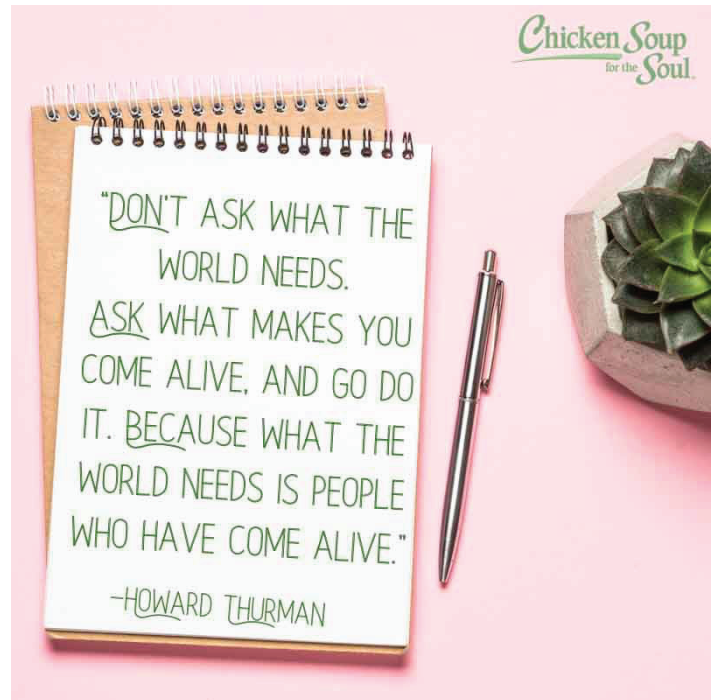


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CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

Swimming Pool Hours

Open Swim Daily: 1 p.m. to 4:50 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Fun Night is every Friday from 6:30 p.m. to 8:50 p.m.

Adult Water Aerobics: Monday through Thursday: 8 a.m. to 8:45 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 pm

Adult Lap Swim: Monday through Friday: 7 a.m. to 8 a.m.; Monday through Thursday: 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m.; Friday-Sunday: 4:50 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

July 19-21

State Junior Teener Tournament in Elkton

Friday, July 19

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

Sunday, July 21

1:00 p.m.: Groton 2 Amateurs host Redfield

4:00 p.m.: Locke Electric Amateurs at Northville

Monday, July 22

5:00 p.m.: Junior Legion at Aberdeen, (DH)

Tuesday, July 23

6:00 p.m.: Locke Electric Amateurs host Aberdeen

July 30 - Aug. 2

Amateur Districts in Groton

Thursday, Aug. 1

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

August 5-18

State "B" Amateur Tournament at Mitchell

August 9-11

State Junior Legion Tourney in Groton

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West Nile Virus Disease Cases by State 2019

West Nile Virus Disease Cases* and Presumptive Viremic Blood Donors by State – United States, 2019 (as of July 9, 2019)

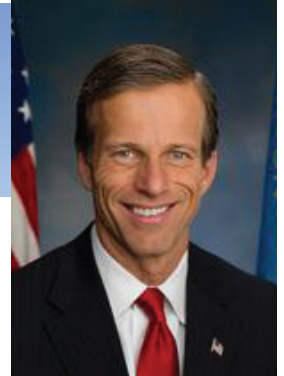
State	Neuroinvasive Disease Cases†	Non-neuroinvasive Disease Cases	Total cases	Deaths	Presumptive viremic blood donors‡
Arizona	19	9	28	0	10
Arkansas	1	0	1	1	0
Colorado	0	1	1	0	0
Idaho	0	1	1	0	0
Nevada	1	0	1	0	0
New Jersey	1	0	1	0	0
Oklahoma	1	2	3	0	0
South Dakota	0	1	1	0	0
Virginia	0	1	1	0	0
Wyoming	1	0	1	0	0
Totals	24	15	39	1	10

*Includes confirmed and probable cases.

†Includes cases reported as meningitis, encephalitis, or acute flaccid paralysis.

‡Presumptive viremic blood donors (PVDs) are people who had no symptoms at the time of donating blood through a blood collection agency, but whose blood tested positive when screened for the presence of West Nile virus. Some PVDs develop symptoms after donation.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



A Giant Leap Into the 21st Century

There are few moments, if any, that have been able to capture the world's collective attention quite like the moon landing did a half-century ago. I was eight years old in July 1969, but I still remember seeing Neil Armstrong's "one giant leap for mankind" with the rest of the world on live TV. I was at my grandma's house with my mom and dad and younger brother (my family didn't own a TV at the time). We all sat in front of her black and white tube to witness this monumental human feat – the result of uniquely American leadership, ingenuity, courage, and curiosity.

President John F. Kennedy captured that sense of purpose nearly a decade before the Apollo 11 mission ever took flight. "In a very real sense, it will not be one man going to the moon – if we make this judgment affirmatively, it will be an entire nation. For all of us must work to put him there," said President Kennedy in his famous "moon shot" address to Congress in 1961. He also noted that "no one can predict with certainty what the ultimate meaning will be of mastery of space," which was as much of a challenge to the American people in the 1960s as it is today.

For kids in 2019, the idea of space travel or having a person land on the moon isn't as mind-bending as it was 50 years ago. Before the Apollo 11 mission, the idea of having a person walk on a lunar surface would have been relegated to the movies or the science-fiction section at the book store. Today, not only has American technology made it to the moon, but it has traveled tens of millions of miles to the surface of Mars. Those journeys were impressive milestones, but American ambition is as expansive as the universe itself, so in many respects, our nation's space exploration days have just begun.

To continue successfully exploring unknown frontiers, both in space and here on earth, the federal government and American entrepreneurs must share a responsibility in committing to pursuing this cause. In Congress, I serve on the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, which has jurisdiction over everything from planes, trains, and automobiles to the depths of the ocean and the far reaches of outer space. In fact, the committee just held a hearing with the administrator of NASA to examine the agency's plan for deep space exploration.

Technology obviously plays a big role in all aspects of our lives, but to put its advancement in perspective, the cell phone that's in your pocket today has more computing power than did the Apollo 11 Command Module that landed on the moon. That's a remarkable thing to consider on its own, but then to think about the fact that we were able to send a rocket into space, land on the moon, and bring three humans home safely (with 1969 technology) – how cool is that?

I've had the opportunity to spend time with one of those men, Buzz Aldrin, in Washington and in South Dakota. In fact, I was honored to host him at an event at the South Dakota School of Mines and Technology in 2015. It's always amazing to hear him discuss everything he's accomplished and everything he sees on the horizon, helping to inspire the next generation of wishers, inventors, and explorers.

Consider, again, for a moment all of the technological advancements our country has made since Armstrong's "one small step" – in communication, in transportation, and in entertainment. Given that remarkable progress (in a relatively short amount of time, too), just think of where we can be 50 years from now. To those young Americans who will help get us there, I hope you see inspiration when you look at the moon and always think of it as America's first "giant leap" – not its last.

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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



Geist Bridal Shower

Please join us for a
bridal shower honoring
Andee Geist,
Bride-to-be of Kody Conlon
Saturday, July 27th, at 1 pm
Aberdeen Senior Citizens Center
1303 7th Ave SE
Aberdeen, SD

The couple is registered at Target, on Amazon.com, and Lori's Pharmacy

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.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

GROTON C & MA CHURCH

706 N. MAIN

JULY 21 – JULY 25

FOR AGES 3 THROUGH GRADE 6

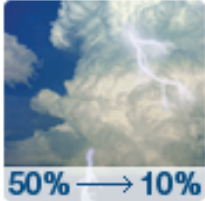
6:15 – 8:30 PM

QUESTIONS? CALL JANA 397-7471

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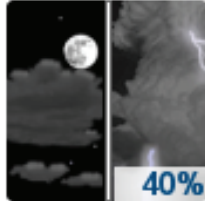
Today



Chance
T-storms then
Slight Chance
T-storms

High: 86 °F

Tonight



Partly Cloudy
then Chance
T-storms

Low: 62 °F

Saturday



Chance
T-storms

High: 81 °F

Saturday
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 58 °F

Sunday

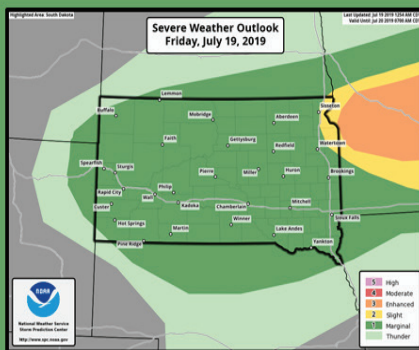
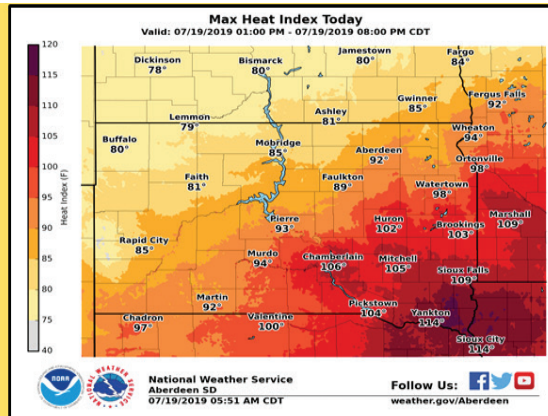


Sunny

High: 78 °F

Hot & Humid Today...

Heat Index 100+
south of a Pierre to
Ortonville line



Today's Severe Weather Outlook

...Storms Return

Stormy this morning,
then again late
afternoon and overnight

ISSUED: 6:39 AM - Friday, July 19, 2019

Published on: 07/19/2019 at 2:45AM

Stormy conditions are expected across northern South Dakota this morning as a cluster of showers and storms move east across the region. Additional thunderstorms are expected later this afternoon and evening across northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Some of these storms will be strong to severe with large hail and strong winds. An isolated tornado cannot be ruled out either, mainly east of I-29 into western Minnesota. The Enhanced Risk for severe storms is more into Minnesota today. Heat and humidity will also be the story today, with heat index values of 100 degrees or higher across the southeast quarter of the state.

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Today in Weather History

July 19, 1933: An F2 tornado moved ESE from west of Tulare to 3 miles ENE of Hitchcock. About ten farms had damage, and several barns were destroyed.

July 19, 2010: Severe storms produced a wide swath of hail and high winds from northern Butte County, through southern Meade, eastern Pennington, Jackson, and Bennett Counties. Millions of dollars in crop damage was reported, along with some damage to homes and automobiles.

1886: The 1886 Atlanta Hurricane season was a very active year with ten hurricanes, seven of which struck the United States. During the evening hours of July 18th, a category 1 storm made landfall near Homosassa Springs, Florida. Damage was slight as the area was thinly inhabited. The hurricane weakened to tropical storm status south of Gainesville and emerged on the eastern side of Florida, south of Jacksonville during the morning hours of the 19th. This was the fourth hurricane to make landfall in the United States.

1960 - Cow Creek and Greenland Ranch in Death Valley, CA, reported morning lows of 102 degrees. The afternoon high at Greenland Ranch was 124 degrees, and the high at Cow Creek that afternoon was 126 degrees. The coolest low for the entire month for both locations was 82 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1974 - A severe thunderstorm with winds to 80 mph and up to two inches of rain washed out four to five foot deep sections of roadway in Lake Havasu City, AZ. Three persons in a station wagon died as it was carried 3000 feet down a wash by a ten foot wall of water. (The Weather Channel)

1977 - Thunderstorms produced torrential rains over parts of southwestern Pennsylvania. Some places receive more than twelve inches in a seven hour period. The heavy rains cause flash flooding along streams resulting in widespread severe damage. The cloudburst floods Johnstown with up to ten feet of water resulting in 76 deaths, countless injuries, and 424 million dollars damage. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Fifteen cities in the western and the southeastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Winnemucca, NV, with a reading of 33 degrees. Flagstaff AZ reported a record low of 34 degrees. Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in New York State and New Jersey. High winds and hail two inches in diameter injured two persons and caused considerable damage to crops in the Pine Island area of central New York State. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms in Nebraska produced more than five inches of rain at Red Cloud, including two inches in fifteen minutes. Torrid temperatures continued over California, with record highs of 115 degrees at Red Bluff and 116 degrees at Redding. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Early morning thunderstorms in the Lower Mississippi Valley produced 5.50 inches of rain south of Alexander, AR, in just ninety minutes, and flash flooding which resulted claimed the life of one woman. Thunderstorms in Indiana produced 4.95 inches of rain in twelve hours east of Muncie. Eight cities in the southwestern U.S. reported record high temperatures for the date, including Las Vegas, NV, with a reading of 115 degrees, and Phoenix, AZ, with a high of 116 degrees. The low that night at Phoenix of 93 degrees was the warmest of record for that location. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2005 - A severe heat wave gripped the region during early to mid-July. Las Vegas, NV tied their all-time record high temperature of 117 degrees, equalling the old record set on July 24, 1942.

2006: A derecho impacted a sellout crowd of almost 44,000 St. Louis Cardinals fans, packed into the new Busch Stadium. Winds of about 80 mph whirled around the St. Louis area, sending the fans running for shelter. The winds knocked out power and broke windows out of the press box. Nearly two minutes after the winds began at 100 mph, they stopped, and it started to rain. In all, about 30 people were injured at the stadium.

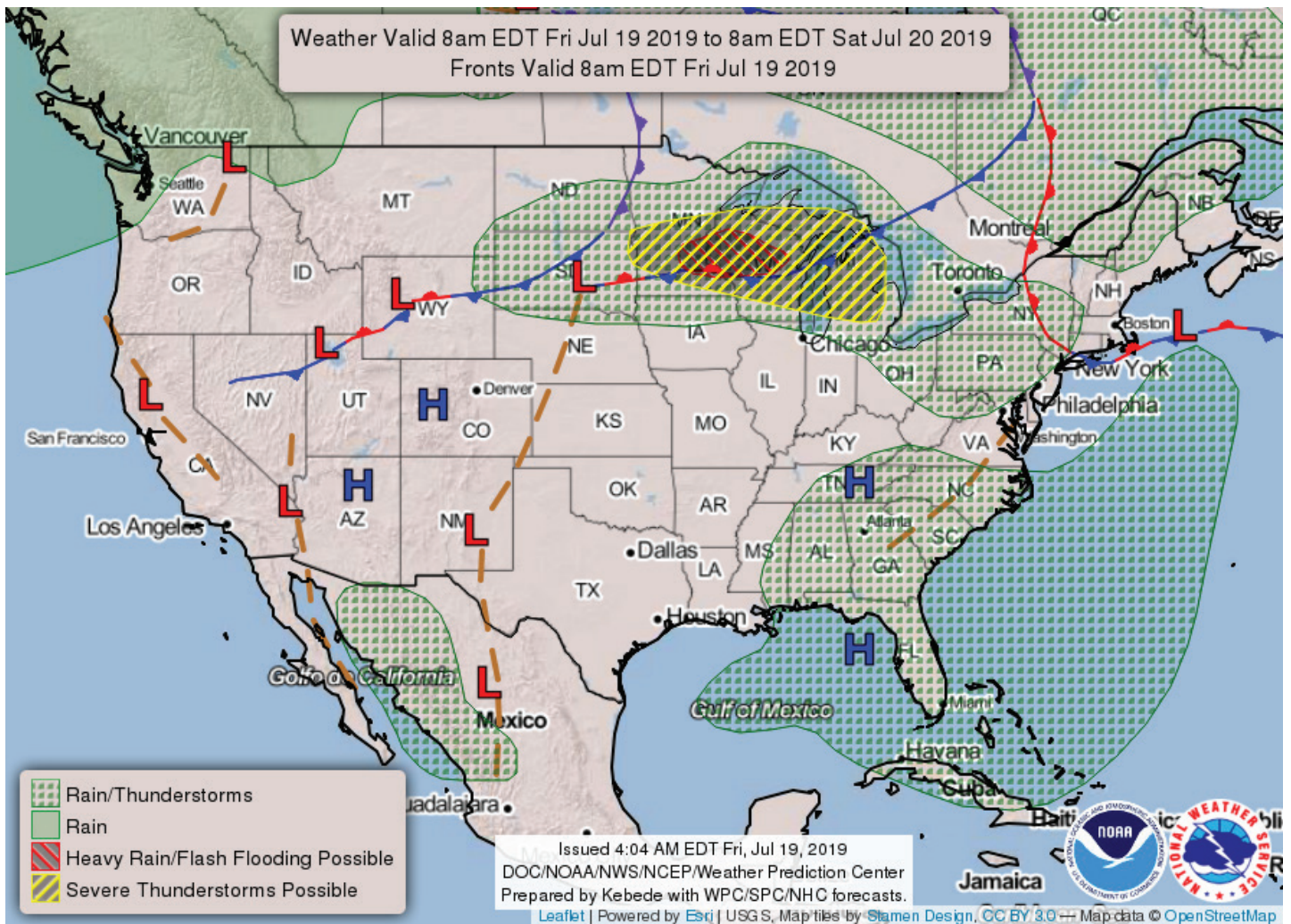
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 91 °F at 5:36 PM
Low Temp: 63 °F at 4:17 AM
Wind: 41 mph at 1:15 AM
Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 106° in 1932
Record Low: 42° in 1900
Average High: 84°F
Average Low: 60°F
Average Precip in July.: 1.87
Precip to date in July.: 2.09
Average Precip to date: 12.71
Precip Year to Date: 14.81
Sunset Tonight: 9:16 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:04 a.m.



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HIDE AND SEEK

Its always a time of joy filled with delightful experiences when our grandchildren come to visit. Their youthful exuberance and innocent behavior fill our home with laughter and many unexpected surprises. One of their favorite games is one most of us enjoyed when we were children: hide and seek. They find nooks and crannies, closets and furniture as obvious places to hide, and then count from one to ten out loud. Then: Ready or not, here I come! is the usual cry before the search begins.

It only takes a few minutes before the one hiding is found by the one seeking. There is no space in our home that remains to be discovered. They know every place there is to hide.

Often we attempt to hide some of our deeds from God, thinking there may be a place where He cannot find us. We break His laws and turn our backs on His teachings and try to rationalize or even generalize our behavior: You know God, everyone does it so its not all that bad. Or, Well, God, the devil made me do it because You didnt stop Him.

Unfortunately, those excuses will not change the facts of Scripture. The human spirit is the lamp of the Lord that sheds light on ones inmost being. This spirit points back to Creation when God breathed the breath of life into man, making him different and distinct from animals.

Obviously, if God created us He certainly must know us, understand us and have access to our most intimate thoughts and desires. We cannot hide anything from our Creator.

When God ignites His lamp and searches our inmost being, its game over. He Himself conducts the investigation and knows exactly where to look. While we may attempt to hide our thoughts and desires from God, He knows exactly where to look! Guard against sinning!

Prayer: Father, we cannot hide our thoughts or actions from Your eye. May we earnestly work to live a life worthy of You, our Savior and Lord. Keep us close to You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 20:27 The human spirit is the lamp of the Lord that sheds light on ones inmost being.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 04/4/2020 Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/2/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS 6/8-10/2020
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show 7/12/2020
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest 10/10/2020

News from the Associated Press

Sanford suspends use of medical devices amid investigation

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sanford Health will suspend the use of some medical devices manufactured by one of its surgeons as a federal investigation into their use is underway.

Sanford's neurosurgeon Wilson Asfora owns a company that sells devices used in spine surgeries. Two Sanford doctors in 2016 filed a lawsuit accusing Asfora of illegally profiting by using those devices in spine surgeries at the hospital in violation of anti-kickback laws. The suit describes accounts of Asfora installing unnecessary medical devices into patients. The Department of Justice has intervened to investigate the case.

Micah Aberson, Sanford's executive vice president, said the suspension beginning Aug. 1 is not related to deficiencies or clinical outcomes. The hospital will stop using the Asfora Bullet Cage and a plate used in neck fusions, replacing them with similar devices.

"The distraction of the economics related to the device is what we want to remove from the conversation," Aberson told the Argus Leader Wednesday.

Aberson noted the suspension will remain in effect until legal issues are resolved.

In the lawsuit, Drs. Bryan Wellman and Dustin Bechtold contend Asfora's surgeries and use of cages and screws spiked because he had a financial incentive to implant devices owned by his company.

"One level was all that was medically necessary for this patient," according to a summary of one patient's fusion. "Dr. Asfora put in three additional cages, which this patient did not need, but which Dr. Asfora personally benefited from financially. Dr. Asfora never saw this patient prior to surgery. Three of these levels were off-label, medically unnecessary, and medically tainted by kickbacks."

The 111-page suit also said Sanford and Asfora billed Medicare and other federal programs for care that was never provided.

"The government has been intermittently interviewing various members of our team over the last couple of years," Aberson said.

Aberson maintained that the allegations against Asfora have no merit.

"We as an organization continue to stand by Dr. Wilson Asfora and his treatment of patients and his clinical outcomes," he said.

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

Bankers: Trade war having negative effect on rural economies

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — More bankers surveyed in parts of 10 Plains and Western states say President Donald Trump's trade skirmishes are having a negative effect on their local economies.

The Rural Mainstreet survey released Thursday shows the survey's overall index falling from 53.2 in June to 50.2 this month. Any score above 50 suggests a growing economy, while a score below 50 indicates a shrinking economy.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey, says higher agriculture commodity prices and rebuilding from recent floods helped prop up the region's economy last month. But he added that nearly 9 of 10 bankers surveyed noted the tariffs' negative impact on the economy. That's up from 8 in 10 who said the same thing in September.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

North Dakota sues feds over pipeline protest police costs

By JAMES MacPHERSON Associated Press

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BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — North Dakota sued the federal government Thursday to recover the \$38 million the state spent policing protests against the Dakota Access oil pipeline.

Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem said he filed the claim in Bismarck federal court after the Army Corps of Engineers ignored an administrative claim he filed one year ago.

The agency did not immediately return telephone calls seeking comment Thursday. It has 60 days to respond to the state's 37-page lawsuit.

Thousands of opponents of the \$3.8 billion pipeline that's been moving North Dakota oil to Illinois for two years gathered in southern North Dakota in 2016 and early 2017, camping on federal land and often clashing with police, resulting in 761 arrests over six months.

Stenehjem said the Corps "allowed and sometimes encouraged" protesters to illegally camp without a federal permit. The Corps has said protesters weren't evicted due to free speech reasons.

The Corps' inaction required North Dakota to provide law enforcement to prevent deaths and protect property, including that of the protesters, Stenehjem said.

"When the protesters finally left, they left behind a spoiled environment and a vast quantity of dangerous waste, garbage and debris that had to be cleaned up by the state at considerable cost," Stenehjem told reporters.

Though the pipeline has been moving oil since 2017, four Native American tribes in the Dakotas continue legal efforts to shut it down. It also has spurred individual lawsuits from protesters, including one filed Thursday in federal court by a 24-year-old Navaho tribal member in New Mexico who claims he suffered damage to his eye after being hit with a beanbag round fired by a law enforcement officer in 2017.

Marcus Mitchell's lawsuit against the state Highway Patrol, Morton County and the city of Bismarck seeks unspecified money damages.

The pipeline construction began while Barack Obama was in the White House. President Donald Trump just days after taking office in January 2017 pushed through completion of the stalled project.

The company announced plans last month to double the pipeline's capacity.

Trump last year denied a state-requested disaster declaration to cover the state's costs. The Justice Department later gave the state a \$10 million grant for policing-related bills. Texas-based pipeline developer Energy Transfer Partners gave the state \$15 million to help with the costs that were funded from loans from the state-owned Bank of North Dakota.

Stenehjem said the \$25 million the state has received to offset the costs doesn't get the Corps off the hook for the state's \$38 million total cost.

"We think we have an excellent case based on sound law," Stenehjem said.

Heat wave forecast prompts Chicago public housing checks

By COREY WILLIAMS Associated Press

Public housing officials in Chicago were planning wellbeing checks on residents as the heat and humidity are expected to mount to dangerous levels as part of a wave of sweltering weather covering a substantial portion of the U.S.

Routine checks also will be done to make sure the temperature in housing units are at safe levels. Window air conditioners are available for emergency situations, Chicago's Housing Authority said Thursday.

Excessive heat warnings were posted Thursday by the National Weather Service from central Nebraska and Missouri into western Ohio and parts of West Virginia. An excessive heat watch was put in place for the Cleveland area, part of New York State and parts of the East Coast.

Temperatures topping 100 degrees (38 Celsius) were expected for the southern and central High Plains.

Detroit was expected to reach 90 degrees Fahrenheit (32.2 degrees Celsius) Thursday, according to the National Weather Service. A high of 91 degrees Fahrenheit (32.7 degrees Celsius) was forecast for Chicago and the Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington D.C. areas. Cleveland was to see 92 degrees Fahrenheit (33.3 degrees Celsius), while a high of 96 degrees Fahrenheit (35.5 degrees Celsius) was expected in Louisville, Kentucky, and St. Louis, Missouri.

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Ambulances in Oklahoma's two largest metropolitan areas of Oklahoma City and Tulsa have responded to more than 40 heat-related calls since Tuesday, most in the late afternoon as the temperature peaks.

"We've had people who have been walking," said Emergency Medical Services Authority spokesman Adam Paluka in Tulsa. "We've had people who have been gardening. It doesn't matter how much you're doing or how little you're doing, the heat can still affect you."

At Cook County Health in Chicago, staff has been placed on-call and operational meetings are being held with emergency room leaders, said Dr. Trevor Lewis, interim chair of the health system's Emergency Medicine department.

"We have a lot of festivals in the city over the weekend. We make appropriate plans for that," said Lewis, adding that informing people how to take precautions during extreme heat is the best precaution.

Some intravenous fluids that normally are kept at room temperature at Detroit's Receiving Hospital are being cooled down and fans are being taken out of storage to be more readily available, said Rob Klever, emergency department medical director.

Heat exhaustion and heat stroke are the primary health issues emergency rooms could see Thursday through Saturday. Both can occur after temperatures hit 80 degrees or the humidity rises above 75 percent, according to Eskenazi Health in Indianapolis.

Heat stroke can lead to permanent brain damage and death if not treated promptly, said Dr. Tyler Stepsis, medical director of the Michael & Susan Smith Emergency Department at Eskenazi Health.

"Spending too much time in high temperatures and elevated humidity conditions, along with dehydration, may create an extremely dangerous situation where the core body temperature exceeds 104 degrees Fahrenheit (40 degrees Celsius)," Stepsis said.

The coming heat already has caused a free Saturday evening concert at a public park in Toledo to be rescheduled and the Thursday night cancellation of a musical, "How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying," at a park amphitheater in Normal, Illinois.

A half-marathon, 10K and 5K running event is expected to be held Saturday at Hoffman Estates, northwest of Chicago.

"Our race does start early in the day because July is hot," said Peter Starykowicz, president of All Community Events. "The weather is 85, 90, 95 degrees. It's all hot. Half of our runners are done by 8:30 a.m. CT."

Ice will be available at course water stations and water misting tents will be put up. Hoffman Estates fire personnel and ambulances will be on-hand and medical personnel will be stationed at the finish line, Starykowicz added.

"The accomplishment is running a race in hot weather ... not going a million miles an hour," he said. "At the end of the day we gotta make sure what we're doing is safe."

Associated Press writer Corey Williams reported from Detroit. Associated Press writer Ken Miller contributed from Oklahoma City.

Charges pending in dog's death in hot vehicle

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Police say charges are pending against the owner of a dog that died in a hot vehicle in eastern South Dakota.

Brookings police say charges of animal neglect or mistreatment could be filed against the person who left the dog in the car Sunday afternoon when temperatures were in the 80s. Police say the dog was dead by the time officers responded to a call about the animal.

Assistant Chief Derrick Powers tells the Argus Leader it was one of at least four calls to police about animals left in vehicles in the last week.

The Brookings Police Department cautioned pet owners that if it's 70 degrees outside, the temperature inside a vehicle with windows closed can hit 89 degrees in 10 minutes.

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

Iran denies Trump claim that US shot down Iranian drone

By **AMIR VAHDAT, DARLENE SUPERVILLE and ROBERT BURNS** Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran on Friday denied President Donald Trump's statement that a U.S. warship destroyed an Iranian drone near the Persian Gulf after it threatened the ship — an incident that marked a new escalation of tensions between the countries less than a month after Iran downed an American drone in the same waterway and Trump came close to retaliating with a military strike.

The Iranian military said all its drones had returned safely to their bases and denied there was any confrontation with a U.S. vessel the previous day.

"We have not lost any drone in the Strait of Hormuz nor anywhere else," tweeted Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi.

The strait is at the mouth of the Persian Gulf and serves as the passageway for a fifth of all global crude exports; a clash there highlights the risk of war between Iran and the U.S.

Trump on Thursday said the USS Boxer took defensive action after an Iranian drone closed to within 1,000 yards of the warship and ignored multiple calls to stand down.

Trump blamed Iran for a "provocative and hostile" action and said the U.S. responded in self-defense. Iran's foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, told reporters as he arrived for a meeting at the United Nations that "we have no information about losing a drone today."

Iran's Revolutionary Guard said on its website Friday that it would release images from the drone — taken both before and after the U.S. claimed it was downed.

The Guard said the drone had been carrying out regular surveillance when the USS Boxer arrived, and transmitted photos of the ship. The statement added that Guard forces continue to carefully monitor all movements of foreigners — especially "the terrorist forces" of the U.S. and the British in the strategic Strait of Hormuz and Persian Gulf.

The Guard did not say when the images would be released.

After Trump pulled the U.S. out of the Iran nuclear deal last year and imposed economic sanctions on Tehran, the Iranians have pushed back on the military front, shooting down a U.S. drone on June 20.

Also in the past weeks, the Persian Gulf region has seen six attacks on oil tankers that the U.S. has blamed on Iran, and a tense encounter between the Guard and the British navy. Iran has denied involvement in the attacks or the British naval encounter.

The U.S. has also sent thousands of additional troops and increased its security presence in the region.

Adding to the economic pressure on Tehran, the Treasury Department said Thursday it was imposing sanctions on what it called a network of front companies and agents involved in helping Iran buy sensitive materials for its nuclear program. It said the targeted individuals and entities are based in Iran, China and Belgium.

The Pentagon said Thursday's incident happened at 10 a.m. local time in international waters while the Boxer was transiting the waterway to enter the Persian Gulf. The Boxer is among several U.S. Navy ships in the area, including the USS Abraham Lincoln, an aircraft carrier that has been operating in the nearby North Arabian Sea for weeks.

Neither Trump nor the Pentagon spelled out how the Boxer destroyed the drone. CNN reported that the ship used electronic jamming to bring it down rather than hitting it with a missile.

In Tehran, the semi-official Tasnim news agency quoted military spokesman Gen. Abolfazl Shekari as saying that "all Iranian drones that are in the Persian Gulf and the Strait of Hormuz, including the one which the U.S. president mentioned, have ... returned to their bases."

The Iranians and Americans have had close encounters in the Strait of Hormuz in the past, and it's not unprecedented for Iran to fly a drone near a U.S. warship.

In December, about 30 Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels trailed the USS John C. Stennis aircraft carrier and its strike group through the strait as Associated Press journalists on board watched. One small vessel launched what appeared to be a commercial-grade drone to film the U.S. ships.

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Other transits have seen the Iranians fire rockets away from American warships or test-fire their machine guns. The Guard's small fast boats often cut in front of the massive carriers, running dangerously close to running into them in "swarm attacks." The Guard boats are often armed with bomb-carrying drones and sea-to-sea and surface-to-sea missiles.

Thursday's incident was the latest in a series of events that raised U.S.-Iran tensions since early May when Washington accused Tehran of threatening U.S. forces and interests in Iraq and in the Gulf.

In response, the U.S. accelerated the deployment of the Lincoln and its strike group to the Arabian Sea and deployed four B-52 long-range bombers to the Gulf state of Qatar. It has since deployed additional Patriot air defense missile batteries in the Gulf region.

Shortly after Iran shot down a U.S. Navy drone aircraft in June, Trump ordered a retaliatory military strike but called it off at the last moment, saying the risk of casualties was disproportionate to the downing by Iran, which did not cost any U.S. lives.

Iran claimed the U.S. drone violated its airspace; the Pentagon denied this.

Zarif said Thursday that Iran and the U.S. were only "a few minutes away from a war" after Iran downed the American drone. He spoke to U.S.-based media on the sidelines of his visit to the U.N.

"We live in a very dangerous environment," he said. "The United States has pushed itself and the rest of the world into probably the brink of an abyss."

Zarif blamed Washington for the escalation and accused the Trump administration of "trying to starve our people" and "deplete our treasury" through economic sanctions.

Earlier Thursday, Iran said the Guard seized a foreign oil tanker and its crew of 12 for smuggling fuel out of the country, and hours later released video showing the vessel to be a United Arab Emirates-based ship that had vanished in Iranian waters over the weekend.

The announcement cleared up the fate of the missing ship but raised a host of other questions and heightened worries about the free flow of traffic in one of the world's most critical petroleum shipping routes.

Superville and Burns reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Ian Phillips in New York, Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Deb Riechmann in Washington, and Jennifer Peltz at the United Nations contributed to this report.

Trump disavows 'Send her back!' chant as Omar stands defiant

By ALAN FRAM and DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has chided his supporters who chanted "send her back" when he questioned the loyalty of a Somali-born congresswoman, joining widespread criticism of the campaign crowd's cry after Republicans warned about political blowback from the angry scene.

In a week that has been full of hostile exchanges over race and love of country on both sides, Trump also claimed he had tried to stop the chant at a reelection event Wednesday night in North Carolina — though video shows otherwise. The crowd's "send her back" shouts resounded for 13 seconds as Trump made no attempt to interrupt them. He paused in his speech and surveyed the scene, taking in the uproar.

"I started speaking really quickly," he told reporters Thursday. "I was not happy with it. I disagree with it" and "would certainly try" to stop any similar chant at a future rally.

The taunt's target — Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota — responded defiantly Thursday. She told reporters at the Capitol that she believes the president is a "fascist" and cast the confrontation as a fight over "what this country truly should be."

"We are going to continue to be a nightmare to this president because his policies are a nightmare to us. We are not deterred. We are not frightened," she told a cheering crowd that greeted her like a local hero at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport as she returned from Washington.

The back-and-forth captured the potential impacts of Trump's willingness to inject racist rhetoric into his reelection fight. Trump's allies distanced themselves from the chant, fretting over the voters it might turn off in next year's election and beyond. Democrats, meanwhile, pointed to the episode as a rallying cry to

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energy and mobilize their supporters to vote Trump out of office.

"We are ready," Omar said to cheers, before heading to a town hall on Medicare for All.

Trump started the week's tumult by tweeting Sunday that Omar and three other freshmen congresswomen could "go back" to their native countries if they were unhappy here. His other targets — all Trump detractors — were Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts.

All are American citizens, and all but Omar was born in the U.S. She fled to America as a child with her family from violence-wracked Somalia.

The president did not back down from that criticism on Thursday.

They have "a big obligation and the obligation is to love your country," he said. "There's such hatred. They have such hatred."

The chants at the Trump rally brought scathing criticism from GOP lawmakers as well as from Democrats, though the Republicans did not fault Trump himself.

House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy of California declared that the chant has "no place in our party and no place in this country."

Rep. Adam Kinzinger of Illinois tweeted that it was "ugly, wrong, & would send chills down the spines of our Founding Fathers. This ugliness must end, or we risk our great union."

Citing Trump's rhetoric, House Democrats said they were discussing arranging security for Omar and the three other congresswomen.

Even by Trump's standards, the campaign rally offered an extraordinary tableau for American politics: a president drinking in a crowd's cries to expel a congresswoman from the country who's his critic and a woman of color.

It was also the latest demonstration of how Trump's verbal cannonades are capable of dominating the news. Democrats had hoped the spotlight on Thursday would be on House passage of legislation to boost the minimum wage for the first time in a decade.

To many GOP ears, this time the attention wasn't all positive.

Rep. Mark Walker of North Carolina, a conservative who attended Trump's rally, told reporters at the Capitol that the chant "does not need to be our campaign call like we did 'Lock her up' last time."

That was a reference to a 2016 campaign mantra that Trump continues to encourage aimed at that year's Democratic presidential candidate, Hillary Clinton.

Walker, who called the chant "offensive," was among about 10 House GOP leaders who had breakfast Thursday with Vice President Mike Pence at Pence's residence in Washington. Walker said he cautioned Pence that attention to the chant could distract voters next year from the economy and other themes Republicans want to emphasize.

"We don't need to take it that far where we change the narrative of the story," he said he told Pence.

The lawmakers attending agreed that the chant was inappropriate and could prove a harmful distraction, and Pence concurred and said he'd discuss it with Trump, said another participant who described the conversation on condition of anonymity.

In North Carolina, Trump berated each of the four congresswomen and said: "They never have anything good to say. That's why I say, 'Hey if you don't like it, let 'em leave, let 'em leave.'" He added, "I think in some cases they hate our country."

His criticism of Omar included a false accusation that she has voiced pride in al-Qaida.

Associated Press writers Padmananda Rama, Kathleen Hennessey, Zeke Miller, Deb Riechmann and Matthew Daly contributed to this report.

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10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. IRAN DENIES US DESTROYED ONE OF ITS DRONES NEAR PERSIAN GULF

Tehran refutes Trump's statement that a U.S. warship destroyed one of its drones in the Strait of Hormuz after it threatened the ship.

2. DEMOCRATS DIVIDED ON HOW TO BEAT TRUMP

Many party officials are reluctant to plunge headfirst into a debate about race that could alienate the swing voters they need to retake the White House.

3. POLICE SEARCH JAPANESE ANIMATION STUDIO WHERE FIRE KILLED 33

Authorities are mining for clues into why a man set a Kyoto anime studio on fire, gutting the building and crushing the hearts of many comic fans.

4. SOUTH KOREAN DIES FROM SELF-IMMOLATION NEAR JAPAN'S EMBASSY

The 78-year-old man phoned an acquaintance to say he planned to set himself ablaze to express his antipathy toward Japan.

5. STAGE IS SET FOR NEXT ROUND OF 2020 DEBATES

Joe Biden and Kamala Harris will get a rematch in the second round of Democratic presidential primary debates in Detroit later this month.

6. WHO TRUMP TAPPED FOR OPEN CABINET POST

The president will nominate lawyer Eugene Scalia, the son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, to be his new labor secretary.

7. LEBANESE HAVE DIRE VIEW OF ECONOMY

As the Middle East country's economic crisis deepens, so does public distrust in the political class, widely seen as corrupt and steeped in rivalries.

8. WHAT IS GAINING IN POPULARITY

America's growing fascination with doorbell cameras is being fueled in part by law enforcement which sees them as a tech ally in the fight against crime.

9. FORGET 'MANMADE': BERKELEY BANS GENDER-SPECIFIC WORDS

Leaders in this Northern California city vote unanimously to replace about 40 gender-specific words in the code with gender-neutral terms.

10. WHO'S TRYING TO AVOID AN EARLY EXIT AT BRITISH OPEN

Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy face the daunting task of trying to make the cut on the tricky Royal Portrush links course.

South Korean dies from self-immolation near Japan's embassy

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — A 78-year-old South Korean man died hours after setting himself ablaze near the Japanese Embassy in Seoul on Friday, police said, at a time of worsening tensions between Seoul and Tokyo.

The man, surnamed Kim, ignited a fire inside his car parked in front of the building where the Embassy is located. The man died later Friday while being treated at a Seoul hospital, police said.

Police said Kim had phoned an acquaintance earlier to say he planned to self-immolate to express his antipathy toward Japan.

Kim's family told investigators that his father-in-law had been conscripted as a forced laborer when the Korean Peninsula was under Japan's colonial rule from 1910-45, according to a police statement.

No suicide note was found. Police earlier said flammable materials were found in the car that Kim borrowed from an acquaintance Thursday.

Police said they'll analyze possible evidence from Kim's mobile phone and investigate people concerned to try to determine the exact motive for his action.

The man's self-immolation comes with relations between Seoul and Tokyo at their worst in decades after Japan recently tightened export controls for some high-tech materials.

If his self-immolation is found to be directly related to the Japanese curbs, it would be the first such action in South Korea since anti-Japanese sentiments flared up over the trade restriction. Some activists and residents in South Korea are staging anti-Japan demonstrations and campaigns to boycott Japanese products, but those have been limited so far.

South Korea and Japan are both key U.S. allies. But they often have been embroiled in disputes stemming from the Japanese colonial occupation.

South Korean officials say the Japanese trade controls are retaliation for local court rulings ordering Japanese firms to pay compensation to former Korean forced laborers. Japan denies that, saying the controls are required for national security.

South Koreans have been staging largely peaceful anti-Japan rallies near the Japanese Embassy in Seoul for decades. Occasionally, they have turned violent, with demonstrators cutting their own fingers or scuffling with police officers.

In 2017, a South Korean Buddhist monk died after setting himself ablaze to protest a 2015 agreement with Tokyo meant to settle an impasse over the coercion of Korean women into sex slavery for Japanese soldiers before and during World War II.

Fast-growing web of doorbell cams raises privacy fears

By **AMY FORLITI** and **MATT O'BRIEN** Associated Press

The woodsy community of Wolcott, Connecticut, doesn't see a lot of crime. But when the police chief heard about an opportunity to distribute doorbell cameras to some homes, he didn't hesitate.

The police who keep watch over the town of 16,000 raffled off free cameras in a partnership with the camera manufacturer. So far, the devices have encountered more bears than criminals, but Chief Ed Stephens is still a fan. "Anything that helps keep the town safe, I'm going to do it," he said.

But as more police agencies join with the company known as Ring, the partnerships are raising privacy concerns. Critics complain that the systems turn neighborhoods into places of constant surveillance and create suspicion that falls heavier on minorities. Police say the cameras can serve as a digital neighborhood watch.

Critics also say Ring, a subsidiary of Amazon, appears to be marketing its cameras by stirring up fear of crime at a time when it's decreasing. Amazon's promotional videos show people lurking around homes, and the company recently posted a job opening for a managing news editor to "deliver breaking crime news alerts to our neighbors."

"Amazon is profiting off of fear," said Chris Gilliard, an English professor at Michigan's Macomb Community College and a prominent critic of Ring and other technology that he says can reinforce race barriers. Part of the strategy seems to be selling the cameras "where the fear of crime is more real than the actual existence of crime."

The cameras offer a wide view from wherever they are positioned. Homeowners get phone alerts with streaming video if the doorbell rings or the device's heat sensors detect a person or a passing car. Ring's basic doorbell sells for \$99, with recurring charges starting at \$3 a month for users who want footage stored. Ring says it stores the recordings for two months.

Many law enforcement agencies nationwide said the idea to partner with Ring came after the company promoted its product at law enforcement conferences.

Some departments have chosen to simply use Ring's Neighbors app, which encourages residents to share videos of suspicious activity. Other agencies agreed to provide subsidies, matched by Ring, to offer hundreds of discounted cameras in hopes of tapping into footage of residential streets, yards and sidewalks. And some police chiefs raffle off the devices.

Ring would not disclose the number of communities with such partnerships. Sharing video is always voluntary and privacy is protected, according to the company and police.

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"There is nothing required of homeowners who participate in the subsidies, and their identity and data remain private," spokeswoman Brigid Gorham said. She said customers can control who views their footage, and no personally identifiable information is shared with police without a user's consent.

Realistically, though, if police want video for an investigation, they can seek a search warrant.

Tech industry analyst Carolina Milanese said engaging with police and offering incentives is a "very smart move by Ring" and a missed opportunity for competitors, including Google's Nest and smaller companies such as Arlo Technologies and SimpliSafe.

But a staff attorney at the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California called the system "an unmitigated disaster" for the privacy of many neighborhoods.

Through the subsidy programs, Amazon "gets to offer, at taxpayer dime, discounted products that allow it to really expand its tentacles into wide areas of private life way more than it already has," Mohammad Tajsar said.

The Los Angeles suburb of Arcadia has spent \$50,000 to offer discounts on 1,000 cameras. Several other communities in the region also participate in subsidy programs, and officials in Los Angeles County just voted last month to get on board.

Officers can view a "heat map" that shows the general area where cameras are, but they do not see a camera's actual location. If police want a video, they must contact Ring to see if the resident is willing to share, said Jennifer Brutus, senior management analyst for the Arcadia Police Department.

Arcadia launched its program at the end of 2017, and in the following year, the city saw a 25% decrease in residential burglaries, Brutus said. It's hard to quantify how much of that is directly related to Ring, but she said the devices act as a deterrent.

In one case, a doorbell camera caught footage of four burglary suspects trying to enter a residence. Three were arrested at the time, but a fourth got away. After the homeowner gave Arcadia detectives some Ring video clips, police identified and arrested the last suspect.

Hammond, Indiana, also put up money to offer Ring cameras at a discount. Lt. Steve Kellogg said the partnership was a natural move for a city that already uses cameras to read license plates.

"You cannot enter or leave our city without ... being captured on film," he said, adding that doorbell cameras are the next logical step. "We thought, 'Well, the only angle we don't really have is cameras right by the homes.'"

He said sharing video is voluntary.

Green Bay, Wisconsin, gets one free camera for every 20 people who sign up for the Ring app through a city link. Initially, police required recipients of those free cameras to agree to provide any video police requested. It dropped the requirement after The Associated Press began reporting this story.

In the Minneapolis suburb of Coon Rapids, a thief stole a 7-foot, 150-pound bald eagle carving from Larry Eklund's yard earlier this year. Police had a key piece of evidence: an image of the suspect looking directly into Eklund's doorbell camera.

A few days went by with no leads. Then officers posted the video on social media. Hours later, the carving was returned.

"If we wouldn't have had the Ring, we would have never been able to recognize the guy," Eklund said. "I'm sure it would've been just really hard to get it back."

But Coon Rapids opted not to partner with Ring and instead started its own in-house volunteer camera registry. Trish Heitman, a community outreach specialist for the police department, said the city did not want to promote a particular camera brand.

Another big issue was confidentiality. Coon Rapids keeps its list of registered camera owners private. If a crime occurs near a camera, police can contact homeowners in the registry to see if they want to share video.

If any partnership required data sharing, "we would never do it," Heitman said.

Back in Wolcott, Ernie Field won a free Ring camera and said he had to register for the app to qualify for the raffle. Now he gets alerts on his phone when a car drives by and a short video when his daughter

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gets home from school.

"I don't know if there's more crime now, or we just know about it more because of social media," he said. Field, who said he had been looking at other cameras, wondered whether Wolcott's partnership gave Amazon an unfair advantage.

"They have a monopoly over a lot of things," he said. "And they're kind of taking over everything."

Forliti reported from Minneapolis. O'Brien reported from Providence, Rhode Island.

2020 debates: Biden-Harris rematch and progressive faceoff

By BILL BARROW Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — The second set of summer Democratic presidential debates will feature a rematch with a twist, plus the first showdown of leading progressives as the party wrestles with its philosophical identity and looks ahead to a 2020 fight against President Donald Trump.

Former Vice President Joe Biden and California Sen. Kamala Harris will take center stage in Detroit on July 31, barely a month after Harris used the first debates to propel herself into the top tier with an aggressive takedown of the 76-year-old Biden's long record on race.

CNN, which is broadcasting the debates, assigned candidates randomly with a drawing Thursday night, with 20 candidates spread evenly over two nights, July 30-31.

This time, Harris, the lone black woman in the field, will be joined by another top black candidate, New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, who also has been an outspoken critic of Biden. Booker had denounced Biden for his recollections of the "civility" of working in a Senate that included white supremacists and for his leadership on a 1994 crime bill that the New Jersey senator assailed as a mass incarceration agent in the black community.

Meanwhile, Sens. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts lead the July 30 lineup, allowing the two progressive icons to compete directly for the affections of the party's left flank. They will be joined by several more moderate candidates who are likely to question the senators' sweeping proposals for single-payer health insurance and tuition-free college, among other plans.

Biden vs. Harris has quickly become the defining candidate-on-candidate juxtaposition in the early months of the contest.

Although of different sexes, races and generations, the two rivals share the same broad path to the nomination, particularly the broad coalition of white and black voters necessary to win the Southern primaries that dominate the early months of the nominating calendar.

Harris' June attacks on Biden's 1970s opposition to federal busing orders as a way to desegregate public schools was a way for her to stand out to liberal whites and to try to cut into Biden's strength in the black community, where he is lauded as the loyal vice president to Barack Obama, the nation's first black president.

To be clear, Biden aides say Harris' broadsides sparked a new aggressiveness and determination for the former vice president, and he's gone on a policy offensive in recent weeks, most notably on health care.

A proponent of adding a public option to the Affordable Care Act insurance exchanges, Biden almost certainly will try to pin down Harris on her support for Sanders' "Medicare for All" proposal. Harris, though, has stopped short of Sanders' explicit call for abolishing private insurance, and she insists that the plan can be paid for without any tax hikes on the middle class.

Biden and Harris will be joined on the stage July 31 by Booker; New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio; Colorado Gov. Michael Bennet; former Obama Cabinet member Julián Castro; New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand; Hawaii Rep. Tulsi Gabbard; Washington Gov. Jay Inslee; and entrepreneur Andrew Yang.

Flanking Sanders and Warren on the stage July 30 will be Montana Gov. Steve Bullock; Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana; former Maryland Rep. John Delaney; former Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper; Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar; former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke; Ohio Rep. Tim Ryan; and author Marianne Williamson.

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Delaney and Hickenlooper have been among the most outspoken moderates warning Democrats against a leftward lurch. Klobuchar, Bullock and Buttigieg also position themselves as more centrist than Warren and Sanders.

A generational split also will be on display: Buttigieg, 37, and O'Rourke, 46, each have called for the party to pass the torch, while Sanders, at 77, is more than twice the young mayor's age. Warren, meanwhile, recently turned 70.

It will be the first debate opportunity for Bullock, who takes the spot that California Rep. Eric Swalwell had in June before dropping out in recent weeks. Another late entry to the race, billionaire activist Tom Steyer, did not meet the polling or fundraising thresholds required for the July debate.

For several of the longshot candidates, the July debates are critical. The Democratic National Committee is doubling the polling and fundraising requirements to make the stage in the next round of debates, scheduled for September in Houston and October in a city yet to be announced.

As of now, it's likely those higher standards would mean many of the 20 candidates on stage in Detroit won't have a place in Houston.

Follow Barrow on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/BillBarrowAP>

How to beat Trump? Dems divided as he rams race onto ballot

By **STEVE PEOPLES, ERRIN HAINES WHACK and KATHLEEN RONAYNE** Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Joe Biden was at a soul food restaurant in Los Angeles on Thursday when he blasted President Donald Trump's "racist" taunts at a rally the night before.

"This is about dividing the country," the early Democratic front-runner, who has been criticized for his own handling of race, told reporters. "This is about dividing and raising the issue of racism across the country because that's his base, that's what he's pushing."

But Michael Fisher, an African American pastor from Compton who attended the event, warned Democrats to ignore Trump.

"They should absolutely not respond to ignorance," Fischer said. "They should stay focused on the issues."

That tension previews the uncomfortable balancing act Democrats will face in the nearly 16 months before Election Day. Trump's escalating exploitation of racism puts the rawest divide in American life squarely on the ballot in 2020. Democrats are united in condemning his words and actions, but the question of how to counter them is much more complicated.

The party's passionate left wing is pressing for an all-in battle, arguing that candidates' plans to combat racism are just as important as their proposals to provide health insurance to every American. But others question whether race should be the centerpiece of the campaign to replace Trump. Several presidential candidates, meanwhile, reject the debate as a false choice, arguing they can criticize Trump for racist tactics while still advancing proposals on health care, education, the minimum wage and more.

The emotionally charged developments shook both political parties on Thursday, a day after Trump continued his verbal assault against four minority congresswomen, this time at a raucous rally in North Carolina. The president's supporters chanted "Send her back!" after Trump criticized Minnesota Rep. Ilhan Omar, a Muslim who fled to the U.S. as a child from violence-wracked Somalia.

While Trump tried to distance himself from the chant on Thursday, it echoed his own comments from earlier in the week when he said the "squad" of four young Democratic congresswomen, including New York Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, should "go back" to their "crime-infested places" overseas. They are all American citizens.

After successfully campaigning on health care during last year's midterm elections, Democrats hoped to adopt a similar "kitchen table" strategy going into 2020 that would focus on issues that appeal to all voters. Yet Trump has forced them into a moment of decision that could send the party in a far less certain direction.

The challenge was clear Thursday when Trump's remarks consumed the 2020 debate even as Democrats

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on Capitol Hill voted to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour by 2025. The vote was the latest move by Democrats to highlight their work on more traditional issues that helped them seize the House majority last fall. Yet it barely made a ripple in the national debate.

"Trump is forcing the hand of Democratic Party leaders thinking they could thread the needle. They can't. He's holding Klan rallies," said Aimee Allison, who leads She the People, an advocacy group focused on women of color. "We have to be strong in the face of that and unafraid."

Democratic pollster Cornell Belcher said that to pretend racism and division aren't top-tier concerns for voters is a fallacy.

"This is just as important an issue for Democrats to engage and win on as health care, education and wages," he said, pointing out that Democrats got 9 million more votes than Republicans in the 2018 mid-term elections.

"That wasn't because voters all of a sudden fell in love with Democrats. That was about the direction of this country and people being uncomfortable and alarmed with what's happening with the Republican Party under Trump."

But others question whether to follow Trump into the racial debate at all, concerned about alienating white working-class voters who may have backed Trump in the past and are uncomfortable with allegations of racism or bigotry.

"Calling him racist, which he is, I don't know if that helps," said North Carolina-based Democratic strategist Gary Pearce. He called Trump's message "profoundly disturbing, but I know it works."

In the battleground state of Wisconsin, Democratic Party Chairman Ben Wikler called on his party to take a cautious approach by explaining that Trump is using racism to distract voters from failing policies.

"Trump's use of racism as a political weapon is his only strategy to distract the public from the No. 1 issue in 2018, which was health care," Wikler said. "He can't claim that he stands for working people in 2020."

Most of the Democratic Party's crowded 2020 class weighed in on the Trump-race question — some more aggressively than others.

Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren left no doubt about her position: "#IStandWithIlhan against attacks from this racist president," she tweeted.

New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, who is black, condemned Trump's attacks on the squad but also sought to distance himself from Ocasio-Cortez's description of immigrant detention centers along the southern border as "concentration camps."

"I would not choose that, because you start to begin to create historical comparisons that I do not think are constructive," he said. "But (the spirit is) pointing out the outrageous assault on humanity that's going on within our own borders. It's an assault on the humanity of all of us."

New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand called Trump "un-American."

"His constant attacks on women of color in Congress just show what a small, weak president he is," she said in a brief interview, while trying to pivot to the economy.

"You can talk about both," she said. "Absolutely. You have to. You have to lead on both issues."

Juan Rodriguez, the campaign manager for Kamala Harris, said the California senator would call out Trump on the campaign trail for "vile and reprehensible" comments at every opportunity but would also talk about her policy solutions.

Harris will "not be distracted by a person, who, the way she'd characterize, is weak and wants to stoke fear," Rodriguez said.

Republicans, too, are grappling with the racial debate that could have profound long-term consequences on the GOP's ability to win elections in an increasingly diverse nation.

Rep. Mark Walker of North Carolina, who called the chant "offensive," was among about 10 House GOP leaders who had breakfast Thursday with Vice President Mike Pence in Washington. Walker said he cautioned Pence that attention to the chant could distract voters next year from the economy and other themes Republicans want to emphasize.

Pence concurred and said he would discuss it with Trump, said another participant in the meeting who

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described the conversation on condition of anonymity.

Publicly, however, the overwhelming majority of Republican elected officials stood behind the president or offered tepid criticism.

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell suggested Trump's critics were going too far by accusing him of racism.

"We ought to tone the rhetoric down across the country using — throwing around words like racism, you know, kind of routinely applying it to almost everything," he told Fox Business Network.

Whack reported from Philadelphia and Peoples reported from New York. Associated Press writers Alan Fram, Zeke Miller and Elana Schor in Washington and Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

Woods tries not to make it a short week at Royal Portrush

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

PORTRUSH, Northern Ireland (AP) — Tiger Woods arrived at Royal Portrush on Sunday morning. Now he tries to avoid leaving Friday afternoon from the British Open.

Woods, Rory McIlroy and others who got off to a rugged start faced a daunting task trying to make the cut on a links course with ever-changing conditions and a steady challenge.

Woods didn't make a birdie until the 15th hole in his opening round of 78, his worst start in a British Open and third-highest score in a major championship. McIlroy played reasonably well except the start (quadruple bogey) and finish (triple bogey) in his round of 79.

J.B. Holmes set the pace with a 5-under 66 and played Friday morning under a mostly blue sky and mild wind. That could change without notice.

Forget 'manmade': Berkeley bans gender-specific words

By OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ and SAMANTHA MALDONADO Associated Press

BERKELEY, Calif. (AP) — There will be no manholes in Berkeley, California. City workers will drop into "maintenance holes" instead.

Nothing will be manmade in the liberal city but "human-made." And students at the University of California, Berkeley, will join "collegiate Greek system residences" rather than fraternities and sororities.

Berkeley leaders voted unanimously this week to replace about 40 gender-specific words in the city code with gender-neutral terms — an effort to be more inclusive that's drawing both praise and scorn.

That means "manpower" will become "human effort" or "workforce," while masculine and feminine pronouns like "she," "her," "he" and "him" will be replaced by "they" and "them," according to the measure approved Tuesday by the City Council.

The San Francisco Bay Area city is known for its long history of progressive politics and "first of" ordinances. Berkeley was among the first cities to adopt curbside recycling in the 1970s and more recently, became the first in the U.S. to tax sugary drinks and ban natural gas in new homes.

Berkeley also was the birthplace of the nation's free-speech movement in the 1960s and where protests from both left- and right-wing extremist groups devolved into violence during a flashpoint in the country's political divisions soon after President Donald Trump's election.

Rigel Robinson, who graduated from UC Berkeley last year and at 23 is the youngest member of the City Council, said it was time to change a municipal code that makes it sound like "men are the only ones that exist in entire industries or that men are the only ones on city government."

"As society and our cultures become more aware about issues of gender identity and gender expression, it's important that our laws reflect that," said Robinson, who co-authored the measure. "Women and non-binary people are just as deserving of accurate representation."

When the changes take effect in the fall, all city forms will be updated and lists with the old words and

their replacements will be posted at public libraries and the council chambers. The changes will cost taxpayers \$600, Robinson said.

Removing gendered terms has been slowly happening for decades in the United States as colleges, companies and organizations implement gender-neutral alternatives.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom's wife, Jennifer Siebel Newsom, changed a Sacramento political tradition by adopting the unofficial title "first partner" instead of "first lady," saying it's more inclusive. The change reflected Siebel Newsom's experience as an actress and filmmaker focused on gender politics and inequality.

But formalizing the shift in the sweeping way that Berkeley is doing is "remarkable and sends a message," Rutgers University linguistics professor Kristen Syrett said.

"Anytime you're talking about something where gender is not the issue but you use a gendered term, that immediately sends a message of exclusion, even if it's a dialogue that has nothing to do with gender," said Syrett, who recently spearheaded an update to the guidelines on inclusive language for the Linguistic Society of America.

For Hel Baker, a Berkeley home caregiver, the shift is a small step in the right direction.

"Anything that dismantles inherent bias is a good thing, socially, in the grand scheme of things," the 27-year-old said.

"I don't, by any means, think this is the great championing for gender equality, but you gotta start somewhere," Hel added.

Lauren Singh, 18, who grew up in Berkeley, approved of the move, saying, "Everyone deserves to be represented and feel included in the community."

Not everyone agreed with the new ordinance. Laramie Crocker, a Berkeley carpenter, said the changes just made him laugh.

"If you try to change the laws every time someone has a new opinion about something, it doesn't make sense. It's just a bad habit to get into," Crocker said.

Crocker, 54, said he would like city officials to focus on more pressing issues, like homelessness.

"Let's keep it simple, get back to work," he said. "Let's figure out how to get homeless people housed and fed. He, she, they, it — they're wasting my time."

Rodriguez reported from San Francisco.

Corvette goes mid-engine for first time to raise performance

By TOM KRISHER AP Auto Writer

WARREN, Mich. (AP) — When you first lay eyes on the new 2020 Corvette, a modern version of the classic American sports car isn't the first thing that pops into your head.

Instead, you think Lamborghini, Lotus, McLaren.

The eighth-generation 'Vette, dubbed C8, is radically different from its predecessors, which for 66 years had the engine in the front. This time, engineers moved the General Motors' trademark small-block V8 behind the passenger compartment. It's so close to the driver that the belt running the water pump and other accessories is only a foot away.

Also gone are the traditional long hood and large, sweeping front fenders, replaced by a downward-sloping snub nose and short fenders. In the back, there's a big, tapered hatch that opens to a small trunk and the low-sitting all-new 6.2-liter, 495-horsepower engine.

So why change the thing?

"We were reaching the performance limitations of a front-engine car," explains Tadge Juechter, the Corvette's chief engineer, ahead of Thursday night's glitzy unveiling in a World War II dirigible hangar in Orange County, California.

With a mid-engine, the flagship of GM's Chevrolet brand will have the weight balance and center of gravity of a race car, rivaling European competitors and leaving behind sports sedans and ever-more-powerful muscle cars that were getting close to outperforming the current 'Vette.

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"We're asking people to spend a lot of money for this car, and people want it to be the best performer all around," Juechter said.

GM President Mark Reuss said the C8 will start below \$60,000, 7% more than the current Corvette's base price of \$55,900. Prices of other versions weren't announced but the current car can run well over \$100,000 with options, still thousands cheaper most than European competitors.

Corvette sales aren't huge. Through June, the company sold just under 10,000 of them. But industry analysts say the car helps the company's image, showing that it can build a sports car that performs with top European models.

GM says the new version, with an optional ZR1 performance package, will go from zero to 60 mph (96.6 kilometers per hour) in under three seconds, the fastest Corvette ever and about a full second quicker than all but one high-performance version of the outgoing Vette.

The "cab forward" design with a short hood looks way different, but GM executives say they aren't worried that it will alienate Corvette purists who want the classic long hood and the big V8 in the front.

Harlan Charles, the car's marketing manager, said mid-engine Corvettes had for years been rumored to be the next generation so it wasn't unexpected. GM also is hoping the change will help draw in younger buyers who may not have considered a Corvette in the past.

George Borke, a member of Village Vettes Corvette Club in The Villages, Florida, a huge retirement community, said he hasn't heard anyone in the 425-member club complain about the new design. "I think after 60 years it's time for a change," said Borke, who owns a current generation "C7," bought when the car was last redesigned in the 2014 model year.

The new car has two trunks, one in the front that can hold an airline-spec carry-on bag and a laptop computer case. Under the rear hatch behind the engine is another space that can hold two sets of golf clubs.

Even though it's a performance car, Juechter said the Corvette can go from eight cylinders to four to save fuel. Some owners get close to 30 mpg on the freeway with the current model, and Juechter said he expects that to be true with the new one. Full mileage tests aren't finished, he said.

Engineers also took great pains to make the new car quiet on the highway, with heat shields and ample insulation to cut engine noise.

Even though the car has an aluminum center structure and a carbon fiber bumper beam, it still weighs a little more than the current model. It's also slightly less aerodynamic due to large air intake vents on the sides to help cool the engine. The new Corvette comes with a custom-designed fast-shifting eight-speed automatic transmission with two tall top gears. It also will be made with right-hand-drive for international markets.

Higher-performance versions are coming, although Juechter wouldn't say if the C8 is designed to hold a battery and electric motor.

Workers at a GM plant in Bowling Green, Kentucky, are just starting to build the new cars, which will arrive in showrooms late this year.

American warship destroys Iranian drone in Strait of Hormuz

By **DARLENE SUPERVILLE** and **ROBERT BURNS** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A U.S. warship on Thursday destroyed an Iranian drone in the Strait of Hormuz after it threatened the ship, President Donald Trump said. The incident marked a new escalation of tensions between the countries less than one month after Iran downed an American drone in the same waterway and Trump came close to retaliating with a military strike.

In remarks at the White House, Trump blamed Iran for a "provocative and hostile" action and said the U.S. responded in self-defense. Iran's foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, told reporters as he arrived for a meeting at the United Nations that "we have no information about losing a drone today."

The clash in one of the busiest waterways for international oil traffic highlighted the risk of war between two countries at odds over a wide range of issues. After Trump pulled the United States out of the Iran

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nuclear deal last year and imposed additional economic sanctions, the Iranians have pushed back on the military front, allegedly sabotaging Saudi and other oil tankers in the Gulf, shooting down a U.S. drone on June 20 and stepping up support for Houthi rebels in Yemen.

Adding to the economic pressure on Tehran, the Treasury Department said Thursday it was imposing sanctions on what it called a network of front companies and agents involved in helping Iran buy sensitive materials for its nuclear program. It said the targeted individuals and entities are based in Iran, China and Belgium.

Trump said the Navy's USS Boxer, an amphibious assault ship, took defensive action after the Iranian aircraft closed to within 1,000 yards of the ship and ignored multiple calls to stand down.

"The United States reserves the right to defend our personnel, facilities and interests and calls upon all nations to condemn Iran's attempts to disrupt freedom of navigation and global commerce," Trump said.

The Pentagon said the incident happened at 10 a.m. local time Thursday in international waters while the Boxer was transiting the waterway to enter the Persian Gulf. The Boxer is among several U.S. Navy ships in the area, including the USS Abraham Lincoln, an aircraft carrier that has been operating in the nearby North Arabian Sea for weeks.

"A fixed-wing unmanned aerial system approached Boxer and closed within a threatening range," chief Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said in a written statement. "The ship took defensive action against the UAS to ensure the safety of the ship and its crew."

Neither Trump nor the Pentagon spelled out how the Boxer destroyed the drone. CNN reported that the ship used electronic jamming to bring it down rather than hitting it with a missile.

The Iranians and Americans have had close encounters in the Strait of Hormuz in the past, and it's not unprecedented for Iran to fly a drone near a U.S. warship.

In December, about 30 Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels trailed the USS John C. Stennis aircraft carrier and its strike group through the strait as Associated Press journalists on board watched. One small vessel launched what appeared to be a commercial-grade drone to film the U.S. ships.

Other transits have seen the Iranians fire rockets away from American warships or test-fire their machine guns. The Guard's small fast boats often cut in front of the massive carriers, running dangerously close to running into them in "swarm attacks." The Guard boats are often armed with bomb-carrying drones and sea-to-sea and surface-to-sea missiles.

Thursday's incident was the latest in a series of events that raised U.S.-Iran tensions since early May when Washington accused Tehran of threatening U.S. forces and interests in Iraq and in the Gulf. In response, the U.S. accelerated the deployment of the Lincoln and its strike group to the Arabian Sea and deployed four B-52 long-range bombers to the Gulf state of Qatar. It has since deployed additional Patriot air defense missile batteries in the Gulf region.

Shortly after Iran shot down a U.S. Navy drone aircraft on June 20, Trump ordered a retaliatory military strike but called it off at the last moment, saying the risk of casualties was disproportionate to the downing by Iran, which did not cost any U.S. lives.

Iran claimed the U.S. drone violated its airspace; the Pentagon denied this.

Zarif said Thursday that Iran and the U.S. were only "a few minutes away from a war" after Iran downed the American drone. He spoke to U.S.-based media on the sidelines of a visit to the United Nations.

At the meeting, Zarif also said Iran would be willing to move up an Iranian parliament ratification of an agreement Tehran made with the International Atomic Energy Association — one that outlined access to Iranian nuclear sites and other information.

A spokesman for Zarif explained that Iran is already abiding by the agreement under the 2015 nuclear deal, but it doesn't have the force of law because it's not supposed to be ratified by the Iranian parliament until 2023. Zarif told reporters that the ratification could come earlier if the U.S. eased sanctions.

A senior administration official responded that Trump has repeatedly said he is willing to have a conversation with Iranian leaders. The official said that if Iran wants to make a "serious gesture," it should immediately stop enriching uranium and negotiate an agreement that includes a permanent end to Iran's

nuclear ambitions, including development of nuclear-capable missiles. The official was not authorized to publicly discuss the issue and spoke only on condition of anonymity.

Zarif blamed Washington for the escalation of tensions.

"We live in a very dangerous environment," he said. "The United States has pushed itself and the rest of the world into probably the brink of an abyss." Zarif accused the Trump administration of "trying to starve our people" and "deplete our treasury" through economic sanctions.

Earlier Thursday, Iran said its Revolutionary Guard seized a foreign oil tanker and its crew of 12 for smuggling fuel out of the country, and hours later released video showing the vessel to be a United Arab Emirates-based ship that had vanished in Iranian waters over the weekend.

The announcement cleared up the fate of the missing ship but raised a host of other questions and heightened worries about the free flow of traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical petroleum shipping routes. One-fifth of global crude exports pass through the strait.

Associated Press writers Ian Phillips in New York, Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Deb Riechmann in Washington, and Jennifer Peltz at the United Nations contributed to this report.

Ex-Illinois student's life spared in killing of scholar

By MICHAEL TARM AP Legal Affairs Writer

PEORIA, Ill. (AP) — A former University of Illinois doctoral student was spared the death penalty Thursday and sentenced to life in prison for kidnapping and killing a 26-year-old scholar from China. Her parents, disappointed he was not sentenced to death, publicly begged for the killer to reveal where her remains are so they can be returned home.

Jurors deliberated about eight hours over two days before announcing they were deadlocked on whether 30-year-old Brendt Christensen should be put to death for killing Yingying Zhang in 2017 as part of a homicidal fantasy, automatically resulting in a sentence of life behind bars without the possibility of parole.

The federal trial judge, James Shadid, castigated Christensen in court later Thursday as he formally sentenced him, telling him his "inexplicable act of violence has taken its toll on so many, first and foremost the Zhang family."

"The Zhang family ... must live with the thought that Yingying was ripped away from them by a total stranger, thousands of miles away, fulfilling his self-absorbed and selfish fantasies," he told Christensen.

The same jurors took less than 90 minutes to convict Christensen last month for abducting Zhang from a bus stop, then raping, choking and stabbing her before beating her to death with a bat and decapitating her. Prosecutors called for the death penalty, which the Zhang family also supported, but a jury decision on that had to be unanimous.

Christensen, who has never revealed what he did with Zhang's remains, shut his eyes in obvious relief and looked back smiling at his mother when he heard that his life would be spared. He also hugged his lawyers.

Illinois abolished the death penalty in 2011, but Christensen was charged under federal law, which allows for capital punishment.

Speaking through an interpreter outside court later, her father, Ronggao Zhang, appealed to Christensen to reveal where her body is so that the family can take her remains back to China.

"If you have any humanity left in your soul, please end our torment. Please let us bring Yingying home," he said.

The U.S. Attorney for Central Illinois, John Milhiser, said that efforts to find Zhang's remains would continue. As he spoke, Zhang's mother, Lifeng Ye, sobbed.

When the judge asked Christensen if he wanted to make a statement at the formal sentencing Thursday, Christensen responded politely, "No, thank you."

Minutes later, Shadid blasted him for not taking the opportunity to make a statement for the first time publicly and express remorse, especially when he no longer had anything to lose.

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"You could have said whatever you wanted to say for as little or as long as you wished," the judge said sternly. "And yet today, 769 days after you took Yingying's life, you could not muster a simple 'I'm sorry.'"

As the judge chided him, Christensen sat stone-faced, looking straight ahead and not at the judge. Shadid said he hoped Christensen might one day consider an apology before he dies "lonely" and "isolated" in prison.

"Maybe, just maybe," the judge said, "the moment will strike you to pick up paper and pen and write, 'I'm sorry,' to Mr. and Mrs. Zhang."

Getting 12 jurors to agree on imposing the ultimate punishment can be difficult.

Defense lawyer Elisabeth Pollock geared her remarks in closings Wednesday toward convincing at least one of the 12 jurors to hold out against execution, urging each not to be swayed by a majority that may support execution.

She also sought to humanize Christensen, telling jurors how he once bought a stuffed toy his sister wanted using his allowance money. She teared up as she walked behind Christensen, put her hands on his shoulders and said, "He is not just the worst thing he ever did."

Prosecutor James Nelson said during his closing that Christensen is heard laughing as he described in a secret FBI recording how he killed Zhang. "Pride was dripping from his voice" about what he'd done, Nelson told jurors.

Another prosecutor, Eugene Miller, added: "What the defendant did was evil."

Among the most poignant testimony during the penalty phase was from Zhang's mother. She said Christensen dashed Zhang's dreams, killing her months before she had planned to get married.

"My daughter did not get to wear a wedding dress," she said. "I really wanted to be a grandma."

Christensen's parents took the witness stand, too, and appealed to jurors to spare their son's life. Both said they loved him unconditionally.

Christensen, a native of Stevens Point, Wisconsin, began his studies in Champaign at the university's prestigious doctoral program in physics in 2013. Zhang, who had aspired to become a crop-sciences professor to help her working class family financially, had been in Illinois for just three months. It was her first time living outside China.

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

Trump to nominate Eugene Scalia for labor secretary

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump announced Thursday that he will nominate lawyer Eugene Scalia, the son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, to be his new labor secretary.

Trump tweeted the news Thursday evening, less than a week after his previous secretary, Alexander Acosta, resigned amid renewed criticism of his handling of a 2008 secret plea deal with wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein, who was indicted earlier this month for sexually abusing underage girls.

"Gene has led a life of great success in the legal and labor field and is highly respected not only as a lawyer, but as a lawyer with great experience" working "with labor and everyone else," Trump wrote of Scalia, who is currently a partner in the Washington office of the Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher firm.

If confirmed, it will be a return to the department, where Scalia previously served as solicitor in President George W. Bush's administration, overseeing litigation and legal advice on rulemakings and administrative law. He has also worked for the U.S. Department of Justice.

Trump had previously announced that Acosta would be succeeded in an acting capacity by his deputy, Patrick Pizzella.

Scalia did not respond to a request for comment Thursday.

Man shouting 'You die!' kills 33 in Japan anime studio fire

By MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A man screaming "You die!" burst into an animation studio in Kyoto, doused it with a flammable liquid and set it on fire Thursday, killing 33 people in an attack that shocked the country and brought an outpouring of grief from anime fans.

Thirty-six others were injured, some of them critically, in a blaze that sent people scrambling up the stairs toward the roof in a desperate — and futile — attempt to escape what proved to be Japan's deadliest fire in nearly two decades. Others emerged bleeding, blackened and barefoot.

The suspect, identified only as a 41-year-old man who did not work for the studio, was injured and taken to a hospital. Police gave no details on the motive, but a witness told Japanese TV that the attacker angrily complained that something of his had been stolen, possibly by the company.

Most of the victims were employees of Kyoto Animation, which does work on movies and TV productions but is best known for its mega-hit stories featuring high school girls. The tales are so popular that fans make pilgrimages to some of the places depicted.

The blaze started in the three-story building in Japan's ancient capital after the attacker sprayed an unidentified liquid accelerant, police and fire officials said.

"There was an explosion, then I heard people shouting, some asking for help," a witness told TBS TV. "Black smoke was rising from windows on upper floors. Then there was a man struggling to crawl out of the window."

Japanese media reported the fire might have been set near the front door, forcing people to find other ways out.

The building has a spiral staircase that may have allowed flames and smoke to rise quickly to the top floor, NHK noted. Fire expert Yuji Hasemi at Waseda University told NHK that paper drawings and other documents in the studio also may have contributed to the fire's rapid spread.

Firefighters found 33 bodies, 20 of them on the third floor and some on the stairs to the roof, where they had apparently collapsed, Kyoto fire official Kazuhiro Hayashi said. Two were found dead on the first floor, 11 others on the second floor, he said.

A witness who saw the attacker being approached by police told Japanese media that the man admitted spreading gasoline and setting the fire with a lighter. She told NHK public television that the man had burns on his arms and legs and complained that something had been stolen from him.

She told Kyodo News that his hair got singed and his legs were exposed because his jeans were burned below the knees.

"He sounded like he had a grudge against the society, and he was talking angrily to the policemen, too, though he was struggling with pain," she told Kyodo News. "He also sounded like he had a grudge against Kyoto Animation."

NHK footage also showed sharp knives police had collected from the scene, though it was not clear if they belonged to the attacker.

Survivors said he was screaming "You die!" as he dumped the liquid, according to Japanese media. They said some of the survivors got splashed with the liquid.

Kyoto Animation, better known as KyoAni, was founded in 1981 as an animation and comic book production studio, and its hits include "Lucky Star" of 2008, "K-On!" in 2011 and "Haruhi Suzumiya" in 2009.

The company does not have a major presence outside Japan, though it was hired to do secondary animation work on a 1998 "Pokemon" feature that appeared in U.S. theaters and a "Winnie the Pooh" video.

"My heart is in extreme pain. Why on earth did such violence have to be used?" company president Hideaki Hatta said. Hatta said the company had received anonymous death threats by email in the past, but he did not link them to Thursday's attack.

Anime fans expressed anger, prayed and mourned the victims on social media. A crowd-funding site was set up to help the company rebuild.

Fire officials said more than 70 people were in the building at the time.

The death toll exceeded that of a 2016 attack by a man who stabbed and killed 19 people at a nursing home in Tokyo.

A fire in 2001 in Tokyo's congested Kabukicho entertainment district killed 44 people in the country's worst known case of arson in modern times. Police never announced an arrest in the setting of the blaze, though five people were convicted of negligence.

This story has been corrected to say company president's first name is Hideaki, not Hideki.

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

Records detail frenetic effort to bury stories about Trump

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Court records released Thursday show that President Donald Trump took part in a flurry of phone calls in the weeks before the 2016 election as his close aides and allies scrambled to pay porn star Stormy Daniels to keep quiet about an alleged affair.

The documents detailing calls and text messages were made public as federal prosecutors closed their investigation into the payoff — and a similar payment to Playboy model Karen McDougal — with no plans to charge anyone in the scandal beyond Trump's former lawyer and fixer, Michael Cohen.

Federal prosecutors in New York said in a court filing that they investigated whether other people gave false statements or otherwise obstructed justice. In the end, the decision was made not to bring additional charges, according to two people briefed on the matter. They were not authorized to discuss it publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

The U.S. Attorney's Office in Manhattan declined to comment and did not explain its decision not to prosecute anyone else. U.S. Justice Department policy prohibits the indictment of a sitting president.

The White House had no immediate comment on the latest documents. On Thursday, Trump lawyer Jay Sekulow welcomed the closing of the investigation into the "ridiculous" allegations and denied anew that the president broke campaign finance law.

The newly unsealed court papers, consisting of search warrant applications, offered tantalizing new details about the campaign's frenetic efforts to quash stories about the alleged affairs.

The documents cite records showing Trump spoke on the phone with Cohen at least five times between Oct. 8 and Oct. 28 as Trump's campaign rushed to keep a lid on tales of his alleged misconduct in the closing weeks of the campaign.

In the series of calls that began at 7:20 p.m. on Oct. 8, Trump, Cohen and Trump spokeswoman Hope Hicks spoke together on the phone for several minutes, followed immediately by a series of calls between Cohen and David Pecker, president of American Media Inc., the parent company of the National Enquirer, and the company's chief content officer, Dylan Howard.

Prosecutors have said Pecker, a friend of Trump's, had offered to use his company to bury negative stories in a practice known as "catch and kill."

Cohen then phoned Trump again at 8:03 p.m. and spoke with Trump for eight minutes. That was followed by more calls minutes later between Howard and Cohen, and then a text from Howard to Cohen that read: "Keith will do it."

"Based on the timing of these calls, and the content of the text messages and emails, I believe that at least some of these communications concerned the need to prevent Clifford from going public," an investigator for the U.S. attorney's office wrote, saying "Keith" referred to Daniels' lawyer, Keith Davidson. Daniels' real name is Stephanie Clifford.

The hush money payments were not initially reported on campaign finance documents and far exceeded the legal limits on contributions. Trump, after initially denying knowledge of the matter, has since described the payments as "private transactions."

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Cohen pleaded guilty last year to campaign finance violations and other offenses and is serving a three-year prison sentence. He has long maintained that Trump directed him to orchestrate the payoffs to the two women— an assertion prosecutors also have made in court filings. The payment to McDougal was funneled through Trump-friendly AMI.

Cohen in February also told Congress that a Trump Organization executive, Allen Weisselberg, and Trump's son Donald Jr. were involved in reimbursing him for one of the hush money payments.

Federal prosecutors entered into a non-prosecution agreement with AMI in exchange for the cooperation of its top executives.

"The conclusion of the investigation exonerating The Trump Organization's role should be of great concern to the American people and investigated by Congress and The Department of Justice," Cohen said in a statement Thursday.

The House Judiciary Committee sent a letter to Hicks on Thursday asking her to clarify her June testimony to the panel. Hicks told the panel she wasn't "present" for any conversations between Trump and Cohen about Daniels. Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler asked Hicks to clarify her testimony no later than August 15.

Rep. Adam Schiff, the Democratic chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said the unsealed documents "demonstrate that Donald Trump was intimately involved in devising and executing a corrupt scheme" to cover up an affair.

"The inescapable conclusion from all of the public materials available now is that there was ample evidence to charge Donald Trump with the same criminal election law violations for which Michael Cohen pled guilty and is now serving time in prison," Schiff said.

The court papers were ordered released by U.S. District Judge William Pauley at the request of several media organizations, including the AP. The judge called the documents "a matter of national importance."

The materials also show that on Oct. 28, 2016, as Cohen was finalizing payments intended to secure Daniels' silence, he spoke by phone with Trump for about five minutes, and later traded texts with Davidson.

Cohen thanked Davidson, the documents show, and said, "I hope we're good."

"I assure you," Davidson replied. "We are very good."

Cohen made several calls the same day to Howard and Pecker.

The hush-money payment to McDougal remained secret until The Wall Street Journal published a story about it days before Election Day.

An hour before the Journal story was published, the court papers show, Cohen and Howard commiserated via text message.

Cohen said, in what officials understood to be a reference to Trump: "He's pissed." Howard said, "I'm pissed! You're pissed. Pecker is pissed. Keith is pissed. Not much we can do."

Cohen and Hicks were relieved the Journal story did not receive the attention they feared it would. Cohen texted Hicks: "So far I see only 6 stories. Getting little to no traction." Hicks responded: "Same. Keep praying!! It's working!"

Cohen replied, "Even CNN not talking about it."

This story has been corrected to show Michael Cohen, not Donald Trump, made calls to Dylan Howard and David Pecker.

Associated Press writers Bernard Condon in New York and Eric Tucker and Michael Balsamo in Washington contributed to this report.

Deemed dangerous, Epstein denied bail in sex abuse case

By TOM HAYS and LARRY NEUMEISTER Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A judge who denied bail for jailed financier Jeffrey Epstein on sex trafficking charges Thursday said he poses a danger to the public and seems to still have an uncontrollable urge for sexual

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conduct with or in the presence of underage girls.

Epstein, 66, also might use his "great wealth and vast resources" to flee the country, U.S. District Judge Richard M. Berman said.

Epstein, his hands folded before him, showed no reaction when Berman announced his fate in the morning. Epstein's lawyers did not comment.

"I doubt that any bail package can overcome danger to the community," Berman said in court, citing a danger for both the "minor victims in this case and prospective victims as well."

Epstein has pleaded not guilty to sex trafficking charges.

In the written ruling released hours later, Berman cited the discovery in Epstein's mansion after his July 6 arrest of a trove of sexually suggestive photographs of nude underage and adult females.

"Mr. Epstein's alleged excessive attraction to sexual conduct with or in the presence of minor girls — which is said to include his soliciting and receiving massages from young girls and young women perhaps as many as four times a day — appears likely to be uncontrollable," Berman said.

"Accordingly, Mr. Epstein's past sexual conduct is not likely to have abated or been successfully suppressed by fierce determination, as his Defense Counsel suggests," he added.

Lawyers for Epstein had argued their client has stayed clean since pleading guilty to soliciting a minor for prostitution charges in Florida in 2008 in a deal that allowed him to avoid federal prosecution. They have argued that with the current charges, the federal government is reneging on that deal.

The decision means Epstein will remain behind bars while he fights charges that he exploited dozens of girls in New York and Florida in the early 2000s. He faces up to 45 years in prison if convicted.

In court, Berman noted the "compelling testimony" at Monday's bail hearing by Epstein accusers Annie Farmer and Courtney Wild, who "testified that they fear for their safety and the safety of others if Mr. Epstein were to be released."

Wild, who said she was sexually abused by Epstein when she was 14 in Palm Beach, Florida, pleaded with the judge to keep him jailed.

"He's a scary person to have walking the streets," Wild said during the Monday hearing.

The defense had argued 66-year-old Epstein should be allowed to await trial under house arrest with electronic monitoring at his \$77 million Manhattan mansion. They said he wouldn't run and was willing to pledge a fortune of at least \$559 million as collateral.

The judge said he also rejected bail because Epstein presents a flight risk, in part because of his opulent lifestyle that includes private jets, frequent international travel and a foreign residence in Paris.

Two politicians lauded Berman's bail decision, with Democrat U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz saying "survivors deserve more answers and true justice."

On Monday, Assistant U.S. Attorney Alex Rossmiller said the government's case against Epstein is "getting stronger every single day" as more women contact authorities to say he sexually abused them when they were minors.

Rossmiller said the government learned earlier this week that a raid of Epstein's mansion following his arrest turned up "piles of cash, dozens of diamonds" and a passport with a picture of the defendant but a name other than his in a locked safe.

In a court filing Wednesday, prosecutors disputed a claim by defense lawyers that there was no evidence he'd ever used the fake passport, saying the Austrian passport contained stamps reflecting it was used to enter France, Spain, Britain and Saudi Arabia in the 1980s.

Prior to Thursday's bail hearing, defense lawyers told the judge Epstein was given the passport by a friend after some Jewish-Americans were informally advised to carry identification bearing a non-Jewish name when traveling internationally during a period when hijackings were more common.

They said he never used it and the passport stamps predated his receipt of the document.

Prosecutors have also said they believe Epstein might have tried to influence witnesses after discovering he had paid a total of \$350,000 to two people, including a former employee, in the last year. That came after the Miami Herald reported the circumstances of his state court conviction in 2008, which led to a 13-month jail term and the federal non-prosecution agreement.

Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta resigned last week after coming under renewed criticism for overseeing the decade-old arrangement as U.S. attorney in Miami.

Buried in opioids, sickened community eyes drugmakers' role

By **ANGIE WANG** and **JOHN MINCHILLO** Associated Press

JACKSON, Ohio (AP) — The numbers are staggering: An average yearly total of 107 opioid pills per resident were distributed over a seven-year period in this rural Appalachian county.

The newly released federal data is shocking even to people who live here in Jackson County, where nearly everyone seems to have known someone who died from drug-related causes. Five children in one elementary school class were said to have lost a parent to an overdose death this past academic year.

Standing at his son's grave in Coalton, a village of fewer than 500 people, Eddie Davis remembers vividly his last conversation, in his home nearly 10 years ago, with the son he called Bub, "not knowing that would be the last time I would see him or hear his voice or be able to hug him."

Soon, Jeremy Edward Davis was dead, at age 33.

"My son was accountable for himself; he did what he did, he chose to do that," Davis, 67, said Wednesday.

But then he wondered aloud about the role of the drugmakers, and those who did the overprescribing. "Again, how did the drugs get here, how did the pills get here, who is responsible for it? I think they should pay."

The outsized numbers of prescription pain pills have helped fuel many heartbreaking stories of overdose deaths like Davis'. They've also contributed to uneven addiction recovery and surging foster care rates as parents lose their children or leave them orphaned.

"When I was an addict, this town was misery," said William Carter, who struggled with an addiction to pain pills, and then heroin, for more than a decade. "It was nothing but trying to hustle to make your next fix."

The 42-year-old resident of Jackson, the county seat, started on pain pills in 2000, then later turned to far cheaper and more available heroin as law enforcement crackdowns reduced the availability of pills.

Carter said his life "was pure hell. It was just trying not to be sick. It was shooting up in every gas station bathroom in this town," he said. "When I think about that, it disgusts me."

Such stories are all too common here.

"Essentially, there is no segment of our communities that are not impacted by this," said Robin Harris, executive director for a governmental board that helps provide addiction and mental health services in the region.

Treatment centers and psychiatric hospital beds are full, and while churches and faith organizations are helping the government and agency efforts, resources don't stretch nearly far enough in an impoverished area, said Harris.

In the elementary class of 53 children, she said, the five who experienced the deaths of parents from overdose included a boy who was alone with his dead father for 12 hours because he had no telephone service to call for help.

Census data shows nearly one in five of the county's more than 32,000 residents live in poverty in a region that has long lagged the rest of the nation economically as a result of losing coal, iron and steel industry jobs.

Yet people will buy drugs, said Jackson County Municipal Judge Mark Musick, who oversaw Carter's recovery.

"It's amazing how many young adults have told me across the podium what the cost of their habit is daily. And you think, 'I wouldn't be able to spend \$250 a day. Where do they get that?'"

Musick said many county residents are disabled by addiction — struggling to keep jobs and support their children.

"The amount of grandparents raising grandkids in that area is just unbelievable," said state Rep. Ryan Smith, a Republican whose district includes Jackson and Gallia counties.

The drug data released this week by a federal court in Cleveland shows that drug companies distributed

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8.4 billion hydrocodone and oxycodone pills to commercial pharmacies in 2006 and 12.6 billion in 2012. That's an increase of over 50%.

Records kept by the federal Drug Enforcement Administration show that 76 billion oxycodone and hydrocodone pills — the vast majority of them generics, not brand names — were shipped to U.S. pharmacies from 2006 to 2012. The data was reported first by The Washington Post, which had sued along with HD Media to obtain the data. During that time, prescription opioids contributed to more than 100,000 deaths in the United States, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The distribution database is a key element of lawsuits filed by more than 2,000 state, local and tribal governments. The first trials are scheduled for October.

A spokeswoman for one distributor, McKesson Corp., said Wednesday it didn't push sales or influence the numbers of prescriptions or use. McKesson distributed more than 18% of the nation's opioids from 2006 to 2012, the most of any company.

For those on the front lines, the drug companies' roles in the epidemic are infuriating.

"It looks like a war zone down here," Perry County, Kentucky, Sheriff Joseph Engle said Wednesday while patrolling a hard-hit town around 170 miles (274 kilometers) south of Jackson, Ohio.

The federal data showed that on average, 175 pills a year per person were distributed in Perry County during the period covered.

Engle said that in his two decades of law enforcement, he has watched as prescription painkillers flooded his community, causing widespread addiction. Every family has felt it, he said. He has relatives struggling with addiction. He's buried high school friends to overdoses.

The drug companies should "have to come down here and rebuild this place," Engle said.

In West Virginia, Mingo County was among the hardest-hit rural areas with a rate of 203 pills per person per year. Tommy Preece, volunteer fire chief in the town of Kermit, doesn't need to see the statistics to know the area's history of drug problems.

He lost his brother, Assistant Fire Chief Timmy Dale Preece, to a drug overdose in August 2017.

"I've seen so much of it, it's unreal," he said Wednesday, adding: "I don't see no end to it as long as these pharmaceutical companies are going to keep shoving these pills out there."

Carter, the recovering pain pill and heroin user in Jackson, says he feels fortunate to have a job, a marriage, and "a beautiful 13-year-old daughter." But he's also scared for his daughter growing up in the area, as he sees the region's misery continue.

"I am short-staffed at work right now because a co-worker is planning a memorial for their family member from last week for an overdose," Carter said. "It's to the point everyone is like, 'Well, it's another one.'"

Contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Dan Sewell in Cincinnati; John Seewer in Toledo; Julie Carr Smyth and Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Columbus; Mark Gillispie in Cleveland; Claire Galofaro in Louisville, Kentucky; John Raby in Charleston, West Virginia; Geoff Mulvihill in Cherry Hill, New Jersey; and Matthew Perrone in Washington contributed to this report.

House OKs \$15 minimum wage, setting marker for 2020 campaign

By LISA MASCARO AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Democrats approved legislation Thursday to raise the federal minimum wage for the first time in a decade, to \$15 an hour, transforming an issue that once splintered the party into a benchmark for the 2020 election.

Even though the bill has little chance of passing the Republican-led Senate, or being signed into law by President Donald Trump, the outcome pushes the phased-in rate to the forefront as the new standard, one already in place at some leading U.S. corporations.

While the increase would boost pay for some 30 million low-wage workers, intended as one answer to income inequality, passage was assured only after centrist Democrats won adjustments to the bill. Reluctant to embrace the party's left flank, they pushed for changes, including a slower six-year phase-in of

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the wage. It's a reminder of moderates' influence on policy, but also the limits.

"We're testing candidates from the presidential all the way down to the school board," said Mary Kay Henry, the president of the Service Employees International Union whose members cheered passage from the House gallery. To address stark income inequality, she said, "they have to raise wages."

A hike in the \$7.25 hourly wage has been a top Democratic campaign promise, and what Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland called Thursday the "right thing to do."

"America's workers deserve a raise," said Speaker Nancy Pelosi at a press conference with labor leaders and employees ahead of voting. Lifting a young girl into her arms, Pelosi said, "This is what it's all about... It's about family."

The last increase in the federal minimum occurred 10 years ago, the longest stretch without an adjustment since the wage floor was first enacted during the 1930s. The wage protection covers millions of low-wage workers in all types of jobs.

Under the House bill, for the first time, tipped workers would be required to be paid the same as others earning the minimum, boosting their pay to \$15 an hour, too. It's now \$2.13, in what labor scholars call a jarring remnant from the legacy of slavery, when newly freed workers received only tips.

Republicans in the House balked at the wage hike, which would be the first since Democrats last controlled the majority. Just three Republicans joined most Democrats in passage, on a 231-199 vote.

During the floor debate, Rep. Ronald Wright, R-Texas, called it a "disastrous bill."

Republicans have long maintained that states and municipalities are already able to raise the wage beyond the federal minimum, and many have done so. They warn higher wages will cost jobs, especially among smaller business owners.

Wright said the bill should be renamed the "Raising Unemployment for American Workers Act."

While opponents have long said higher minimum wages lead to job losses, economists say new studies are casting doubt on those long-held theories.

A report from the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office sent mixed messages. It said more than 30 million workers would see bigger paychecks with a higher wage, lifting more than 1 million workers from poverty. It also said between 1 million and 3 million jobs could be lost.

At time of wage stagnation and grave income inequality that's playing out on the campaign trail, Democrats led by Rep. Bobby Scott, D-Va., the chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee, are willing to accept that tradeoff.

But swift passage earlier this year ran into trouble when centrists and those Democrats from rural regions and Southern states raised concerns.

While the new Democratic majority is often seen as pushing the House leftward, many of the freshmen are actually moderates from districts won by Trump in 2016. Those same freshmen will face some of the toughest reelection races in 2020.

The moderate Blue Dog Coalition, led by Rep. Stephanie Murphy, D-Fla., advocated for changes to the wage bill. With some two dozen members, the caucus has enough votes to deny Pelosi a majority and sink the legislation.

They wanted the longer phase of six years instead of five. And they included an amendment requiring a report from the General Accountability Office, after the first phases of the wage hike, to assess the economic impact on jobs and whether wages should be fully raised to \$15.

"I've always been one to believe compromise is not a dirty word," Murphy said in an interview. "It has helped us get things done."

Most members of the Blue Dogs and another centrist caucus, the New Democratic Coalition, ended up voting for the bill. They also held the line against a Republican alternative.

Progressives and labor leaders said they could live with the changes. Rep. Mark Pocan, D-Wis., co-chairman of the Congressional Progressive Caucus, said the bill is popular back home and far from Trump's characterization of Democrats as "socialists."

The idea of a \$15 hourly wage, "somehow that's an out-of-the-mainstream thought?" he said. "Of course not."

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Advocates who have been trying to boost wages for workers for years said they were stunned at how quickly the debate shifted.

Sara Jayaraman, president of the Restaurant Opportunities Center United, group founded with displaced workers from the World Trade Center after the Sept. 11, 2001 terror attacks, said boosting the tipped wages in particular, for waiters and other tipped workers, was a milestone.

It's "historic moment and a historic bill," she said. "Once you start raising workers' wages it's hard to go back."

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British Open back at Royal Portrush and puts on quite a show

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

PORTRUSH, Northern Ireland (AP) — An emotional opening shot by Darren Clarke. A shocking one by Rory McIlroy.

Tiger Woods had his worst score to start a British Open. Brooks Koepka quickly got into contention again. Emiliano Grillo made a 1. David Duval made a 14.

The Open returned to Royal Portrush after a 68-year absence and made up for lost time with an unusual amount of theater Thursday. When more than 15 hours of golf before a robust, sellout crowd finally ended, J.B. Holmes was atop the leaderboard at a major for the first time in 11 years.

Even that might have been fitting. The big hitter from a small town in Kentucky had his first taste of links golf at Royal Portrush during a college trip, and he recalled how the caddies kept giving him the wrong lines off the tee because they had never seen anyone hit it that far.

Holmes drove the downwind 374-yard fifth hole to 12 feet for a two-putt birdie, and he ended with a 5-iron into the wind to 15 feet for a final birdie and a 5-under 66.

"You just have to accept the conditions over here and not get too greedy," Holmes said.

He had a one-shot lead over Shane Lowry of Ireland, who didn't have the level of expectations or the connection to Royal Portrush like McIlroy, Clarke or native son Graeme McDowell, all of whom grew up in Northern Ireland and never imagined golf's oldest championship returning to their tiny country.

"I feel like for me I can come here a little more under the radar than the other guys," Lowry said.

That wasn't the case for McIlroy.

He was the betting favorite who as a 16-year-old stunned Irish golf with a 61 to set the course record at Royal Portrush in the North of Ireland Amateur. The throaty cheers went silent when his tee shot went left and out of bounds. He went into a bush and had to take a penalty to take it out, and he walked off the first green with a quadruple-bogey 8. McIlroy finished with a triple bogey for a 79.

"I'm going to go back and see my family, see my friends, and hopefully they don't think any less of me after a performance like that today," McIlroy said. "And I'll dust myself off and come back out tomorrow and try to do better."

Woods didn't seem quite as optimistic.

That magical Masters victory in April is quickly turning into a memory as Woods struggles to find the balance between playing and making sure his back holds up. He has played only 10 rounds since Augusta National, and this was one to forget. Woods three-putted for bogey on No. 5, bladed a chip on No. 6 for a double bogey and stretched his arms in mock triumph when he finally made a birdie — his only birdie — on No. 15.

He ended with another bogey for a 78, matching his third-worst score in a major.

"Playing at this elite level is a completely different deal," Woods said. "You've got to be spot on. These guys are too good. There are too many guys that are playing well and I'm just not one of them."

The Dunluce Links held up beautifully in such lush conditions, and so did the reputation of Northern Ireland's ever-changing coastal weather. There was a blue sky and dark clouds, a strong breeze and a stiff wind, shadows and showers, all within an hour's time.

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"I took on and put off my rain gear probably at least nine times in nine holes," Matt Kuchar said.

Even so, the scoring was good, without anyone being great.

The large group at 68 included Koepka, who has won three of the last six majors and looked very much capable of adding the third leg of the Grand Slam. Koepka was tied for the lead at one point until he made his lone bogey on the 17th hole. He has been runner-up twice and won the PGA Championship this year. He started out the final major in a tie for third after the first round.

As usual, Koepka keeps it simple, and it helps to have Ricky Elliott as his caddie. Elliott grew up at Portrush and knows the course as well as anyone.

"It's easy when he's just standing on the tee telling you to hit it in this spot and I just listen to him," Koepka said. "I don't have to think much. I don't have to do anything. I figure out where the miss is and where I'm trying to put it and then go from there."

Jon Rahm, a two-time Irish Open winner at nearby Portstewart and in the south at Lahinch two weeks ago, joined Holmes and Webb Simpson as the only players to reach 5 under at any point during the day. The Spaniard was particularly sharp from around the greens, controlling chips and putts beautifully. He ran out of luck late, however, missing a 5-foot par putt on the 16th and dropping another shot on the 18th.

Even so, 68 was his best score in his fourth British Open.

Duval had hit his worst score in any tournament — 91 — mainly from the jolt of a bad swing on a tough hole, compounded by an oversight. He never found two of his own tee shots at the par-5 seventh, hit the wrong ball in the process and with all the penalty shots had a 14, the second-highest score in 159 years of the British Open.

"Just one of those God-awful nightmare scenarios that happened today," Duval said. "And I happened to be on the end of it."

Forty-one players broke par, and 15 of them were within three shots of the lead.

Clarke turned and applauded the grandstand that filled up before his opening tee shot at 6:35 a.m., and he treated everyone else to three birdies through five holes. He wound up with a 71. McDowell wiped a tear from his eye before he teed off, and he was one shot off the early lead until a triple bogey at the last hole sent him to a 73.

McIlroy's only hope was to treat the crowd to four days, a daunting task when only five players in the 156-man field posted a worse score.

He said he wasn't the center of attention, and he was right. That belonged to Royal Portrush and the people who filled the links to see championship golf. They were treated to quite the show.

This story has been corrected to show that this was Woods' third-worst score, not second-worst, in a major.

More AP golf: <https://apnews.com/tag/apf-Golf>

Trump says critics hate America, despite his own US putdowns

By CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Donald Trump once saw a country that had lost its greatness — its cities wracked with crime, its borders a pathetic sieve, its leadership corrupt, its standing in the world a joke. "The American dream," he said, "is dead."

In contrast he praised the fruits of communist leadership. "China, you go there now, roads, bridges, schools, you never saw anything like it," he marveled. "I love China," he went on. The U.S.A.? "We're dying. We're dying. ... We've got nothing."

Harsh, loveless words about his country. But Trump did not leave it and "go back" to anywhere, as he's saying other critics of the country should do. Instead, in those 2015 remarks forever associated with a descent down a gilded escalator and rough comments about Mexican immigrants, Trump announced his presidential candidacy and set about trying to make America great "again" in the ways he defines greatness.

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In his mind and those of his supporters, it was the patriotic thing to do.

But if that was disruptive patriotism, what is the rhetoric from new agitators now — the four liberal Democratic women he says should leave the country if they don't love it? He says it's America-hating trash talk.

Trump set off an uproar Sunday with tweets that falsely portrayed the women of color as foreigners and told them they should go back to the "broken and crime-infested places from which they came." The Democratic-led House rebuked his "racist comments" Tuesday, a step that has no effect except it forced Republicans to take sides on an episode that makes them uncomfortable. All but four sided with Trump.

Trump is unbowed. At his North Carolina rally Wednesday night, he soaked up the crowd's new chant, "Send her back," and said of the women: "They never have anything good to say. That's why I say, 'Hey if you don't like it, let 'em leave, let 'em leave.'" In the light of day Thursday, he dissociated himself from the chant — "I was not happy with it" — while saying the women "have a big obligation, and the obligation is to love your country."

Like Trump, the four women are provocative scolds, highlighting what they think is wrong with the country and trying — from far different angles than the president — to set some things right. Like Trump, Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ilhan Omar of Minnesota can be hot-headed about it. But their contempt is directed at him, not the flag.

To be sure, Ocasio-Cortez raised eyebrows in March when she suggested the state of America today is perhaps 10% better than the "garbage" of the Ronald Reagan years.

Just as Trump raised eyebrows in his strikingly dark inauguration speech about empty factories "like tombstones across the landscape," urban decay, crime, gangs drugs, failed education — "this American carnage."

Demanding love of country — or expressions of it — as a condition for living in it is something of an un-American activity, per the Constitution's enshrinement of the right to talk trash, engage in nonviolent dissent and rant on Twitter.

The oath of citizenship taken by immigrants requires no expressions of affection for the United States.

New citizens must agree to obey laws, serve militarily if drafted, renounce any allegiance to another state and pledge faith — not to America and certainly not to a president, but to a constitution. Oaths swearing in members of Congress, the president, vice president and justices also don't ask for any nation love.

Constitutional protections — Americanness — give Trump a free hand to unload on the women he's been assailing for days.

That Americanness also gave Tlaib a free hand in January to call Trump an F-word (it began with "mother-") when she coarsely vowed in a speech that he will be impeached.

And it makes voters free to exact a political cost or to reward them.

The Constitution and the laws and culture that flow from it make for an impulse, circumscribed in many countries, to let people do and say what they want.

You can praise dictators, like Trump does, and refuse to criticize Russian President Vladimir Putin for allegedly killing critics because, "Well, I think our country does plenty of killing also."

Or you can say that terrorism is a byproduct of U.S. "involvement in other people's affairs," as Omar has put it.

You can call people "a bunch of communists," as Sen. Lindsey Graham branded the Democratic four-some, even if that's not what they advocate or call themselves.

In his dire words opening his campaign four years ago, Trump spoke not at all about intrinsic American goodness — the Reaganesque, shining-city-on-a-hill bromides and conceits about American exceptionalism that come routinely from politicians of both parties. There was nothing, for example, like Ocasio-Cortez's observation in a TV interview Wednesday that "America has always been about the triumph of people who fight for everyone."

Trump only granted his country the "tremendous potential" to make a comeback under him. "Tremendous people," he added.

Across US, clergy mobilize to support vulnerable migrants

By DAVID CRARY and HANNAH GRABENSTEIN Associated Press

So far this week, an anticipated nationwide sweep has not materialized at the expected magnitude. Yet the mere prospect of such action has prompted legions of pastors, rabbis and their congregations across the United States to stand ready to help vulnerable immigrants with offers of sanctuary and other services.

Here's a look at some of the recent developments:

Rabbis have organized a network of more than 70 synagogues nationwide committed to supporting immigrants and asylum seekers, whether through providing sanctuary or other assistance, such as accompanying people to check-ins with immigration authorities.

Some rabbis have been arrested during a series of protests organized by Jewish activists to oppose immigration crackdowns, including a demonstration Tuesday at the headquarters of Immigration & Customs Enforcement in Washington.

The network — T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights headquartered in New York City — says it represents more than 2,000 rabbis and cantors.

"I've never seen an issue that has so mobilized the Jewish community all over the country — it's reached a breaking point," said T'ruah's director of organizing, Rabbi Salem Pearce. "A lot of our families went through the things immigrants are experiencing today."

Baltimore-based Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, which has been assisting uprooted people since 1939, has launched a United Sanctuaries of America campaign, seeking to recruit places of worship willing to provide sanctuary to anyone fearful of deportation without due process. LIRS also is reaching out to community organizations and nonprofits which would help ensure that sanctuary providers have needed resources such as legal assistance and logistical support.

"The response has been incredible," said LIRS president Krish O'Mara Vignarajah. "Churches are saying they want to be part of this — some have offered to provide safe spaces or meals. Some who have existing sanctuary spaces are now saying they need the legal services."

ICE considers churches and some other places to be "sensitive locations" and generally does not pursue people inside who are seeking sanctuary.

In Seattle, the Gethsemane Lutheran Church provided sanctuary for more than a year for a Mexican immigrant, Jose Robles, who was targeted for deportation. On Wednesday, Robles — accompanied by his wife and three daughters, Gethsemane's pastor, and dozens of other supporters — presented himself to an ICE office in a Seattle suburb, where he was detained after applying for a stay of deportation.

Robles' fate is uncertain. The pastor, Joanne Engquist, said efforts would continue to get him a U-visa that would enable him to avoid deportation.

Of course, we are deeply disappointed in the outcome," Engquist said. "What keeps us going is hope for justice."

At the Church of the Epiphany in Los Angeles, Father Tom Carey says housing people in the sanctuary is an "option of last resort."

Carey is a member of an organization called Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, or CLUE, which advocates for low-income families and immigrants. Ahead of the announced raids, eight Christian congregations publicly offered their buildings as sanctuaries through the organization.

Even in his sermons, Carey takes a stance. By chance, this week's reading was the story of the good Samaritan.

"According to the parable that Jesus told, our neighbors are not the people we know. Our neighbors are the people we don't know who are in trouble," Carey said. "And the commandment is to love your neighbor."

Carey's church also connects immigrants needing legal help with an immigration lawyer who works pro bono. Of his 70 or so congregants, Carey estimates a third are in the U.S. illegally.

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Pastor Robert Stearns at Living Water International Apostolic Ministries in Houston has also said his church can be a sanctuary, but his offer comes with caveats.

"The only people who will be allowed in are those who want to participate in becoming American citizens," Stearns said.

Stearns opened his small church as a sanctuary at the request of his representative, Congresswoman Shelia Jackson Lee. If a person in the U.S. illegally approached him, he said they'd find shelter at the church but they would also have to meet with lawyers or with Jackson Lee's staff.

He believes it would be hypocritical to preach against doing wrong and then aid someone trying to break the law.

"We're not going to throw you to the wolves. What we're going to do is set the attorneys in place for you if you're willing to go through that process," he said. "If you don't want to do that, there's nothing I can do for you."

In Chicago, the diocese's Catholic Charities has seen a noticeable decline in the number of people taking advantage of its social aid programs, spokeswoman Brigid Murphy said.

On an agency-wide call Wednesday, concerned staff soberly discussed the downtick in mothers at its Women, Infants and Children Food and Nutrition Centers and identified ways the human services arm of the diocese can help.

Murphy said the organization will try to provide more remote assistance for people afraid to leave their homes. They'll work to educate about immigrants' rights and provide as much legal assistance as can be discussed over the phone.

In some ways, however, they're stymied: food can't be distributed by phone.

"Depending on how long this environment continues, we'll be looking at the best ways to serve people in need while staying within the bounds of the law," Murphy said. "But I don't know that we've come up with an answer to that yet."

Utah's dominant religious denomination, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, doesn't offer sanctuary to immigrants, but it tries to stake out a compassionate stance on immigration and said last year it was "deeply troubled" by the family separations at the border.

The religion allows local lay leaders to provide "life-sustaining" help to church members regardless of immigration status, while encouraging people to get legal help to resolve their immigration situation, said church spokesman Eric Hawkins.

Members of the faith, widely known as the Mormon church, account for a large portion of the volunteers who help immigrant and refugee resettlement programs run by Catholic Community Services of Utah.

Said spokeswoman Danielle Stamos, "Their help is really critical to what we do."

This version of the story corrects that the Seattle man's sanctuary ended Wednesday, not Tuesday.

Associated Press writer Brady McCombs in Salt Lake City contributed to this report.

Netflix subscriber drop hints at streaming-service fatigue

By MAE ANDERSON AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — How much is too much for streaming video?

A dramatic slowdown in worldwide growth at Netflix — including the first quarterly drop in its U.S. subscribers since 2011 — is raising questions about just how much are people willing to pay for streaming services. Especially with a host of new ones from Disney, Apple and others on their way.

A recent price increase seems to have spooked Netflix subscribers. The company lost 126,000 subscribers in the U.S., less than 1% of its 60.1 million paid U.S. subscriptions, during the April-June period. Its

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most popular plan rose from \$11 to \$13 in a U.S. price hike announced in January and rolled out for many subscribers during the second quarter. Worldwide, the service picked up 2.7 million worldwide subscribers, far below Netflix's forecast of 5 million.

"Netflix raising prices prompted people to think about whether they were getting value for money," Wedbush analyst Michael Pachter said.

While people are willing to shell out for several services to meet their streaming needs, he said, they're also willing to cancel if they're not using it enough, just as they would with a gym membership or a subscription to the New Yorker magazine.

Streaming services preparing to compete with Netflix appear to be taking note.

Disney Plus, set to debut in November, will already be cheaper than Netflix at \$8 a month, though Disney Plus will also have a smaller video library. Hulu has cut prices to \$6 from \$8 for its main, ad-supported service. Services from Apple, due out this year, and WarnerMedia and NBCUniversal, out in 2020, don't have announced prices yet, although the NBCUniversal service will be free and ad supported for traditional cable TV subscribers.

Of course, even if these individual services are cheaper than Netflix, it's not clear how many consumers will be willing to pay for.

One way to make a service appealing is not through better prices but through exclusive shows and deep libraries, including shows that Netflix will be losing. Netflix's two most popular shows, "Friends" and "The Office," will be departing in the coming months for rival services.

Group M analyst Brian Weiser said that for now, other services shouldn't be overly concerned by a weak quarter or two at Netflix. He said streaming content consumption is still growing rapidly, so the overall market has plenty of room for competitors. And the streaming arena is a growth area in the much bigger and more mature entertainment industry.

"I don't think it follows that if Netflix has an underperforming quarter that tells you about others," he said.

Some analysts also believe Netflix's trouble is temporary.

Canaccord Genuity analyst Michael Graham said the subscriber numbers will likely hit the stock in the short term — the stock was down 11% in midday trading Thursday — but overall the company's growth remains on track, particularly overseas.

"We still see a strong content strategy and room to add large numbers of international subscriptions as key strengths going forward," he wrote in a note to investors.

Similarly, Pivotal Research Group analyst Jeffrey Wlodarczak said investors shouldn't make a "mountain out of a molehill," with the most recent quarterly figures.

The spring quarter is typically sluggish for the streaming service, and Netflix acknowledged a weak content slate could have been partly responsible for the drop. It expects to regain some momentum this summer, projecting that it will add 7 million subscribers from July through September. The optimism stems in part from the immense popularity of "Stranger Things," whose third season attracted record viewership after its July 4 release.

Netflix has said it welcomes competition. It ended June with 151.6 million worldwide subscribers, far more than a current crop of video streaming rivals that includes Amazon and Hulu.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump distorts Omar's words on terrorism

By HOPE YEN and AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump falsely accused Rep. Ilhan Omar of expressing pride in terrorists and misrepresented the record on the economy and health care in his freewheeling North Carolina rally.

A look at some of his claims from Wednesday night:

OMAR

TRUMP quotes Omar as saying: "You don't say 'America' with this intensity. You say 'al-Qaida,' it makes you proud. Al-Qaida makes you proud. You don't speak that way about America."

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THE FACTS: This is a wholly distorted account of what the Minnesota Democrat said. She did not voice pride in the terrorist group.

Trump is referring to an interview Omar gave in 2013. In it, she talked about studying terrorism history or theory under a professor who dramatically pronounced the names of terrorist groups, as if to emphasize their evil nature.

"The thing that was interesting in the class was every time the professor said 'al-Qaida,' he sort of like — his shoulders went up" and he used a menacing, intense tone, she said. Her point was that the professor was subtly rousing suspicions of Muslims with his theatrical presentation, while pronouncing "America" without the intensity he afforded the names of terrorist groups.

At no point did she say "al-Qaida" should be uttered with intensity or pride and that "America" shouldn't.

Trump is continuing to assail Omar and three other liberal Democratic women of color, challenging their loyalty to the U.S. They are Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts.

TRUMP cites a history of Omar "launching vicious anti-Semitic" statements.

THE FACTS: Omar ignited a bipartisan uproar in Washington and Minnesota during her first weeks in Congress this year when she suggested on Twitter that members of Congress support Israel for money. Many Jewish leaders denounced her remarks as reviving old stereotypes about Jews, money and power.

A few weeks before her "It's all about the Benjamins baby" tweet, a 2012 tweet surfaced in which she said Israel "hypnotized the world." She denied anti-Semitism was intended and apologized for both episodes.

OCASIO-CORTEZ

TRUMP, on Ocasio-Cortez: "Cortez said that illegal immigrants are more American than any person who seeks to keep them out ever will be. Can you believe that? That's what she is saying."

THE FACTS: True, except that people who come to the border and ask for refugee status can't be described as "illegal immigrants." They commit no crime by applying for that status. Ocasio-Cortez, speaking of woman and children who show up seeking refuge or opportunity, said: "They're acting more American than any person who seeks to keep them out ever will be." This was from an MSNBC interview in January.

At the rally, Trump refused to call the New York congresswoman by her full hyphenated surname, saying he didn't have time to go with "three different names."

HEALTH CARE

TRUMP: "We are offering plans up to 60 percent cheaper than Obamacare."

THE FACTS: The bargain health insurance plans Trump talks about are cheaper because they skimp on benefits such as maternity or prescription drug coverage and do not guarantee coverage of preexisting conditions.

The short-term plans the Trump administration began offering last year on the federal insurance marketplace provide up to 12 months of coverage and can be renewed for up to 36 months.

Premiums for the plans are about one-third the cost of fuller insurance coverage. The health plan offerings are intended for people who want an individual health insurance policy but make too much money to qualify for subsidies under the Affordable Care Act.

The Trump administration introduced the short-term plans, which undermine how "Obamacare" is supposed to work, after failing to repeal much of President Barack Obama's health care law.

TRUMP: "Patients with preexisting conditions are protected by Republicans much more so than protected by Democrats, who will never be able to pull it off."

THE FACTS: Democrats did pull it off. Obama's health care law, the Affordable Care Act, requires insurers to take all applicants, regardless of medical history, and charge the same standard premiums to healthy people and those who had medical problems before or when they signed up.

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The Trump administration is pressing in court for full repeal of "Obamacare."
Trump and other Republicans say they'll have a plan to preserve protections for people with preexisting conditions, but the White House has provided no details.

ECONOMY

TRUMP: "We have the strongest economy in history."

THE FACTS: The economy is not the strongest in the country's history. It expanded at an annual rate of 3.1% in the first quarter of this year. That growth was the highest in just four years for the first quarter.

In the late 1990s, growth topped 4% for four straight years, a level it has not yet reached on an annual basis under Trump. Growth even reached 7.2% in 1984.

In fact, there are some signs that growth is slowing, partly because of Trump's trade fights with China and Europe. Factory activity has decelerated for three straight months as global growth has slowed and companies are reining in their spending on large equipment.

Most economists forecast the economy will expand at just a 2% annual rate in the April-June period.

Trump is pushing the Federal Reserve chairman, Jerome Powell, to cut short-term interest rates to shore up the economy. That isn't something a president would do during the strongest economy in history.

Economists mostly expect the Fed will cut rates, either at its next meeting in July or in September. Lower rates make it easier for people to borrow and buy new homes and cars.

The economy is now in its 121st month of growth, making it the longest expansion in history. Most of that took place under Obama.

The economy grew 2.9% in 2018 — the same pace it reached in 2015 under Obama — and simply hasn't hit historically high growth rates.

TRUMP: "The lowest unemployment numbers ever."

THE FACTS: Again, not so.

The 3.7% unemployment rate in the latest report is not the best in history. It's near the lowest level in 50 years, when it was 3.5%. The U.S. also had lower rates than now in the early 1950s. And during three years of World War II, the annual rate was under 2%.

TRUMP: "The best unemployment in our history. And likewise, women, 74 years. ... I'm sorry, women, I let you down. It's not in our history, but we're going to be there very soon."

THE FACTS: No, the jobless rate for women of 3.1% in April was the lowest in 66 years, not 74, and it has since increased to 3.3% in June. The data only go back 71 years, so 74 years isn't a possibility.

Seitz reported from Chicago. Associated Press writers Christopher Rugaber and Cal Woodward contributed to this report.

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Asylum seekers waiting in Nuevo Laredo fear lurking dangers

By **MARÍA VERZA** Associated Press

NUEVO LAREDO, Mexico (AP) — The round-faced woman from La Ceiba, Honduras, and her 5- and 12-year-old sons arrived in this city across the border from Laredo, Texas, where she had been promised a job and hoped to build a new life.

Instead they were met by unidentified men, taken to a hotel, held in a room and threatened not to try to leave while the men tried, unsuccessfully, to extort money from relatives. After three days they managed to escape when the men left the room unguarded and they took refuge in a church.

"I don't want to go out on the street. I'm afraid the same men ... will do something to me or my boys,"

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the woman said, insisting on speaking anonymously out of fear for their safety.

As the United States tries to slow the flow of mostly Central American migrants and asylum seekers to its southern border and pressures Mexico to assist, months-long stays on the Mexican side of the frontier have become the rule for many. Their situation is especially precarious here in Tamaulipas, which is one of Mexico's most violent states and where organized crime gangs are dominant. The U.S. government tells its own employees not to set foot in nearly all parts of the state.

For the 1,800 or so asylum seekers and migrants currently stuck in Nuevo Laredo hoping for a chance at refuge in the United States, fear is palpable and stories of harrowing experiences are common.

The Mexican government announced plans Wednesday to spend millions of dollars to improve migrant shelters and detention centers that house families, but in southern Mexico, far from the U.S. border.

The Honduran woman fled her home country due to threats she had received as a government worker. She sought asylum in southern Mexico, but the documents related to that claim were stolen along with her phone in a previous kidnapping attempt when men hustled the family into a van as they were walking down a street. They got away when the vehicle approached a checkpoint and they were abruptly shoved out the door.

Now she finds herself in Nuevo Laredo and wants to try for asylum in the United States, but she is worried by a new U.S. policy this week that would make it harder for people like her to claim refuge. Even if she does try, once her name reaches the front of the long waiting list she stands to be promptly sent back to Mexico to wait for a U.S. court date months down the line — Nuevo Laredo recently became the fourth city to receive asylum seekers returned across the border under a U.S. program known informally as "remain in Mexico."

"I don't want to be here," the woman said of her uncertain future, one of her sons clinging to her at all times. "I don't know, I don't know," she sobbed.

She spent all day Wednesday at a shelter in Nuevo Laredo, afraid to even venture out to the local migration office to try to replace her Mexican asylum documents.

Nor has she filed a police report about the kidnapping. "How am I going to report it? If they find out, they'll kill me," she said.

Migrant advocacy groups have criticized the U.S. decision to return asylum seekers to Mexico under the policy that began in January, and particularly its rollout to Tamaulipas.

"Forcing them to remain in Nuevo Laredo is an inhumane policy," Doctors Without Borders said in a statement. "It is putting them in the hands of organized crime, where being a migrant is synonymous with being merchandise."

The group said 45% of migrants to whom it provided health or psychological care in the first five months of the year suffered some kind of violence while waiting to cross into the United States.

"Most of our patients don't go out on the streets because the risk of kidnapping is imminent," it added.

Gledis Neira, a 52-year-old Cuban, arrived in Mexico on June 4 and a week later at a municipal shelter in Nuevo Laredo. It wasn't long before three friends, also Cubans, were pulled from a taxi, robbed and threatened with a baseball bat.

Another day a woman came to the shelter saying she was looking to offer work to "girls who knew how to dance, preferably Cubans." Someone questioned whether it was safe after the woman refused to offer details on the supposed job, and nobody went with her.

"I came to understand the fear in Nuevo Laredo. ... The (shelter) guards themselves were telling us to watch out for ourselves," Neira said.

The U.S. State Department warns U.S. citizens to avoid all travel to Tamaulipas due to widespread crime and kidnapping, and the state's highways are the scene of all sorts of smuggling. On Wednesday, 112 Central Americans were rescued from an overcrowded tractor-trailer.

Drug gangs and splinter groups have long fought for control. And Nuevo Laredo is considered a "crown jewel" for smugglers with its bridge crossings handling over 60 percent of Mexico's exports to the United States.

Currently the Northeast cartel is in charge, ruling through threats, disappearances, kidnappings and kill-

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ings. Nuevo Laredo registered 144 violent homicides through the first five months of this year, and there are 20 open kidnapping investigations.

Mexican officials fear a possible repeat of a 2010 massacre of 72 migrants in the Tamaulipas town of San Fernando, and want at all costs to avoid that.

On Tuesday, dozens of people who were returned from the United States to Nuevo Laredo were put on a bus bound for the city of Monterrey. Most had crossed illegally, unlike others who waited weeks to file U.S. asylum claims and so far are being sent back to Nuevo Laredo.

"We are focusing on transferring them to the safest places possible, so that they are not exposed to extortions, to risks, dangers," Maximiliano Reyes, assistant foreign relations secretary, said Wednesday. He added that officials were examining the possibility of converting a military base in the nearby town of Colombia into a migrant reception center.

There are signs that immigration facilities in Monterrey, too, are overwhelmed.

Mexico's National Human Rights Commission said that city police had to be called in when about 100 people packed into the Monterrey office tried to flee on Wednesday. The people were later taken to a fairground.

A Salvadoran man at the office died of a heart attack, the government said, though the circumstances were unclear.

Some asylum seekers said arriving at the U.S. border initially seemed like a victory, but being sent back to Mexico sapped them of hope.

Doris Villegas cried as she recalled the bakery that she, her husband and their two teen children left back home in crisis-stricken Venezuela, and the family's hopes for a stable life in the United States.

They waited 50 days in Nuevo Laredo before they were able to apply for refuge, and then were promptly sent back to wait for a Sept. 19 hearing. Now they are running out of money and don't know what they will do.

"Go out into the streets and look for work?" Villegas said. "I don't dare."

Associated Press writer Alfredo Peña in Ciudad Victoria, Mexico, contributed to this report.

The heat goes on: June toastiest on record, July may follow

By **SETH BORENSTEIN** AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The heat goes on: Earth sizzled to its hottest June on record as the climate keeps going to extremes.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Thursday announced that June averaged 60.6 degrees (15.9 Celsius), about 1.7 degrees (0.9 Celsius) warmer than the 20th century average.

It beat out 2016 for the hottest June with records going back to 1880. NASA and other groups also concluded that last month was the hottest June on record.

Europe shattered June temperature records by far, while other records were set in Russia, Africa, Asia and South America. France had its hottest month in history, which is unusual because July is traditionally hotter than June. The Lower 48 states in America were near normal.

"Earth is running a fever that won't break thanks to climate change," North Carolina state climatologist Kathie Dello said in an email. "This won't be the last record warm summer month that we will see."

It seems likely that July too will be a record hot month, said Berkeley Earth climate scientist Robert Rohde.

The United States set a record for most precipitation. The 12-month period from July 2018 to June 2019 was the wettest on record.

The first half of 2019 is tied with 2017 for the second hottest initial six months of the year, behind 2016. So far the year is 1.7 degrees warmer than the 20th century average.

This heat "is what we can expect to see with a warming climate," said Freja Vamborg, a climate scientist at the Copernicus Climate Change Service in Europe.

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter: @borenbears

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Iran state TV: Iranian forces seize foreign oil tanker, crew

By AYA BATRAWY and NASSER KARIMI Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran said Thursday its Revolutionary Guard seized a foreign oil tanker and its crew of 12 for smuggling fuel out of the country, and hours later released video showing the vessel to be a United Arab Emirates-based ship that had vanished in Iranian waters over the weekend.

The announcement solved one mystery — the fate of the missing ship — but raised a host of other questions and heightened worries about the free flow of traffic in the Strait of Hormuz, one of the world's most critical petroleum shipping routes. One-fifth of global crude exports passes through the strait.

The incident happened with tensions running high between Iran and the United States over President Donald Trump's decision to pull the U.S. out of the Iran nuclear deal.

Iranian state television did not at first identify the seized vessel but said it was intercepted on Sunday and was involved in smuggling some 1 million liters (264,000 gallons) of Iranian fuel. Iran did not identify the nationalities of the crew.

Crude prices, which had been falling since last week, ticked higher almost immediately after the announcement.

Iran said the tanker was seized south of its Larak Island in the Strait of Hormuz. Neighboring Qeshm Island has a Revolutionary Guard base on it.

Hours after that initial report, Iranian TV released footage of the ship surrounded by Guard vessels and showed the registration number painted on its bridge, matching that of the UAE-based MT Riah.

The Panamanian-flagged tanker stopped transmitting its location early Sunday near Qeshm Island, according to data on the tracking site Maritime Traffic. However, it often did so over the past two years when nearing Iranian waters, other tracking data shows.

U.S. Central Command, which oversees American military operations in the Middle East, declined to comment.

It was not immediately clear whether the seizure was a straightforward attempt by Iran to curb oil smuggling or also an effort to assert its authority in the strait and send a message to its rivals in the region. The UAE has long lobbied for tougher U.S. policy toward Iran, though more recently it has called for de-escalation.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif said that the seized vessel was at best a "small tanker" and that Iranian forces are cracking down on fuel smuggling daily.

"We live in a very dangerous environment. The United States has pushed itself and the rest of the world into probably the brink of an abyss," he told reporters at the United Nations in New York. Zarif accused the Trump administration of "trying to starve our people" and "deplete our treasury" through sanctions.

Iranian media reported earlier this month that some 8 million liters of government-subsidized Iranian fuel are smuggled daily through Iran's borders to other countries where prices are much higher.

Analysts at the Israeli-based maritime risk analytics company Windward said that the Riah has been at sea for the past two years and has a pattern of turning off its location transmitters for days at a time, particularly when entering Iranian waters.

The firm said data suggests that for more than two years that the 58-meter (190-foot) Riah had been clandestinely receiving fuel from an unknown source off the UAE coast and delivering it to other tankers, which then take it to Yemen and Somalia.

No distress calls were made from the Riah, and no ship owner reported a missing vessel.

The ship's registered owner, Dubai-based Prime Tankers LLC, told The Associated Press it had sold the vessel to another company, Mouj Al-Bahar. A man who answered a telephone number registered to the

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company told the AP it didn't own any ships.

Officials in the UAE said the ship was neither UAE-owned nor operated and carried no Emirati personnel. In past weeks, the Persian Gulf region has seen six attacks on oil tankers that the U.S. has blamed on Iran, the downing of a U.S. surveillance drone by Iranian forces and a tense encounter between Iran's Guard and the British navy. Iran has denied involvement in the attacks or the British naval encounter.

The U.S. has also sent thousands of additional troops and increased its security presence in the region. Meanwhile, Iran has begun increasing uranium production and enrichment beyond the limits of the 2015 accord in a bid to pressure Europe to find ways around U.S. sanctions.

On Thursday, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, in a phone conversation with French President Emmanuel Macron, urged European signatories of the deal to speed up their efforts to stop U.S. pressure, his website reported. He said efforts to stop Iran's nuclear activities "are not acceptable under any circumstance."

Karimi reported from Tehran, Iran. Associated Press writers Ian Phillips in New York and Jon Gambrell in Dubai contributed to this report.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump hypes stock gains for the less wealthy

By JOSH BOAK AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is misrepresenting the facts when he says the rising stock market has largely benefited working-class Americans.

Speaking at a Cabinet meeting, he suggested that his economic policies such as tax cuts have led to the biggest stock market gains for lower-income, blue-collar workers. That's a distortion of reality.

A look at the claim:

TRUMP: "I think a number that makes me the happiest is that, proportionately, the biggest gainer in this entire stock market — when you hear about how much has gone up — blue-collar workers, the biggest proportionate gainer." — remarks Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Wealthier Americans have largely benefited from the stock market gains, not blue-collar workers.

The problem with the president claiming the stock market has helped working-class Americans is that the richest 10% of the country controls 84% of stock market value, according to a Federal Reserve survey. Because they hold more stocks, wealthier Americans have inherently benefited more from the 19% gain in the Standard & Poor's index of 500 stocks so far this year. About half of U.S. families even hold stocks, so plenty of people are getting little to no benefit from the stock market gains.

The statement fits a pattern in which Trump portrays policies that have comparatively favored the wealthy as primarily helping the middle class.

For example, the president promised in 2017 that his tax cuts would be a "middle-class miracle." But much of the magic went to millionaires.

People earning more than \$1 million received a combined total tax cut last year of \$36 billion, or \$64,428 per filer, according to the Joint Committee on Taxation. Those earning between \$50,000 to \$75,000 — a solidly middle-class income — got back a combined \$22.4 billion, or \$819 per filer.

What Trump may be claiming with regard to the stock market is that working Americans are disproportionately benefiting in their 401(k) retirement savings.

Trump has said that 401(k) plans are up more than 50%. His data source is vague; during the Cabinet meeting, the president said, "Somebody told me." But 401(k) balances have increased in large part due to routine contributions by workers and employers, not just stock market gains.

The Employee Benefit Research Institute shows that only one group of Americans has gotten an average annual 401(k) gain in excess of 50% during Trump's presidency. These are workers age 25 to 34 who have fewer than five years at their current employer. At that age, the gains largely came from the regular contributions instead of the stock market. And the percentage gains look large because the account levels are relatively small.

AP Economics Writer Christopher Rugaber contributed to this report.

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Congo soldiers, police to enforce Ebola emergency measures

By KRISTA LARSON and AL-HADJI KUDRA MALIRO Associated Press

GOMA, Congo (AP) — Congolese soldiers and police will enforce hand-washing and fever checks now that the deadly Ebola outbreak has been declared an international health emergency, authorities said Thursday.

Soldiers and police will “force” people who resist taking the key steps to help contain the disease that has killed more than 1,600 people in the past year, said the outbreak response coordinator at Congo’s health ministry, Dr. Aruna Abedi.

“It’s not possible that someone refuses to wash their hands and have their temperature checked at a very critical moment in this outbreak,” Abedi told reporters in Goma, the city of more than 2 million people where a first Ebola case was announced early this week. The major regional crossroads is on the Rwanda border and has an international airport.

The World Health Organization’s rare emergency declaration Wednesday night for the second-worst Ebola outbreak in history came after a WHO expert committee declined on three previous occasions to recommend it, to the impatience of some health experts who for months had expressed alarm.

Congo’s increased use of soldiers and police could bring objections from some residents and health workers in an outbreak taking place in what has been called a war zone.

This outbreak is like no other, unfolding in a turbulent part of northeastern Congo where dozens of rebel groups are active and wary communities had never experienced the disease before. Health workers have faced misinformation and even deadly attacks that have hampered the critical work of tracing contacts of infected people and deploying an experimental but effective Ebola vaccine.

Wednesday’s declaration quickly led to fears among some Congolese authorities and residents that governments might close borders or take other measures that could hurt the local economy. Congo’s health minister has resisted the characterization of the outbreak as a health emergency.

Rwanda’s government said surveillance measures at the border would be tightened, but traffic was flowing normally through the border on Thursday.

One Congolese, 25-year-old Clovis Mutsuva, told The Associated Press that while the declaration might bring in needed funds to help contain the outbreak, any border closures would make locals “more unhappy.” A lot of key local merchandise such as fuel comes from Kenya and neighboring Uganda, Mutsuva said.

“This scares us because Goma risks becoming isolated from the rest of the world,” added Katembo Kabunga as some people in the city received vaccinations.

While the risk of regional spread remains high, the risk outside the region remains low, WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said after Wednesday’s announcement. Last month saw the first confirmed cases in Uganda and a case just 70 kilometers (43 miles) from the border with South Sudan, where a recently ended civil war badly weakened the health system.

The international emergency “should not be used to stigmatize or penalize the very people who are most in need of our help,” Tedros said. WHO has estimated “hundreds of millions” of dollars would be needed to stop the outbreak.

Some aid groups say they hope the declaration will spark a radical shift in Ebola response efforts to help address community resistance. The medical charity Doctors Without Borders said the outbreak is still not under control.

This is the fifth such declaration in history. Previous emergencies were declared for the devastating 2014-16 Ebola outbreak in West Africa that killed more than 11,000 people, the emergence of Zika in the Americas, the swine flu pandemic and polio.

WHO defines a global emergency as an “extraordinary event” that constitutes a risk to other countries and requires a coordinated international response. WHO was heavily criticized for its sluggish response to the West Africa outbreak, which it repeatedly declined to declare a global emergency until the virus was spreading explosively in three countries and nearly 1,000 people were dead.

Maliro reported from Beni, Congo.

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Lawmakers impede next UK leader’s path to a no-deal Brexit

By JILL LAWLESS and RAF CASERT Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — With Britain set to get a new pro-Brexit leader within days, lawmakers on Thursday erected a roadblock in the path of any attempt by the incoming prime minister to take the country out of the European Union without a divorce deal.

The move came as the U.K.’s official economic watchdog said a no-deal Brexit would trigger a recession, with the pound plummeting in value and the economy shrinking by 2% in a year.

The Office for Budget Responsibility made its assessment as chances of a disruptive exit from the 28-nation bloc appear to be rising.

Britain is due to leave the EU on Oct. 31, but Parliament has repeatedly rejected the divorce deal struck between Prime Minister Theresa May and the bloc. Both men vying to take over from her as Britain’s prime minister, Boris Johnson and Jeremy Hunt, say they will leave without an agreement if the EU won’t renegotiate.

Most lawmakers, however, oppose a no-deal Brexit, and want to try to stop it happening. Johnson, who is the strong favorite to win the Conservative leadership race next week, has not ruled out suspending Parliament if it tries to block his plan to leave the EU at Halloween.

That got harder on Thursday, after the House of Commons approved a measure that effectively stops the government from sending lawmakers home in the weeks before the planned Oct. 31 departure. The 315-274 Commons vote saw several government ministers — including Treasury chief Philip Hammond — abstain rather than support the government’s call to keep suspending Parliament as an option.

“We’re putting down a marker,” said Conservative lawmaker Alistair Burt, who co-sponsored the move. “Parliament can’t be bypassed.”

Digital Minister Margot James resigned so she could vote against the government, saying it was “time for me to make a stand.”

Three years after British voters narrowly chose to leave the 28-nation EU, the nation remains deeply divided and stuck in limbo. May announced her resignation last month after failing to win Parliament’s approval for her Brexit deal.

Her successor is being chosen by about 160,000 members of the Conservative Party, most of whom are strongly in favor of Brexit and prepared to accept the risks of leaving without a deal. Johnson is the runaway favorite to win the contest when the result is announced Tuesday.

He claims that Britain can flourish outside the EU if it has enough optimism and “mojo,” and says a no-deal Brexit will be “vanishingly inexpensive” if the country prepares properly.

But most economists predict the economic shock would be severe, as tariffs and border checks were imposed overnight on trade between Britain and the EU.

The Office for Budget Responsibility, which provides the U.K. government with independent economic forecasts, said a no-deal Brexit would see “heightened uncertainty and declining confidence deter investment, while higher trade barriers with the EU weigh on exports.”

It predicted GDP would fall by 2% by the end of 2020 in a no-deal scenario, and borrowing would be around 30 billion pounds (\$37 billion) a year higher from 2020-21 than it forecast in March.

Treasury chief Hammond, who has warned about the perils of a no-deal Brexit — and is likely to be fired

by the next prime minister — said “I greatly fear the impact on our economy and our public finances” of a no-deal Brexit.

He said the OBR forecast was based on the “most benign version” of a no-deal Brexit, and in all likelihood “the hit would be much greater, the impact would be much harder.”

Johnson has downplayed the chances of a no-deal exit, saying he will go to Brussels and seek a new Brexit deal that retains “the best bits” of May’s withdrawal agreement and discards the rest.

But the EU insists it won’t change the 585-page withdrawal agreement, which sets out the terms of Britain’s departure and includes a transition period of almost two years to allow both sides to adjust to their new relationship.

“This document is the only way to leave the EU in an orderly manner,” EU Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier told the BBC in an interview broadcast Thursday.

Meanwhile, the relationship between the British government and the EU has been frayed by years of testy negotiations and allegations of ill-will on both sides.

EU Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans told a BBC documentary that the British lacked a plan and were “running around like idiots” during the Brexit negotiations. He cited a catchphrase from the classic British sitcom “Dads’ Army”: “Don’t panic!”

In return, junior U.K. Brexit minister Martin Callanan accused Timmermans of spreading “childish insults” about the British negotiating stance. Quoting another famous riposte from “Dad’s Army,” he said that Timmermans was a “stupid boy.”

Casert reported from Brussels.

Follow AP’s full coverage of Brexit and the Conservative Party leadership race at: <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Elizabeth Warren pitches new constraints on private equity

By ELANA SCHOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — White House hopeful Elizabeth Warren is proposing new regulations on the private equity industry, pitching constraints designed to end what she decries as “legalized looting” by investment firms that take over troubled companies.

Warren’s plan, the latest in a series of policy ideas that have propelled the Massachusetts senator to the top tier of the 2020 Democratic presidential primary, would hold private equity firms liable for debts and pension promises made by the companies they buy up. It would restrict the firms’ ability to pay dividends as well as high fees that shift money out of acquired companies.

The new private equity rules bring Warren’s detail-driven campaign back to the familiar ground that launched her political career — reining in Wall Street.

Warren, the former chair of the independent panel that oversaw the government’s 2008 bailout of major financial institutions, is a longtime foe of the financial industry who has underscored since launching her presidential run that she is a capitalist. But like democratic socialist Bernie Sanders, a rival for the Democratic nomination to challenge President Donald Trump, Warren is building her campaign around a promise of sweeping upheaval she says would spread around more of the benefits of economic growth.

“I am tired of big financial firms looting the economy to pad their own pockets while the rest of the economy suffers,” Warren wrote in a Medium post announcing her plan on Thursday. “I am done with Washington ignoring the evidence and acting as though boosting Wall Street helps our families. Financial firms have helped push our economy badly off track.”

Warren’s private equity proposals also include new rules that would require worker pay to take precedence over other obligations when companies declare bankruptcy as well as more open disclosure of investment firms’ fees, both of which are included in private legislation she’s set to introduce later Thursday alongside Senate and House Democratic colleagues. Her platform further calls for the restoration of dividing lines

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between commercial and investment banking that were repealed in 1999, a change that was part of both the Republican and the Democratic platforms during the 2016 presidential election despite Trump's lack of emphasis on it during his campaign.

The private equity industry pushed back at Warren's proposal on Thursday. American Investment Council President Drew Maloney, whose group represents private equity firms, said that the industry "is an engine for American growth and innovation — especially in Senator Warren's home state of Massachusetts."

"Extreme political plans only hurt workers, investment, and our economy," Maloney said in a statement.

Private equity-backed companies headquartered in Warren's home state employ nearly 400,000 people, the AIC said.

Warren is headed to Iowa for a two-day campaign swing during which she's likely to tout her new private equity plan, the latest installment of a broader self-described "economic patriotism" agenda that also includes a \$2 trillion investment in environmentally friendly manufacturing .

Besides bolstering her credentials as an antagonist of Wall Street, Warren's new proposal also gives her the chance to tout her avoidance of high-dollar fundraisers and reliance on small donors to power her campaign. Sanders, a Vermont senator, has similarly vowed to forgo high-dollar fundraisers, but the private equity industry remains a notable supporter of several of their Democratic presidential rivals .

Federal Election Commission records show that employees of Blackstone, which leads Private Equity International's ranking of top private equity firms, have donated a total of \$102,100 to 11 Democratic presidential hopefuls this year, with South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg topping the list of recipients at \$30,800. Neither Warren nor Sanders reported receiving contributions from the private equity giant's employees.

Associated Press writer Brian Slodysko contributed to this report.

Facing Trump's tariffs, some companies move, change or wait

By PAUL WISEMAN, ANNE D'INNOCENZIO and JOE McDONALD AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Some are moving factories out of China. Others are strategically redesigning products. Some are seeking loopholes in trade law or even mislabeling where their goods originate — all with the goal of evading President Donald Trump's sweeping tariffs on goods from China.

But most of the companies that stand to be hurt by Trump's tariffs are hunkering down and waiting — waiting because they don't know when, whether or how his yearlong trade war with China will end or which other countries the president might target next.

Consider Xcel Brands, a New York-based company that owns such brands as Halston, Isaac Mizrahi and C. Wonder. Two years ago, it made all its clothing in China. Now it's on the move — diversifying production to Vietnam, Cambodia, Bangladesh and Canada and considering Mexico and Central America as well. By next year, it expects to have left China completely.

"You have to keep moving things around," said CEO Robert D'Loren.

Trump launched the world's biggest trade war since the 1930s by imposing tariffs on \$250 billion in Chinese goods and threatening to tax \$300 billion more. He has pursued separate battles with America's allies, too — from South Korea, Mexico and Canada to Japan and the European Union — over trade in steel, aluminum and autos.

"The president has managed to pick a fight with all of our trading partners," said Rick Helfenbein, CEO of the American Apparel & Footwear Association trade group.

Faced with the prospect of a forever war with America's trading partners, numerous businesses say they're delaying investment decisions and reviewing their business relationships until they have a clearer view of how Trump's trade wars might end — if they will.

The paralysis itself is inflicting its own damage worldwide. Foreign direct investment, including cross-border mergers and new factories, fell in 2018 for a third straight year to its lowest point since the recession year of 2009, the United Nations reports. The International Monetary Fund expects world trade to slow in 2019 for a second straight year.

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Companies that depend on targeted imports face an agonizing decision: Can they press their foreign suppliers to cut their prices? Could they absorb the higher costs themselves? Or should they pass them on to their customers in the form of price increases — and risk losing business?

Most companies weren't prepared for the trade disruptions. For decades, most major countries, far from erecting trade barriers, tore them down. Some companies weren't even set up internally to analyze tariffs and calculate how to minimize the impact on their business.

"The one thing that businesses hate is instability and not being able to plan," said Rosemary Coates, president of Blue Silk Consulting, which advises companies on managing their global supply chains. "You're getting chased around the world by (trade) policy with no advance warning."

Seeking relief, here is what some companies are doing:

SHIFTING PRODUCTION

Shifting to other countries could slash Xcel Brands' labor costs in half. This is crucial, D'Loren said, because fashion companies have little ability to raise prices and would have to absorb the cost of higher import taxes.

To be sure, the trend of manufacturers gradually leaving China predates Trump's trade wars. With wages and other costs in China rising, companies were already shifting toward lower-wage countries, from Vietnam to Mexico. Since 2017, 20 publicly traded Chinese companies have announced plans to invest in Vietnam, according to China's Securities Times newspaper, raising the total over the past decade to more than 60. A few have considered shifting production to the United States.

Hurt by Trump tariffs on the metals used to make brass, Coins 4 U, which markets coins for awards and promotions, last year moved production from China, where it had been manufacturing since its founding in 2013, to Lake Ronkonkoma, New York.

"Our costs didn't rise too much, about 10%," said Sam Carter, sales manager for the company, based in Cheyenne, Wyoming. An unexpected plus, Carter said, is that some American customers prefer to buy products made in the United States.

But it isn't simple for some companies to completely abandon China, where specialized suppliers cluster in manufacturing centers and make it convenient for factories to obtain parts when they need them.

"You think that moving production was fairly straightforward, but I can't tell you how difficult it is," D'Loren said. Refining the logistics can take a year to 18 months.

If the trade war was resolved, D'Loren said, he would consider returning some of his production to China.

Trump has asserted that his tariffs have caused an exodus of companies out of China. That's a drastic exaggeration, analysts say. And some companies have moved export-oriented operations out of China even while expanding within the country to serve Chinese customers.

"People in the Trump administration think you can just snap your fingers and move to other countries," said Coates, the consultant.

Over the past five years, Columbia Sportswear has cut its manufacturing presence in China by more than 60%. But some products can't be made elsewhere, the company says, because they're highly specialized and dependent on significant investments in tooling, machinery and personnel training.

Columbia's Sorel Style shoe, for example, features a hidden wedge heel that requires proprietary tooling and machinery. Moving its remaining production out of China, Columbia says, would cost at least \$3 million in machinery, require it to hire and train a new workforce and delay production at least a year.

Vietnam is enjoying an investment boom as companies seek alternatives to China. But Vietnam's population is about 97 million — fewer than some individual Chinese provinces — and wouldn't be able to meet demand.

"The infrastructure is just being developed," Coates said. "The factories are being overwhelmed. They can't take on additional projects."

GETTING CREATIVE

Increasingly, clothing and shoe companies are trying to design their way out of paying tariffs. Some have used a strategy called "tariff engineering." It involves altering products just enough to change how

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they're classified under the U.S. International Trade Commission's Harmonized Tariff Schedule to evade or reduce import taxes.

Trump's steep tariffs on China — and the threat of new ones — have raised the stakes. A result is that some clothing design teams are taking the tariffs into consideration as they sketch pockets, say, or design work boots, said Stephen Lamar of the American Apparel & Footwear Association.

Over the past year, Tom Gould, a trade law specialist at Sandler, Travis & Rosenberg, P.A., said he's seen an uptick in clients seeking to engineer their way out of punitive tariffs. Sometimes he helps retailers and manufacturers reduce their import taxes by finding errors in how certain goods are classified in the tariff schedule.

Small changes can make a big difference. Add drawstrings or pockets below the waist to a blouse and the import tax drops from 15.4% to 8.1% for a cotton version and from 26.9% to 16% for one made of polyester.

U.S.-based companies are also scouring customs laws for loopholes. Increasingly, e-commerce companies are looking to ship directly to U.S. homes from warehouses in Mexico, Hong Kong, and Canada. Federal regulations allow U.S. -based companies to send packages worth less than \$800 to American homes from countries like Mexico and pay no tariffs.

"People are looking at a variety of new or already established legal ways to reduce tariffs," said Lamar of the American Apparel & Footwear Association.

Some are trying not-so-legitimate means, too. Chinese exporters have tried to evade U.S. tariffs by sending honey, steel, ceramic tiles and other goods through Vietnam and relabeling them as Vietnamese, according to the country's customs agency.

The Vietnamese customs agency responded last month by announcing that it would increase penalties for such "country of origin fraud."

WAITING IT OUT

The standoff over Beijing's combative technology policies has dragged on for more than a year and consumed 11 rounds of negotiations. Even if the two sides forge an agreement, it's far from clear that it would stick. The uncertainty is chilling investment.

"Companies don't like to inject a lot of change in their operations," said Brian Dunch, leader of global trade services at the consultancy PwC. "Change creates inefficiencies."

A survey by the American Chamber of Commerce in South China found that U.S. manufacturers had suspended nearly half their investment projects valued above \$250 million because of uncertainty in U.S.-China trade relations.

Some companies worry that there may be no way out of Trump's trade wars. Disputes that seemed to have been resolved can suddenly flare up again.

On May 13, for example, GoPro, the action-camera maker based in San Mateo, California, reiterated its plan to evade Trump's tariffs by moving its production of U.S.-bound cameras from China to Mexico. Yet before the month was out, Trump had threatened to impose heavy tariffs on Mexican imports — to pressure Mexico to stop the flow of Central American migrants to the southern U.S. border. Though Trump later dropped that threat, the incident highlighted the way the mercurial president can upend the rules of trade on a whim.

Likewise, Vietnam's status as a tariff safe haven may prove fleeting.

"Vietnam takes advantage of us even worse than China," Trump warned in an interview last month.

D'Innocenzio reported from New York and McDonald from Beijing. AP Business Writer Joyce M. Rosenberg contributed to this report from New York.

US stock indexes shake off an early loss and close higher

By DAMIAN J. TROISE AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks reversed course from an early slump and closed higher Thursday to break a two-day losing streak after technology and bank stocks rallied.

Corporate earnings are in full swing and investors have been cautiously assessing results and company statements. The volatile market is still on track for a weekly loss despite the S&P 500 opening the week with a record high close. The pullback has barely dented the big gains made by every major index this year, including a 19.5% rise for the S&P 500 index.

The latest batch of results are providing a better picture of the economy after months of ups and downs in the market because of policy concerns and lingering trade disputes.

"We've been watching the game and now we actually get to see the scorecard," said Brad McMillan, chief investment officer for Commonwealth Financial Network.

The results so far have reflected financial strength from banks as the broader economy holds up with solid job growth and consumer confidence.

"The consumers are still making things happen out there and it's showing up in the earnings to a surprising degree," he said.

The S&P 500 index rose 10.69 points, or 0.4%, to 2,995.11. The Dow Jones Industrial Average edged up 3.12 points to 27,222.97. It was down as much as 151 points earlier. The Nasdaq composite rose 22.04 points, or 0.3%, to 8,207.24.

IBM rose 4.6% after reporting solid results. The company, along with Apple, helped lift the technology sector to lead the broader gains.

Banks led financial stocks higher. BB&T rose 2.8% and SunTrust Banks rose 2.7%. Both reported earnings that easily beat analysts' estimates.

Medical equipment makers helped health care stocks reverse course after an early loss. Danaher rose 2.4% after reporting solid second quarter results. Abbott Laboratories and Thermo Fisher both rose 2.3%.

Market indexes were down most of the day after Netflix plunged 10.3% in heavy trading and took other communications companies down with it. The streaming video service reported a slump in new subscribers that could mean trouble as it faces a new wave of competition from Disney and Apple.

Communications stocks remained the day's biggest loser. Consumer-oriented and energy stocks also fell. Dollar Tree shed 1.9% and Apache lost 3.8%.

Financial results remain a mixed bag for many companies. Only about 13% of S&P 500 companies have reported, according to FactSet, and analysts expect profits to fall 2.4% overall when every report is tallied.

Union Pacific rose 5.9% after the railroad operator reported profit growth and beat Wall Street forecasts despite hauling less freight. The company cut expenses by 7% during the quarter as shipments fell amid ongoing trade disputes. On Wednesday, rival CSX cut its revenue forecast as it deals with a slowdown in shipments.

Philip Morris International rose 8.2% after the cigarette maker raised its profit forecast for the year following a solid second quarter.

Genuine Parts fell 4.5% after the maker of automotive parts reported weak second quarter financial results and trimmed its profit outlook. The company said it is experiencing weaker demand in Europe.

Microsoft rose 1.6% after the close of regular trading. The technology company's second quarter profit, which it reported after the closing bell, beat Wall Street forecasts.

Several other large companies are expected to report results Friday, including American Express and Schlumberger.

Benchmark crude oil fell \$1.48 to settle at \$55.30 a barrel. Brent crude oil, the international standard, fell \$1.73 to close at \$61.93 a barrel. Wholesale gasoline fell 5 cents to \$1.83 per gallon. Heating oil declined 3 cents to \$1.86 per gallon. Natural gas fell 1 cent to \$2.29 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Gold rose \$4.80 to \$1,426.10 per ounce, silver rose 23 cents to \$16.12 per ounce and copper fell 1 cent to \$2.70 per pound.

The dollar fell to 107.52 Japanese yen from 108.10 yen on Wednesday. The euro strengthened to \$1.1266

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from \$1.1223.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, July 19, the 200th day of 2019. There are 165 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 19, 1969, Apollo 11 and its astronauts, Neil Armstrong, Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin and Michael Collins, went into orbit around the moon.

On this date:

In 1553, King Henry VIII's daughter Mary was proclaimed Queen of England after Lady Jane Grey was deposed.

In 1812, during the War of 1812, the First Battle of Sackets Harbor in Lake Ontario resulted in an American victory as U.S. naval forces repelled a British attack.

In 1848, a pioneering women's rights convention convened in Seneca Falls, New York.

In 1944, the Democratic national convention convened in Chicago with the nomination of President Franklin D. Roosevelt considered a certainty.

In 1961, TWA became the first airline to begin showing regularly scheduled in-flight movies as it presented "By Love Possessed" to first-class passengers on a flight from New York to Los Angeles.

In 1979, the Nicaraguan capital of Managua fell to Sandinista guerrillas, two days after President Anastasio Somoza fled the country.

In 1980, the Moscow Summer Olympics began, minus dozens of nations that were boycotting the games because of the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan.

In 1985, Christa McAuliffe of New Hampshire was chosen to be the first schoolteacher to ride aboard the space shuttle. (McAuliffe and six other crew members died when the Challenger exploded shortly after liftoff in January 1986.)

In 1989, 111 people were killed when United Air Lines Flight 232, a DC-10 which suffered the uncontained failure of its tail engine and the loss of hydraulic systems, crashed while making an emergency landing at Sioux City, Iowa; 185 other people survived.

In 1990, President George H.W. Bush joined former presidents Ronald Reagan, Gerald R. Ford and Richard M. Nixon at ceremonies dedicating the Nixon Library and Birthplace (since redesignated the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum) in Yorba Linda, California.

In 1993, President Bill Clinton announced a policy allowing homosexuals to serve in the military under a compromise dubbed "don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue."

In 2016, Republicans meeting in Cleveland nominated Donald Trump as their presidential standard-bearer; in brief videotaped remarks, Trump thanked the delegates, saying: "This is a movement, but we have to go all the way."

Ten years ago: A Russian-owned civilian helicopter crashed shortly after takeoff from southern Afghanistan's largest NATO base, killing 16 civilians. Israel rejected a U.S. demand to suspend a planned housing project in east Jerusalem. Stewart Cink won the British Open in a four-hole playoff with Tom Watson. Eighty-one-year-old Hershel McGriff became the oldest driver to take part in a national NASCAR series race, finishing 13th in a Camping World West Series event at Portland International Raceway. Author Frank McCourt, who'd won the Pulitzer Prize for his memoir "Angela's Ashes," died in New York at 78.

Five years ago: A New York City police officer (Daniel Pantaleo) involved in the arrest of Eric Garner, who died in custody two days earlier after being placed in an apparent chokehold, was stripped of his gun and badge and placed on desk duty. Actor James Garner, 86, died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: The White House said President Donald Trump had invited Russian President Vladimir Putin to the White House in the fall for a second get-together, just days after a Helsinki summit that brought Trump criticism from Democrats and Republicans alike. Putin said his summit with Trump had

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been a success, and he accused Trump's opponents in the U.S. of hampering any progress on the issues they discussed. A duck boat packed with tourists capsized and sank in high winds on a lake in the tourist town of Branson, Missouri, killing 17 people.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Helen Gallagher is 93. Country singer Sue Thompson is 93. Singer Vikki Carr is 79. Blues singer-musician Little Freddie King is 79. Country singer-musician Commander Cody is 75. Actor George Dzundza is 74. Rock singer-musician Alan Gorrie (Average White Band) is 73. International Tennis Hall of Famer Ilie Nastase is 73. Rock musician Brian May is 72. Rock musician Bernie Leadon is 72. Actress Beverly Archer is 71. Movie director Abel Ferrara is 68. Actor Peter Barton is 63. Rock musician Kevin Haskins (Love and Rockets; Bauhaus) is 59. Movie director Atom Egoyan is 59. Actor Campbell Scott is 58. Actor Anthony Edwards is 57. Country singer Kelly Shiver is 56. Actress Clea Lewis is 54. Percussionist Evelyn Glennie is 54. Country musician Jeremy Patterson is 49. Classical singer Urs Buhler (Il Divo) is 48. Actor Andrew Kavovit is 48. Rock musician Jason McGerr (Death Cab for Cutie) is 45. Actor Benedict Cumberbatch is 43. Actress Erin Cummings is 42. TV chef Marcela Valladolid is 41. Actor Chris Sullivan ("This is Us") is 39. Actor Jared Padalecki is 37. Actor Trai Byers is 36. Actress Kaitlin Doubleday ("Nashville") is 35. Actor/comedian Dustin Ybarra is 33. Actor Steven Anthony Lawrence is 29.

Thought for Today: "An optimist will tell you the glass is half-full; the pessimist, half-empty; and the engineer will tell you the glass is twice the size it needs to be." — Author unknown.