay) is 41. Actor Fran Kranz is 38. Actress Aya Cash is 37. St. Louis Cardinals catcher Yadier Molina is 37. Actor Colton Haynes is 31. Actor Steven R. McQueen is 31. Soul singer Leon Bridges is 30. Actress Hayley Erin ("General Hospital") is 25. Actor Kyle Harrison Breitkopf (BRYT'-kahpf) is 14.

Thought for Today: "Back of every mistaken venture and defeat is the laughter of wisdom, if you listen."
— Carl Sandburg, American writer (1878-1967).

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