

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 1 of 50

[2- SD News Watch: Expanded S.D. cheese plant violates pollution limits](#)

[3- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)

[7- Groton School Positions Available](#)

[7- Geist Bridal Shower](#)

[8- Storm system moves through Groton](#)

[11- Storms develop yesterday morning](#)

[13- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)

[14- Barb Stork Appointed to Board of Regents](#)

[14- Deployment ceremony scheduled for Aberdeen, Watertown Guard units](#)

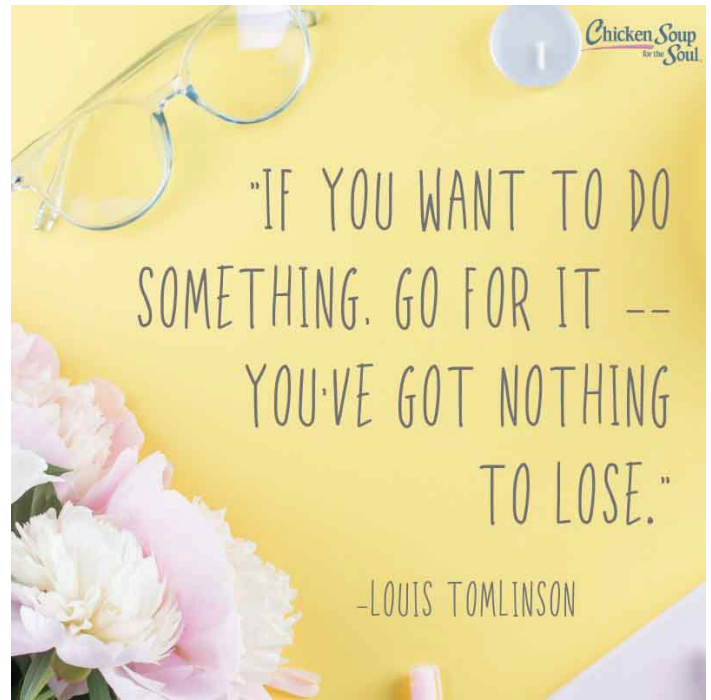
[15- C&MA Vacation Bible School](#)

[16- Weather Pages](#)

[19- Daily Devotional](#)

[20- 2019 Groton Events](#)

[21- News from the Associated Press](#)



## **CLOSED:** Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

## Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Swimming Pool Hours

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

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

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

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

### July 19-21

State Junior Teener Tournament in Elkton

### 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



**The Agropur cheese plant is located on Main Avenue in downtown Lake Norden in Hamlin County. Just three months after a major expansion and installation of a new wastewater treatment plant, the company has already violated state pollution limits.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

## **Expanded S.D. cheese plant violates pollution limits**

Agropur plant in Lake Norden may face fines over violations just three months after \$252 million expansion that shifted wastewater directly to Big Sioux River.

**Bart Pfankuch**

**South Dakota News Watch**

The newly expanded Agropur cheese plant in Lake Norden, S.D., is facing a possible fine from state regulators after tests showed the plant's wastewater that is dumped directly into the Big Sioux River violated state pollution limits in four categories.

Tests of the wastewater released in the expanded plant's first two months of operation showed nine violations for excessive amounts of nitrates and ammonia and high levels of alkalinity and conductivity, according to data from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The violations came after the plant underwent a \$252 million expansion over the past year that tripled its capacity to process milk into cheese. Agropur, a Canadian-owned firm that operates nine production

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 3 of 50



**This spot on the Big Sioux River, located about three miles northwest of Esteline, is where the Agropur pipe discharges treated wastewater into the river. This image was taken looking north from 192nd Street.** Photo: Courtesy of East Dakota

Water Development District

plants in five U.S. states, spent about \$28 million on a new wastewater-treatment system to handle wastes from the expanded plant.

Officials from the plant, the state and area water-management agencies were all disappointed with the early pollution violations.

"The data is showing they've had some violations and it was worse than I expected," said Al Spangler, a water-treatment permit manager with the state Department of Environment & Natural Resources, which regulates industrial and municipal wastewater-treatment systems. "It's not uncommon to have some violations at the beginning and after such a large industrial expansion, but the requirements are that they have to be meeting the limits at the beginning of their discharge and moving forward. They had violations on several different parameters, and we felt that we needed to take action right away."

Spangler said the state is in the process of working with Agropur to correct the problems and is still determining what financial penalty the plant may face.

The violations come after a lengthy debate over issuance of a new wastewater permit for the expanded facility. Initially, the state did not plan to place limits on nitrate levels in the discharge water, but after an outcry by area water-management officials, the state enacted limits on nitrates, among the most worrisome of pollutants in the Big Sioux River. The allowable limits of nitrates – a maximum of 31.5 parts per million released on any single day and a monthly average of 18 ppm – were significantly higher than water managers requested, and still the plant was unable to meet them in its first two months of operation. Several agencies and individuals who commented during the permitting process argued for a limit of 10 ppm of nitrates, which is the level considered safe for drinking water.

"We stood up and didn't approve of the discharge permit, and while we're glad the state listened to us and created a standard, now [Agropur has] already violated it," said Martin Jarrett, general manager of the Big Sioux Community Water System that lies just downriver from the Agropur discharge site. "It really is in the state's court now and we're all waiting to see what actions they take."

The plant had a 40 ppm nitrate release on one day in May, federal data show. The plant also had three violations of ammonia-discharge limits, including a monthly average in April that was nearly five times

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 4 of 50

higher than the allowable limit, and a discharge on one day that month that was nearly seven times the limit. The plant was also barely within limits on parameters known as chronic toxicity and total dissolved solids during April and May.

High nitrate levels can restrict oxygen absorption in humans who ingest polluted water and are especially dangerous to infants, who can suffer from methemoglobinemia, also known as "blue baby syndrome." High ammonia levels can kill fish and other life forms that live in the water.

State officials and regional water managers say the potential impact of the Agropur violations is minimal at this time due to abnormally high water levels and flow rates in the Big Sioux River, which help dilute pollutants. No drinking-water systems in northeast South Dakota pull water directly from the Big Sioux River, but several systems rely on the aquifer that is fed by waters from the river.

"It doesn't take much of a calculation to figure out that 70 percent of the water in my wells comes from the river, so what comes down that river does really affect me and my customers," said Jarrett, whose system provides drinking water from the Big Sioux Aquifer to about 10,000 people in Lake and Moody counties. "Historically, if you keep loading the Big Sioux River with high nitrate levels, if you're putting in 18 ppm per month, it will persist longer and become an issue with the drinking water."

Tim Czmowski, a lifelong South Dakota resident who serves as vice president of Midwest operations for Agropur, said the company has taken swift and extensive action to prevent future wastewater violations.

"Agropur takes its environmental responsibility very seriously and we have put forth a great amount of effort in order to comply with state limits," Czmowski said. "I'm from South Dakota, and I have a personal responsibility to make sure that we do comply."

Czmowski said the company has been working closely with the state and numerous experts to refine and improve its wastewater-treatment processes.

"It's a process, and we're very confident we will come into compliance," he said. "I feel that we're on a good path, and obviously the state of South Dakota is aware of every detail."



**The milk towers at the Agropur cheese plant on Main Avenue in downtown Lake Norden define the skyline of the Hamlin County town of less than 500 people.** Photo:

Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

## Small town, major expansion

Agropur invested \$252 million to roughly triple the production capacity of its cheese plant in Lake Norden from processing about 3.3 million pounds of milk per day to more than 9 million pounds per day, Czmowski said. Production has ramped up since the expanded plant began operating this spring but will not likely reach full capacity for two to four years, he said. The plant produces cheeses that include mozzarella, provolone, Romano, asiago, Muenster, Parmesan, Monterey Jack and cheddar.

As part of the expansion, the company planned to spend \$24 million on a new wastewater-treatment plant, but Czmowski said that in order to meet state permit requirements, Agropur had to spend close to \$28 million. The company constructed a 14.5-mile pipeline to carry treated wastewater to a discharge site directly into the Big Sioux River about three miles northwest of Estelline.

The plant expansion, described by state officials one of the largest single industrial projects in state history, is expected to generate a \$1 billion overall annual economic impact and will allow the plant to hire about 125 new employees beyond its existing workforce of 225.

Obtaining more milk from dairies in South Dakota and other states is one challenge to operating at full capacity, Czmowski said. The plant now needs milk from about 85,000 more cows than were producing for Agropur prior to the expansion, which will create economic opportunities for existing or new dairy farmers across the state and region, he said.

The plant in Lake Norden, a Hamlin County town of fewer than 500 people, was built in the 1950s and has had different ownership over the years, with Agropur purchasing the plant in 2014, Czmowski said.

Formerly, the plant used a series of manmade wetlands to filter its treated wastewater that eventually dumped into a tributary of the Big Sioux River. The plant had a strong track record of meeting pollution limits with the former system, which is a main reason the state initially felt comfortable not placing nitrate limits on the expanded plant's wastewater, Spangler said.

The new treatment system will feature many of the same elements of the old system but also use a new anaerobic processing system that uses several technologies to further screen out and remove pollutants.

The old permit considered Agropur a "non-discharge" plant because wastes were not directly dumped into a flowing waterway. Now, the plant is allowed to dump up to 2 million gallons of treated wastewater per day directly into the Big Sioux River, one of the state's most prominent rivers but also the most pol-



**Construction is still ongoing at the Agropur cheese plant in Lake Norden, S.D., which has seen its milk production capacity triple as part of a \$252 million expansion. The plant violated pollution limits in its treated wastewater during its first few months of operation.**

Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

luted. Early discharges from the new system have averaged just under 1 million gallons per day.

The Big Sioux River runs north-south through the most populated portion of South Dakota and forms the famed waterfall in downtown Sioux Falls that gave the city its name. Along its route, the river is subjected to daily dumping of treated wastes from several municipalities, numerous cheesemakers and other industrial plants, and also receives significant polluted runoff from farms. The city of Sioux Falls and the Smithfield pork-processing plant combined dump about 20 million gallons of treated human and industrial wastewaters into the river each day near downtown Sioux Falls.

## Concerns raised by numerous groups

Water managers along the route say that although the addition of pollutants from Agropur make up only a small portion of contaminants in the river, the cumulative effect of increased dumping is worrisome.

"We need to be concerned," said Jay Gilbertson, manager of the East Dakota Water Development District in Brookings. "The fact that the impact of that violation on the river was inconsequential due to high river flows now isn't the point. The Big Sioux does not have an unlimited capacity to assimilate whatever we dump into it."

Other commenters noted that when flows in the Big Sioux reach historic lows, as they did during an extended drought in recent years, the Agropur discharges at the maximum allowable level could make up about 60 percent of the water flow in the river.

About a dozen individuals and groups filed formal comments to the state during the permitting process for the Agropur expansion, most raising concerns over pollution impacts on the Big Sioux River and also over the lack of nitrate limits. Commenters included eight water-management or -protection groups but also the state Game, Fish & Parks Department, which pointed out that the Big Sioux River in the discharge area is already impaired by high concentrations of E.coli and is impaired downstream owing to E.coli, mercury and suspended solids.

The EPA and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service also urged the state to impose pollution limits. The wildlife service noted, and News Watch confirmed, that Agropur plants in Idaho, Iowa and Wisconsin have had wastewater-permit violations for exceeding limits of phosphorous, residual chlorine, suspended solids, and oxygen demand, and also for improper reporting of data.

Czmowski said efforts to build and employ its new wastewater-treatment process were made more difficult by an unusually cold winter and wet spring in South Dakota.

"We did have very good success, but as normal start-up conditions occur, as we were running, we did



**A milk truck operator awaits his turn to unload at the Agropur cheese plant in Lake Norden, S.D. A large expansion at the plant has created 125 new jobs and also provided major opportunities for growth among dairy farmers across the state.** Photo: Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 7 of 50

have some mechanical failures that caused the treatment processes to be interrupted," Czmowski said. "We fell out of balance and some violations occurred, which we take full responsibility for."

Czmowski said plant officials have held almost daily conference calls with a team of employees since the violations occurred to improve the wastewater treatment, resulting in two or three minor improvements each day.

"We've made hundreds of adjustments and changes and invested in new equipment, we've rented equipment and we've contacted the best in the industry to tap their professional expertise," Czmowski said. "We are also working with the state, and I would say that out of all the operations Agropur has, the standards that have been put forth by the state of South Dakota, they are a tall order and we will do whatever we can to meet them."

Spangler said he plans to tour the Lake Norden plant later this month to check on progress and try to ensure future violations do not occur.

He said the public should be aware that the state's regulatory role is one based both on protection of the environment and creating an economic environment that is conducive to industry and employment.

"In the DENR, our mission is to protect the environment without causing serious impact to economic development," Spangler said. "In any permit we issue or anything we do, we have to consider both the environment and economic development, which is an important balancing act."

In addition to fines, Agropur could face revocation of its wastewater permit if violations were to continue for an extended period of time, though that action is rare, Spangler said.

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

MS/HS Administrative Assistant/Study Hall Supervisor

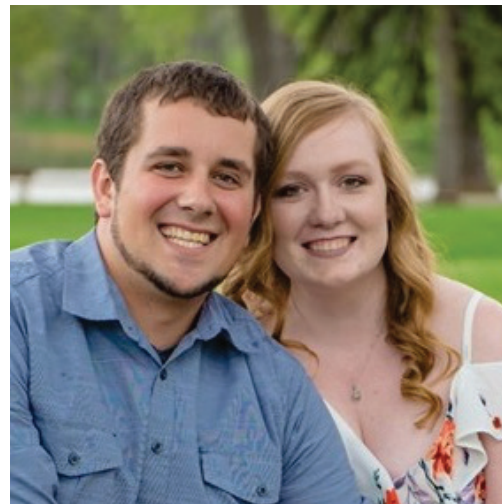
Yearbook Advisor

Assistant Boys Basketball Coach

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

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

The Groton Area School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



## 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

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 8 of 50



**A storm system was approaching Groton from the west yesterday morning.**  
(Photos by Paul Kosel)





# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 9 of 50



**Heavy rain fell in the city, dropping any where from .70 to .90 rain in about 20 minutes. The above photo shows the water flowing off the roof of the transit and the building to the north. The photo to the left features a look at downtown during the downpour.**

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 10 of 50



**Water was backed up at the intersections as the city's storm sewer system was maxed out from the sudden downpour.**

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 11 of 50

## Storms develop yesterday morning

Storms developed over northwest South Dakota during the early morning hours of July 19, 2019 and tracked eastward, persisting all the way across northern South Dakota and into west central Minnesota. The storms were prolific wind producers with wind speeds anywhere from 59 to 78 mph recorded by weather instruments. Many reports of tree damage, roof damage and structural damage occurred in the storms path.

In Aberdeen, SD a localized area of intense winds occurred on the southwest side of town, near the intersection of 6th Ave and S 2nd St. A store marquee sign was torn down and pieces tossed a block away, framing for new construction was flattened, and significant shingle damage occurred. Eye witnesses noted some rotation as debris was lofted into the air. This may have been cause by a 'gustnado'. A gustnado is a small, whirlwind which typically forms on the leading edge of a straight-line wind producing thunderstorm. Gustnados do not connect with the cloud-base and therefore are not considered tornadoes, but instead are classified as thunderstorm wind events. Based off damage, winds in this small area of Aberdeen were likely in the 80-90 mph range. The automated weather station at the Aberdeen Airport recorded 78 mph winds.

Storms transitioned from linear, wind producing storms to single cell rotating storms, or supercell storms, as they moved over west central MN. Hail and funnel clouds were reported in Traverse county.



Business Marquee Sign Damage in Aberdeen, SD.  
Photo Credit: NWS Aberdeen.



New Construction Flattened in Aberdeen, SD.  
Photo Credit: NWS Aberdeen.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 12 of 50



Shingle Damage in Aberdeen, SD. Photo Credit: NWS Aberdeen.



Tree Damage in Aberdeen, SD. Photo Credit: NWS Aberdeen.



Shelf Cloud at NWS Aberdeen. Photo Credit: NWS Aberdeen.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 13 of 50



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



## Madam Speaker, Bring USMCA to the Floor

This op-ed originally ran in the Washington Examiner.

Both in South Dakota and in Washington, I repeatedly hear the same thing – support free trade but hold bad actors accountable. As Americans, our innovation and ambition has allowed us to compete and succeed in a global market – but the playing field should be even. South Dakota has benefited greatly from market access, particularly for agricultural products. But success doesn't mean there isn't room for improvement. The producers I hear from weekly want to hold China accountable for their wrongdoing.

If there is room for improvement, and there is, Congress should be leading the charge. That's why I am urging my colleagues and the Speaker to bring the U.S. Mexico Canada Trade Agreement (USMCA) to the House floor for ratification before this August. No agreement will ever be perfect, but there is no doubt that USMCA represents a real improvement from the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA). NAFTA has led this country to prosperity in the international trade arena – but after decades it's time for an upgrade. A new study from the Business Roundtable found that international trade supports nearly 39 million American jobs, representing one out of every five jobs in the United States. Furthermore, according to the study, the proportion of jobs supported by trade has doubled since 1992 prior to the implementation of NAFTA, when trade supported one in every 10 jobs in the United States.

Since NAFTA was monumental in eliminating tariff barriers to trade, I'm hopeful trade will continue to flow duty free across the continent. What makes USMCA unique is the modernized approach – by focusing on labor standards, harmonizing regulations and deterring future trade barriers, this agreement is forward looking in our relationship with our closest trading partners.

These changes will have a quantitative impact on the American economy. The International Trade Commission's model estimates that USMCA would raise U.S. real GDP by \$68.2 billion (0.35 percent) and U.S. employment by 176,000 jobs (0.12 percent). Such growth would allow our nation to continue its historic trend of economic and job expansion.

It's nearly impossible to talk trade – at least in South Dakota – without discussing the implications of China. China needs to be held accountable, and it needs to happen quickly, so our farmers and ranchers can regain access to markets abroad. I've always considered myself a rule follower, and I think China could use a few more rules. Passage of USMCA will allow us to focus our efforts on bringing China back to the table to negotiate in good faith. Congress must do its part to make this happen.

Trade with Canada and Mexico alone supports more than 12 million American jobs. USMCA will only strengthen that trade relationship and establish a blueprint for agreements that can replicate this success. The newly elected House majority is being put to the test. I hear time and again many of my Democrat colleagues "want to get to yes," but as the clock ticks on, they seem to find new reasons to stall. The question remains – are they willing to put politics aside for the good of the country, or will they reject an objectively better deal to cost President Trump a win?

In just seven short months in Congress, I've witnessed firsthand the partisan disfunction of Washington. This disfunction derails policies that put American workers and the economy first. We should be better, and we shouldn't play politics on such a strong agreement. Passing USMCA is the right thing to do and I have confidence it will have the support of the House. Madam Speaker, bring USMCA to the floor.

## Barb Stork Appointed to Board of Regents

PIERRE, S.D. – Barb Stork, a retired businesswoman from Dakota Dunes, has been named to the South Dakota Board of Regents by Gov. Kristi Noem.

The South Dakota Board of Regents is the constitutional governing board for the state's six public universities and two schools serving special K-12 populations.

"It is an honor to be asked to serve on the Board of Regents and to help with the board's strategic plan for student success, academic quality, economic development, and affordability," Stork said. "The regents have an immense task in overseeing that public education both prepares and rewards the students. I am excited to help support the continued success of our students."

Stork founded and, from 1989 to 2016, served as CEO of Midwest Provisions Inc., a multi-million-dollar contract food service company serving large corporations throughout the Midwest from South Dakota to Texas.

She also served as chair of the Sanford Health System Board of Trustees and is a past chairwoman of the Sioux Falls Area Chamber of Commerce. A native of Ute, Iowa, Stork earned a bachelor's degree in business administration from West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas.

Stork fills an expired term on the Board of Regents previously held by David Mickelson. Her six-year term of appointment continues through March 31, 2025.

## Deployment ceremony scheduled for Aberdeen, Watertown Guard units

ABERDEEN, S.D. - A deployment ceremony is scheduled for 114 Soldiers with the South Dakota Army National Guard's Alpha Battery, 1-147th Field Artillery Battalion and 147th Forward Support Company, Sunday, Sept. 1, at 2 p.m. at the Aberdeen High School gymnasium.

The public is encouraged to attend the event as the units depart for a 10-month deployment to Europe.

A community send-off ceremony will also be held for 56 Soldiers deploying with the 147th FSC on Friday, Aug. 1, at 6 p.m. in Watertown at the Ernie Edwards Readiness Center.

The unit will be supporting Operation Atlantic Resolve, which builds readiness, increases interoperability and enhances the bond between ally and partner militaries using multinational training events in Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Romania.

The Aberdeen-based Alpha Battery is equipped with the Multiple Launch Rocket System, or MLRS, and is capable of providing artillery support to a brigade, division, corps or coalition task force. The Watertown-based Forward Support Company is a multifunctional logistics unit which provides supply and maintenance support.

The units will report to Fort Bliss, Texas, to complete several weeks of theater-specific training prior to deployment overseas.



**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**

**GROTON C & MA CHURCH**

**706 N. MAIN**

**JULY 21 – JULY 25**

**FOR AGES 3 THROUGH GRADE 6**

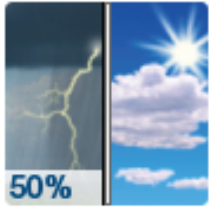
**6:15 – 8:30 PM**

**QUESTIONS? CALL JANA 397-7471**

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 16 of 50

Today



Chance  
T-storms then  
Mostly Sunny

High: 80 °F

Tonight



Mostly Clear

Low: 60 °F

Sunday



Partly Sunny  
then Chance  
T-storms

High: 79 °F

Sunday  
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 56 °F

Monday



Sunny

High: 78 °F



Published on: 07/19/2019 at 10:58AM



## Today in Weather History

July 20, 1951: From the southeast residential section of Watertown, an estimated F2 tornado moved east, passing near Kranzburg and Goodwin. The storms destroyed one home and several barns.

July 20, 2002: A powerful severe thunderstorm moved over Rapid City and across the adjacent plains east of town. Downburst winds and the associated gust front caused damage along a nearly 30-mile long path. Extensive tree damage occurred throughout the eastern half of the city with countless trees and branches more than 24-inch diameter fell. Two roofs were torn off by the winds. Flying debris damaged numerous cars and buildings. The NWS office in downtown Rapid City measured an 80 mph wind gust, with meteorologists noting winds were sustained at 60 to 70 mph for 5 minutes. Ellsworth AFB wind equipment measured a 106 mph wind gust from the thunderstorm as it passed.

1915: A record high temperature of 115 degrees occurred in Yosemite Valley at the National Park Headquarters, California (around 4,000 feet elevation). This reading was the warmest day in a streak of 7 consecutive days of 110 degrees or higher at Yosemite Valley from the 19th through the 25th.

1977: A flash flood hits Johnstown, Pennsylvania, on this day in 1977, killing 84 people and causing millions of dollars in damages. This flood came 88 years after the infamous Great Flood of 1889 that killed more than 2,000 people in Johnstown.

2005: Hurricane Emily made landfall in northern Mexico. When the central pressure fell to 29.43 inches of mercury, and its sustained winds reached 160 mph on the 16th, Emily became the strongest hurricane ever to form before August, breaking a record set by Hurricane Dennis just six days before. It was also the earliest Category 5 hurricane ever recorded in the Atlantic basin, beating Hurricane Allen's old record by nearly three weeks.

1930 - The temperature at Washington D.C. soared to an all-time record of 106 degrees. The next day Millsboro reached 110 degrees to set a record for the state of Delaware. July 1930 was one of the hottest and driest summers in the U.S., particularly in the Missouri Valley where severe drought conditions developed. Toward the end of the month state records were set for Kentucky with 114 degrees, and Mississippi with 115 degrees. (David Ludlum)

1934 - The temperature at Keokuk, IA, soared to 118 degrees to establish a state record. (The Weather Channel)

1953 - Twenty-two inches of hail reportedly fell northeast of Dickinson, ND. (The Weather Channel)

1986 - The temperature at Charleston, SC, hit 104 degrees for the second day in a row to tie their all-time record high. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather across Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 87 mph at Mosinee, WI, and strong thunderstorm winds capsized twenty-six boats on Grand Traverse Bay drowning two women. Thunderstorms produced nine inches of rain at Shakopee, MN, with 7.83 inches reported in six hours at Chaska, MN. Thunderstorms in north central Nebraska produced hail as large as golf balls in southwestern Cherry County, which accumulated to a depth of 12 inches. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - The temperature at Redding, CA, soared to an all-time record high of 118 degrees. Showers and thunderstorms produced much needed rains from New England to southern Texas. Salem, IN, was deluged with 7.2 inches of rain resulting in flash flooding. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Showers and thunderstorms in the Middle Atlantic Coast Region soaked Wilmington, DE, with 2.28 inches of rain, pushing their total for the period May through July past the previous record of 22.43 inches. Heavy rain over that three month period virtually wiped out a 16.82 inch deficit which had been building since drought conditions began in 1985. Thunderstorms in central Indiana deluged Lebanon with 6.50 inches of rain in twelve hours, and thunderstorms over Florida produced wind gusts to 84 mph at Flagler Beach. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)





## HONESTY

In his book, *Why Am I Afraid to Tell You Who I Am?* John Powell gives a clear, easy to understand answer: You may not like me. We might also add, Or what I do.

Most of us want to be liked. And most of us will do whatever it takes to create an image - no matter what it takes - to get others to like us. Even if we have to be dishonest, or to be a little blunter, lie, to get others to like us.

Deceit comes from being human. We do our very best to hide who we really are for fear of being found out. We cover ourselves with clothes that hide our real shape. We color our hair to hide the grey that comes with age. We plaster our faces with make-up to fill in the lines. We use clever words to deceive others about our actions and feelings. We refuse to look into the eyes of someone if we are less than honest. Actually, the list could go on for pages.

Those of us who know God know that honesty is important to Him. He knows who we are and knows that honesty is a problem that originates in our hearts. The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? asked the prophet Jeremiah. It was an important question then, is now, and always will be.

And the answer then and now remains the same: Honesty has no middle ground. One is either honest or dishonest. Only God knows us perfectly and what can be found in the depths of our hearts. We may deceive ourselves and others, but not God. Self-righteousness comes from self-deception. So, A person may think their own ways are right, but the Lord weighs the heart.

As a child, I often sang, He sees all you do and He hears all you say? My God is writing all the time. When God makes a note about your honesty, what will it be?

Prayer: Please, Father, help us to be honest, first by not deceiving ourselves. We know You know us and our motives. May we have the desire and courage to be honest at all times. Amen!

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 21:2 A person may think their own ways are right, but the Lord weighs the heart.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 20 of 50

## 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

### Surrogacy gives 1 Britton couple new baby, extended family

By ERIN BALLARD Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — On the afternoon of Aug. 3, 2018, in a Fargo, North Dakota, delivery room, proud new parents Elizabeth and Gavin Waletich grasped the hands of Heidi Fritz, the woman who had just given birth to their daughter.

Out in the waiting room, a group representing all three gathered for the birth of the special baby girl. In that moment and for many to come, it didn't matter who was biologically related to Wren Waletich. It only mattered that she was loved by all of them.

The three families were brought together by a medical miracle and represent a broader, beautiful definition of what it means to be a family. Nearly a year after her daughter's birth, Elizabeth Waletich can still hardly believe the good fortune her family has had.

"This was more than I could have ever dreamed of," she said. "I just really feel like God had his hand right where we needed it."

The story of Wren's journey into the world and her parents' experience with surrogacy is one near and dear to Waletich's heart.

Britton native Waletich, 27, has known for years that she would not be able to have her own children. She had a partial hysterectomy when she was 15, meaning only her uterus was removed. Her eggs did not have to be preserved artificially because she had no underlying health concerns.

As a result, Waletich began considering surrogacy and adoption at a young age.

She was convinced she would want a closed adoption — one where there is no contact between the biological parents and adoptive family. But having gone through her journey with Fritz, Waletich has a much different opinion.

"Now, I see how beautiful it can be. It would just be a blessing for Heidi to be a part of (Wren's) life, too," she said. "You can only dream that it can be this good. I can't believe it gets to be us. We get to have Wren, and she gets to have all this love. Through all of this I have grown so much as a mother, and I owe all of that Heidi."

Waletich learned of Fritz through her cousin. Fritz had been a surrogate once before, and Waletich's cousin thought Fritz might be able to provide guidance or offer advice about the process.

In spring 2017, Waletich and Fritz decided to meet up in Fargo, where Fritz lives. They visited for six hours that day, and the connection was instant, according to Waletich.

"It was just like fate kind of hit me in the face," she said. "We were so lucky because now having gone through it one time, I can really, really see how scary it can be working with a stranger or anyone who's never done it before. Starting this journey is something we didn't see at the moment, but it kind of fell in our laps."

Waletich and Fritz realized quickly that their ideas on how a surrogacy should work, including boundaries and relationships, were aligned.

"Heidi had a clear plan for herself if she were to do this again, and it was exactly what we could've asked for," Waletich told Aberdeen American News. "We met in March, did the extraction (of eggs) in July and had the first transfer in September. It was kind of a whirlwind six months."

The Waletichs did a gestational surrogacy, meaning that Elizabeth's egg was fertilized first and then placed into Fritz's uterus — a technique known as in vitro fertilization. Fritz is not biologically related to Wren, but carried and delivered her.

Because she knew her fate at such a young age, Waletich said she didn't face the emotional turmoil that often accompanies infertility complications or assisted reproduction methods. That doesn't mean the journey was without its ups and downs, though.

"There were times where I think I mourned not being able to carry the baby, but it didn't weigh on me

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 22 of 50

too heavy," she said. "It wasn't until after the (first) failed transfer, for the first time in my life I thought I might not get to do this. It was a huge low point for us."

But those feelings melted away when the second procedure was a success in November. That's when the more complicated part of the surrogacy began. The Waletichs had to hire lawyers, work out health insurance and set up a new bank account.

"There's a lot of moving parts there. I don't think I realized how big a leap of faith it was," she said. "I feel like we just got so lucky."

During their journey to parenthood, the couple set up appointments at hospitals in Aberdeen and Sioux Falls in hopes of establishing a doctor and figuring where to begin in the long process ahead. Waletich learned that the options she had were financially straining and lengthy. It's difficult enough to be paired with a surrogate through an agency, let alone privately, she said. Agencies she researched had waiting lists of 75 families or more. Waletich left each appointment feeling discouraged.

Much of her anxiety was tied to the financial stress of the process. There were times when she thought she and Gavin had spent their last dime and wouldn't be able to afford to move forward. To prepare for the procedure, Fritz had to take \$5,000 worth of medication, which the Waletichs paid for.

"So you're just over the phone, hoping she did everything right. That's huge, it's nonrefundable," Waletich said. "How do you find somebody to carry the most precious thing in your life? And to trust somebody with the financial and legal aspects you have to go through . . . It's a huge thing. Heidi did everything perfectly."

As the pregnancy progressed, Waletich and Fritz developed a close bond. Waletich and her husband went to the majority of the doctor appointments, sometimes taking others along to share in the joy, with Fritz's permission.

"She was so gracious about all of us. She welcomed us with open arms," Waletich said. "It takes a very special person to do this on an emotional and physical level."

Fritz gave the Waletichs gifts throughout the pregnancy to help them build a foundation around their daughter's birth and feel even closer to the process. Many of them were keepsakes for Wren, such as a baby blanket and a book designed to explain surrogacy to children. Others were more for the parents, like a list of foods Fritz craved while carrying Wren.

When Waletich wasn't able to go to the first appointment at which Wren's heartbeat could be heard, Fritz recorded it and, as a surprise, put the sound inside of a stuffed animal bunny. After the birth, she gave the family a memory book full of professional and candid photos taken throughout the pregnancy.

Sharing those gifts with Wren is especially important to Waletich. She doesn't want Fritz's role in the birth to be a secret — Waletich wants her daughter to understand, as she gets older, where she came from.

"I want that to be her reality versus news that we share with her," she said. "I'll never take (that gift) for granted. Wren will never be confused. I would love to be able to give our future children that same understanding for how they came to be."

Throughout the pregnancy, until Wren was born, Waletich and Fritz spoke daily. Now, because of busy lives and hectic schedules, that's down to once a week, perhaps more. But they have plans to get together in the near future for sleepovers and extended family gatherings.

When Wren was born, Fritz's father gave the infant a keepsake silver coin — like the ones he's given to all his other grandchildren. It doesn't matter that Wren is not related biologically to Fritz and her family, Waletich said. That simply means there are more people to love her. It's a gift Waletich never knew she wanted for her children, but one that she'll always cherish.

Asked whether Wren will have a relationship with Fritz as she grows up, Waletich is firm.

"Absolutely," she said. "I feel like our story is just beginning."

---

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

## Spearfish woman recalls lightning strike

By MARK WATSON Black Hills Pioneer

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — A Spearfish woman wants area residents to know the dangers of watching a thunderstorm outside.

Stephanie Barry and her sister ventured out the High Plains Western Heritage Center June 25 to watch a severe thunderstorm that was rolling north of Spearfish.

"I don't chase (storms) around, but I've taken pictures and videos of lightning ever since I was a kid," Barry said.

The two joined two other vehicles in the parking lot and got out of their car to video the storm around 8:45 p.m.

"It was really far away when we got up there," Barry said.

But then the lightning got closer. Her video tells the tale.

The video she provided to the Black Hills Pioneer was 30 seconds of the five-minute clip, trimmed for email purposes.

Barry was facing north, shooting in the last minutes of daylight with her cell phone. Lightning, both ground strikes and cloud-based, can be seen in rapid succession. Then a bright light followed almost immediately after by a loud clap of thunder. Barry screams. The phone, knocked out of her hand, falls to the ground. The screen goes black.

Barry had been knocked off her feet by the bolt that struck 10-15 feet away.

"I didn't get knocked unconscious," she said. "All I remember is a really big, scary boom and a flash of light. It took me off my feet and knocked the phone out of my hand. The doctor said that is because of how powerful the electricity was."

Barry's sister was not injured by the indirect strike, although she did feel the electricity slightly in one foot.

"It hit the ground and I was the closest object. I got electrocuted and she didn't," Barry said.

The only visible injury was to the top of her left big toe that had a pinpoint sized hole — where the electricity came out, she assumes.

Barry said she was in shock and felt an enormous amount of adrenalin and her nerves "felt funny." After that adrenalin wore off, she said her muscles all over were sore.

Barry said she went to urgent care the next day where she underwent an EKG, blood work, and a neurological exam.

"It was definitely a once in a lifetime thing — hopefully," she said.

Although she still loves thunderstorms, "It's really scary now," she said. She has not ventured outside of her home in a storm since the strike.

"Maybe after a while, definitely not right now," she said.

Barry is not the only person to be struck by lightning. According to the National Weather Service, over the last 30 years, from 1989 to 2018, the U.S. has averaged 43 reported lightning fatalities per year. Only about 10% of people who are struck by lightning are killed, leaving 90% with various degrees of injury.

The odds a person, who lives to be 80 years old, is struck in their lifetime is 1 in 15,300.

Spearfish saw tragedy on July 12, 2015, when two Black Hills State University students were struck by lightning.

Gage McSpadden and Evan Strand were at the Spearfish Canyon Disc Golf Course located off Winterville Drive in Spearfish. McSpadden was struck directly and Strand indirectly. Both were flown to Denver, Colorado, for treatment. McSpadden died two days later.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 24 of 50

## SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

16-18-28-33-67, Mega Ball: 14, Megaplier: 3

(sixteen, eighteen, twenty-eight, thirty-three, sixty-seven; Mega Ball: fourteen; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$154 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$53 million

## “Got the Spider!” joke on demolished house circulates online

RENNER, S.D. (AP) — A photo of a demolished house with the words “Got the Spider!” painted on the roof has made the rounds on social media after a couple decided to have a little fun.

Jeff Hopkins and Dawn Cronk told the Argus Leader they wanted to write something on the roof of the crumbled house and “Got the Spider!” made them laugh. So Cronk bought a can of spray paint and the joke was set in motion.

A stranger took a photo on Tuesday and it’s since been shared online tens of thousands of times. Dozens of people have also driven by to giggle and take photos of their own.

Hopkins says he didn’t think anyone would notice, and they did it just to make themselves laugh. Cronk says she feels blessed to have made people slow down and smile.

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

## Portion of Interstate 229 in Sioux Falls buckles due to heat

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A portion of Interstate 229 in Sioux Falls has buckled due to extreme heat in the area.

The road buckled under the Western Avenue bridge, backing up traffic as crews worked to fix the problem and direct motorists. Drivers are being asked to slow down and use caution.

The temperature in Sioux Falls was 93 degrees with a heat index of 107 degrees when the buckle was reported Friday afternoon. The temperature reached 94 degrees with a heat index of 109 just a few hours later.

The city and surrounding area is under an excessive heat warning until 10 p.m. Friday.

## Shooting shatters apartment window, no injuries

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police are looking for the person who fired gunshots into a Sioux Falls apartment building from a vehicle.

The gunshots about 5 a.m. Friday shattered the front windows of one apartment, but didn’t hit anyone. Police say they found bullet holes in the exterior of the apartment building. Officers searched the area, but didn’t find a suspect or a vehicle that may have been involved.

## State seeks civil damages in illegal hunting case

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks officials are seeking \$80,000 in civil damages against a Sioux Falls man convicted of more than a dozen counts of illegally hunting or possessing big game.

Jesse Atwood pleaded guilty to 14 counts of illegally hunting or possessing 38 white tail deer in 2016 and 2017 in Kingsbury, McCook and Minnehaha counties. Atwood is currently in the Lake County Jail.

Prohibited hunting or possession of a big game animal is punishable by up to a year in jail and a \$2,000



fine. The Argus Leader says Atwood was criminally fined over \$14,000, had his hunting privileges revoked and had to turn over a shotgun and a rifle, among other items.

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

## AP FACT CHECK: Trump and Dems on an incendiary week

By HOPE YEN, AMANDA SEITZ and CALVIN WOODWARD Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump attributed statements to a Democratic congresswoman that she didn't make as he set off an incendiary week of vilification with accusations that she and three other lawmakers of color hate America.

The episode roiled the capital and excited Trump's North Carolina rally, overshadowing distortions in rhetoric that came from many quarters and from both parties on a variety of matters over the last week-plus — the Democratic presidential campaign among them.

A sampling:

LOVING AMERICA

TRUMP quotes Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., 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." — North Carolina rally on Wednesday.

TRUMP: "I hear the way she talks about al-Qaida. Al-Qaida has killed many Americans. She said, 'You can hold your chest out, you can — when I think of America — uhh — when I think of al-Qaida, I can hold my chest out.'" — remarks Monday at a manufacturing event at the White House.

THE FACTS: This is a wholly distorted account of what the Omar 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. The House rebuked him Tuesday for his "racist comments" after he said they should "go back" to their countries. All four are Americans; Omar was born in Somalia; the others in the U.S.

Omar said Trump is a "fascist" and she and the other women he's going after will "continue to be a nightmare to this president because his policies are a nightmare to us."

TRUMP, on Omar: "When she talked about the World Trade Center being knocked down, 'some people.' You remember the famous 'some people.' These are people that, in my opinion, hate our country." — remarks Monday at a manufacturing event.

THE FACTS: It's true that plenty of critics thought Omar sounded dismissive about the 2001 terrorist attacks in a comment in a speech in March. Those remarks, though, did not express love "for enemies like al-Qaida," as Trump put it.

Speaking to the Council on American-Islamic Relations, Omar said the group "was founded after 9/11 because they recognized that some people did something and that all of us were starting to lose access to our civil liberties." Her phrasing — "some people did something" — struck many people as a tone-deaf way to refer to the catastrophic attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 26 of 50

The American-Islamic group actually was founded in 1994, according to its website. Its membership skyrocketed after the 2001 attacks.

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." — North Carolina rally.

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 women 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.

## MIGRANTS

TRUMP: "The Obama Administration built the Cages, not the Trump Administration!" — tweet Monday.

THE FACTS: He is right.

The same facilities that Democrats characterize as cages for migrant children were used by the Obama administration. They are sectioned-off, chain-link indoor pens where children who come to the border without adults or who are separated from adults in detention are temporarily housed. The children are divided by age and sex. When Vice President Mike Pence recently visited detention facilities at the border, journalists accompanying him witnessed migrant men crowded into fetid chain-link quarters.

A year ago, Associated Press photographs showing young people in such enclosures were misrepresented online as depicting child detentions by Trump and denounced by some Democrats and activists as illustrating Trump's cruelty. In fact, the photos were taken in 2014 during the Obama administration.

Many Democrats in the presidential campaign and Congress continue to exploit the "kids in cages" imagery without acknowledging Obama used the facilities, too. His administration built the McAllen, Texas, facility with chain-link holding areas in 2014.

## HEALTH CARE

SEN. BERNIE SANDERS of Vermont, Democratic presidential candidate: "Medicare for All' would reduce overall health care spending in our country." — speech Wednesday.

THE FACTS: That remains to be seen. Savings from Medicare for All are not a slam dunk.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said in a report this year that total spending under a single-payer system, such as the one proposed by Sanders, "might be higher or lower than under the current system depending on the key features of the new system."

Those features involve payment rates for hospitals and doctors, which are not fully spelled out by Sanders, as well as the estimated cost of generous benefits that include long-term care services and no copays and deductibles.

Sanders' figure of \$5 trillion over 10 years in health cost savings comes from a study by the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. The lead author has been a political supporter of Sanders'.

Sanders also cites a savings estimate of \$2 trillion over 10 years taken from a study from the libertarian Mercatus Center at George Mason University in Virginia. But the author of that study says that Medicare for All advocates are mischaracterizing his conclusions.

A report this year by the nonprofit Rand think tank estimated that Medicare for All would do the opposite of what Sanders is promising, modestly raising national health spending.

Part of the reason is the generous benefits. Virtually free comprehensive medical care would lead to big increases in demand.

The Rand study modeled a hypothetical scenario in which a plan similar to Sanders' legislation had taken effect this year.

TRUMP: "We are offering plans up to 60 percent cheaper than Obamacare." — North Carolina rally.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 27 of 50

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 that his 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 administration introduced the short-term plans, which undermine how the Obama health law is supposed to work, after failing to repeal much of that 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." — North Carolina rally.

THE FACTS: But 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.

The Trump administration is pressing in court for full repeal of that law.

Trump and other Republicans say they'll have a plan to preserve protections for people with preexisting conditions. The White House has provided no details.

## AUTO INDUSTRY

SEN. KAMALA HARRIS of California, Democratic presidential candidate: "Some estimate that as many as 700,000 autoworkers are going to lose their job before the end of the year." — remarks in July 12 radio interview.

THE FACTS: This isn't happening. Harris mischaracterized the findings of a study that is also outdated.

In July 2018 the Center for Automotive Research laid out a variety of scenarios for potential job losses across all U.S. industries touched by the auto business — not just autoworkers — if a number of new tariffs and policies that Trump threatened were enacted. The worst case was 750,000. But those hypothetical losses went well beyond autoworkers, to include workers at restaurants, retail stores and any business that benefits from the auto industry.

In any event, the center revised its study in February 2019, with a worst-case scenario down to 367,000 job losses across all industries. And since then, the administration lifted tariffs on steel and aluminum products coming from Canada and Mexico, further minimizing the impact on the auto industry.

The auto industry has grown under Obama and Trump both. Although it's facing a leveling off in demand, it still posts strong numbers. It is not at risk of the catastrophe Harris raises as a possibility — the loss of 3 in 4 autoworkers in the remainder of this year.

TRUMP: "They're coming in at a level that we haven't seen for decades. Car companies are coming in — Japanese car companies, in particular. ... Japan has 12 different companies building plants in Michigan, in Ohio, in North Carolina, in Pennsylvania. One is going to be announced in Florida. We are doing things that nobody thought were possible." — Cabinet meeting Tuesday.

THE FACTS: There's no evidence that car companies are coming to the U.S. at a rate faster than in previous decades. Industry observers know of only a few Japanese automotive companies building or expanding factories in Michigan, Ohio, North Carolina or Pennsylvania — nowhere near a dozen.

Federal statistics show that jobs in auto and parts manufacturing grew at a slower rate in the two-plus years since Trump took office than in Obama's last two years.

Between January 2017, when Trump was inaugurated, and June of this year, the latest figures available, U.S. auto and parts makers added 41,900 jobs, or a 4.4% increase, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But in the two years before Trump took office, the industry added 63,600 manufacturing jobs,

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 28 of 50

a 7.1% increase.

In Ohio, Honda has filed paperwork for a small expansion of its engine plant in Anna, Ohio, near Dayton, but also has announced production cuts without layoffs. A parts supplier announced plans last year to expand in Springfield, Ohio. In North Carolina, transmission maker Aisin in April announced plans to bolster manufacturing operations with 900 jobs by 2021, but gave few details.

The only Japanese automakers building a new U.S. assembly plant are Toyota and Mazda, which are jointly constructing a factory in Alabama that will build SUVs. At least three parts companies have announced plans to build factories in Alabama to serve that facility.

Also, spokesmen for German automakers Volkswagen AG, Daimler AG and BMW AG say they haven't been told of any coming new factory announcements.

## ECONOMY

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." — Cabinet 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. Only about half of U.S. families hold stocks, so plenty of people are getting little to no benefit from the stock market gains.

TRUMP: "We have the strongest economy in history." — North Carolina rally.

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.

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." — North Carolina rally.

THE FACTS: 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." — North Carolina rally.

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.

Associated Press writers Tom Krisher in Detroit, Colleen Long, Josh Boak, Christopher Rugaber and Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar in Washington, and Elliot Spagat in San Diego contributed to this report.

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apne.ws/2kbx8bd>

Follow @APFactCheck on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APFactCheck>

## In reversal, Trump disavows criticism of chanting crowd

By **ALAN FRAM, DARLENE SUPERVILLE and JONATHAN LEMIRE** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has reversed his previous criticisms of a North Carolina campaign crowd that chanted “send her back” about a Somali-born congresswoman.

Trump on Friday defended the rally-goers as “patriots” while again questioning the loyalty of four Democratic lawmakers of color. His comments marked a return to a pattern that has become familiar during controversies of his own making: ignite a firestorm, backtrack, then strongly reaffirm his original, inflammatory position.

When reporters at the White House asked if he was unhappy with the Wednesday night crowd, Trump responded: “Those are incredible people. They are incredible patriots. But I’m unhappy when a congresswoman goes and says, ‘I’m going to be the president’s nightmare.’”

It was another dizzying twist in a saga sparked by the president’s racist tweets about Democratic Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota, who moved from Somalia as a child, and her colleagues Reps. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts.

The moment took an ugly turn at the rally when 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, though the next day he claimed he did not approve of the chant and tried to stop it.

But on Friday, he made clear he was not disavowing the chant and again laced into Omar, the target of the chant.

“You can’t talk that way about our country. Not when I’m president,” Trump said. “These women have said horrible things about our country and the people of our country.”

He also tweeted that it was “amazing how the Fake News Media became ‘crazed’ over the chant ‘send her back’ by a packed Arena (a record) crowd in the Great State of North Carolina, but is totally calm & accepting of the most vile and disgusting statements made by the three Radical Left Congresswomen.”

Omar was defiant after the rally, telling reporters at the Capitol that she believes the president is a “fascist” and casting 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 energize and mobilize their supporters to vote Trump out of office.

Trump’s double flip-flop was reminiscent of his response to the violent clash between white supremacists and anti-racist demonstrators in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017.

Then, he initially blamed violence on “both sides” of the altercation. After a wave of bipartisan condemnation and scathing cable news coverage, he issued a cleanup statement at the White House days later. Yet, after watching the response to his reversal, he doubled back to his original position during a wild Trump Tower news conference.

Trump started the tumult this past week by tweeting Sunday that Omar and three other freshmen congresswomen could “go back” to their native countries if they were unhappy here.

The chants at the Trump rally brought 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.”

GOP 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.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 30 of 50

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 Thursday would be on House passage of legislation to boost the minimum wage for the first time in a decade.

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

## Iran says its seizure of British ship a 'reciprocal' move

By AMIR VAHDAT and AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — A powerful council in Iran said Saturday the country's seizure of a British oil tanker in the strategic Strait of Hormuz was in response to Britain's role in impounding an Iranian supertanker two weeks earlier.

Spokesman of Iran's Guardian Council, Abbas Ali Kadkhodaei, was quoted in the semi-official Fars news agency saying "the rule of reciprocal action is well-known in international law" and that Iran's moves to "confront the illegitimate economic war and seizure of oil tankers is an instance of this rule and is based on international rights."

The council rarely comments on state matters, but when it does it is seen as a reflection of the supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei's views. That's because the council works closely with Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters.

The free flow of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is of international importance because one-fifth of all global crude exports passes through the waterway from Mideast exporters to countries around the world.

The British-flagged Stena Impero was seized by Iran on Friday evening with a crew of 23 crew aboard. None are British nationals. Maritime trackers show it was headed to a port in Saudi Arabia.

Two weeks earlier, Britain's Royal Marines took part in the seizure of an Iranian oil tanker carrying more than 2 million barrels of Iranian crude by Gibraltar, a British overseas territory off the southern coast of Spain. Officials there initially said the July 4 seizure happened on orders from the U.S.

Britain has said it would release the vessel if Iran could prove it was not breaching European Union sanctions on oil shipments to Syria. However, on Friday, a court in Gibraltar extended by 30 days the detention of the Panama-flagged Grace.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif characterized the seizure of Iran's tanker as "piracy." In comments on Twitter, he wrote that the U.K. must cease being an accessory to the "economic terrorism" of the U.S. — a reference to sweeping American sanctions on Iran.

Iran's subsequent seizure of the British tanker was seen as a significant escalation. Germany and France have both condemned the move, with Berlin saying it undermines all efforts to find a way out of the current crisis.

In London, Tom Tugendhat, the chairman of Britain's House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee, said military action to free the British tanker would be "extremely unwise," especially because the vessel was apparently taken to a well-protected port.

Current tensions have been escalating since President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers and imposed economic sanctions on Iran, including its oil exports.

In May, the U.S. announced it was dispatching an aircraft carrier and additional troops to the Middle East, citing unspecified threats posed by Iran.

The ongoing showdown has caused jitters around the globe, with each maneuver bringing fear that any misunderstanding or misstep by either side could lead to war.

In June, Iran shot down an American drone in the same waterway, and Trump came close to retaliating but called off an airstrike at the last moment. Just this week, Washington claimed that a U.S. warship

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 31 of 50

downed an Iranian drone in the strait. Iran denied that it lost an aircraft in the area. There have also been attacks on oil tankers in recent weeks that the U.S. blames on Iran — an allegation denied by the Islamic Republic.

Stena Bulk, the owner of the seized British tanker, said the vessel's crew members are of Indian, Filipino, Russian and Latvian nationalities. Iranian officials say the crew remain on the tanker.

The state-run news agency IRNA had reported earlier Saturday that Iran seized the British-flagged vessel after it collided with an Iranian fishing boat — an explanation that portrayed the seizure as a technicality rather than a tit-for-tat move.

The company that owns the ship said the vessel was in full compliance with all international regulations when it was intercepted Friday by "unidentified small crafts and a helicopter" during its transit through the Strait of Hormuz.

The comments Saturday by the Guardian Council reflect how prominently Britain has featured in the rising U.S. tensions with Iran.

There was a brief standoff between the British navy and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels recently. The British navy said it warned three Guard vessels away after they tried to impede the passage of a commercial British tanker that the navy was escorting.

U.K.-flagged vessels represented less than 0.6% of the 67,533 ships sailing through the Strait of Hormuz in 2018, with 427 transits, according to maritime publication Lloyd's List, quoting research from Russel Group.

Iran's government has desperately tried to get out of the economic chokehold, urging the other partners in the nuclear deal, particularly European nations, to find ways around the U.S. sanctions.

Meanwhile, the U.S. is mulling a proposal called the Sentinel Program — a coalition of nations working with the U.S. to preserve maritime security in the Persian Gulf and keep eyes on Iran.

The U.S. is also sending several hundred troops as well as aircraft and air defense missiles to Iran's rival, Saudi Arabia, as part of its increased military presence in the region. The move has been in the works for several weeks.

King Salman approved hosting U.S. armed forces in the kingdom "to increase joint cooperation in defense and regional security and stability," a statement in the state-run Saudi Press Agency said.

Batrawy reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writer Gregory Katz in London contributed to this report.

## Campaigning from behind: Lower-tier 2020ers seek comeback

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

FLINT, Mich. (AP) — As her campaign bus trundled along Interstate 80 toward the Michigan-Ohio border, Kirsten Gillibrand was offering wedding planning advice to one of her presidential campaign staffers who recently got engaged.

The New York senator recommended a Christmas wedding, preferably on a Caribbean island, until a senior aide intervened — reminding Gillibrand that the staffer will be "otherwise engaged at Christmas," which is just six weeks before the Iowa caucuses.

The good-natured exchange belied a larger doubt hanging over Gillibrand's 2020 bid: Will it really survive to the Feb. 3 caucus that kicks off the process of selecting a Democratic presidential nominee?

Many of the candidates mired in the primary's lower tier have quietly begun asking similar questions. Plagued by anemic polling and underwhelming fundraising, some campaigns are falling into a spiral of perceived hurdles that are becoming increasingly self-fulfilling, making it hard to find money to build an expansive campaign organization.

The anxiety is building ahead of September's presidential debate, which impose tougher qualification rules that will winnow the field from two dozen candidates. That's a humbling prospect for senators and governors who have spent their political careers building what they hoped would be strong resumes for a White House run only to face the reality that voters aren't interested or, worse, don't know who they are.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 32 of 50

Ohio Rep. Tim Ryan has run on bridging the divide between the party's liberal and working class wings, but is barely registering in the polls. Appearing recently at a Pizza Hut in Manchester, Iowa, there were five people on hand, three who came to see Ryan, and a woman and her son only there to eat.

"Who is that man?" the woman asked.

Others are simply getting lost in the shuffle, especially in early voting states where White House hopefuls flock constantly. At a recent Iowa fundraiser for state Sen. Zach Wahls' birthday, even some of the most active Democrats weren't sure which White House hopefuls they'd seen.

"I think I shook (John) Hickenlooper's hand today," noted Laura Bergus, a candidate for city council in Iowa City, referring to the former Colorado governor.

Some of the most endangered candidates built their runs around signature issues that seemed sure to resonate with their party's base, but have largely fallen flat.

Washington Gov. Jay Inslee's focus on climate change hasn't gained him much traction, even as some of his better-known rivals have successfully seized on the issue as the world's most urgent threat. Hickenlooper's pitch as a principled moderate has been largely overlooked and urgent calls for gun control couldn't keep California Rep. Eric Swalwell's now-defunct presidential bid afloat.

Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey so far doesn't have much to show for his overarching message of unity-first optimism. Former Texas Rep. Beto O'Rourke and ex-Obama administration housing chief Julián Castro haven't ridden focuses on softer federal immigration policies to polling success and Massachusetts Rep. Seth Moulton's calls to impeach President Donald Trump haven't resonated.

Gillibrand made advancing women's issues and championing the #MeToo movement the heart of her campaign, but more recently concentrated on showing she's strong enough to take on Trump with a two-day bus tour through Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan, key states for the president's re-election campaign. Gillibrand argued that the president reneged on campaign promises that won him those states in 2016 and she can accomplish what he couldn't, if elected.

But her polling has continued to hover at or below 1%, far behind the likes of former Vice President Joe Biden and Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Kamala Harris of California and Bernie Sanders of Vermont.

Asked in an interview during a stop in Flint if the bus tour will help her break out in a way her women's rights advocacy couldn't, Gillibrand didn't dispute the premise, but said, "I think it's more than that."

"I think I'm showing, by what I'm doing and saying and the ideas that I have, that I can beat President Trump," she said at a small-plates restaurant in a city whose drinking water crisis became a national scandal.

She insisted she's in the race for the long haul and rejects the notion that she's fallen into the Democratic primary's second tier.

"I'm different than other candidates," Gillibrand said. "I've taken on the fights that other candidates haven't."

Former Maryland Gov. Martin O'Malley, who struggled to get noticed during his 2016 Democratic presidential primary bid, said upcoming debates that exclude lower-tier candidates will necessarily trim the field. But he also said there will still be incentives for those trailing badly to hang on and hope for Iowa caucus shockers.

"The guy who's everybody's second choice can be the surprise," O'Malley said. "Iowans usually have a way of making a decision that's contrary to whatever the latest fashion is."

In the meantime, many low-polling candidates are standing by their core messages. Even amid her bus tour decrying Trump, Gillibrand noted during the interview that "both parties have been compromising on women's health for decades."

At a town hall inside the Cleveland Public Library, she went further, asking about 20 attendees, "Do we value women? Unfortunately, the answer in our society today is no."

"It's why we don't prosecute sexual assault. It's why we don't have equal pay. It's why we don't have national paid leave," Gillibrand said.

The crowd seemed moved. A short time later, though, Kittie Warshawsky, a 51-year-old who works for



a nonprofit, asked Gillibrand how she would “get your name out there” given that she mostly failed to get noticed so far. Gillibrand said that was what the “Trump broken promises” bus tour was all about accomplishing.

Afterward, Warshawsky called Gillibrand “terrific” but said of her chances in the primary, “I don’t have an answer yet on how she’s going to get through.”

Associated Press writer Alexandra Jaffe in Manchester, Iowa, contributed to this report.

## Giant Hawaii telescope to focus on big unknowns of universe

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Is there life on planets outside our solar system? How did stars and galaxies form in the earliest years of the universe? How do black holes shape galaxies?

Scientists are expected to explore those and other fundamental questions about the universe when they peer deep into the night sky using a new telescope planned for the summit of Hawaii’s tallest mountain.

But the Thirty Meter Telescope is a decade away from being built. And Native Hawaiian protesters have tried to thwart the start of construction by blocking a road to the mountain. They say installing yet another observatory on Mauna Kea’s peak would further defile a place they consider sacred.

Activists have fought the \$1.4 billion telescope but the state Supreme Court has ruled it can be built. The latest protests could be the final stand against it.

Here’s a look at the telescope project and some of the science it’s expected to produce.

### WHY WOULD THE TELESCOPE BE MORE POWERFUL?

The large size of the telescope’s mirror means it would collect more light, allowing it to see faint, far-away objects such as stars and galaxies dating back as long as 13 billion years.

The telescope gets its name from the size of the mirror, which will be 30 meters (98 feet) in diameter. That’s three times as wide as the world’s largest existing visible-light telescope.

Adaptive optics would correct the blurring effects of the Earth’s atmosphere.

The telescope would be more than 200 times more sensitive than current telescopes and able to resolve objects 12 times better than the Hubble Space Telescope, said Christophe Dumas, head of operations for the Thirty Meter Telescope.

### WHAT RESEARCH WOULD THE TELESCOPE DO?

— Distant planets. During the past 20 years, astronomers have discovered it is common for planets to orbit other stars in the universe. But they don’t know much about what those planets — called extrasolar planets or exoplanets — are like. The new telescope would allow scientists to determine whether their atmospheres contain water vapor or methane which might indicate the presence of life.

“For the first time in history we will be capable of detecting extraterrestrial life,” Dumas said.

Dumas said the new telescope would use special optics to suppress the light of stars. He compared the technique to blocking a bright street light in the distance with your thumb then seeing insects circling in the fainter light below.

— Black holes. Black holes at the center of most galaxies are so dense that nothing, not even light, can escape their gravitational pull.

Andrea Ghez, a University of California, Los Angeles physics and astronomy professor who discovered our galaxy’s black hole, said scientists believe black holes play a fundamental role in how galaxies are formed and evolve.

But so far astronomers have only been able to observe this dynamic in detail in the Milky Way because the next galaxy is 100 times farther away.

The Thirty Meter Telescope would enable scientists to study more galaxies and more black holes in greater detail.

It may also help them understand gravity. Those who doubt the importance should note that GPS-enabled maps on cellphones rely on Einstein’s theories about gravity.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 34 of 50

"We think of these things as esoteric. But in fact, in the long run, they have profound impacts on our lives," Ghez said.

—Dark matter and dark energy. Humans see only about 4 percent of all matter in the universe, Dumas said. Dark energy makes up about three-quarters and dark matter the rest. Neither can be seen.

"We have no idea what dark matter is and no idea what dark energy is. That's a big dilemma in today's world," Dumas said.

Because mass deforms space and light, Dumas said the new telescope would make it possible to measure how dark matter influences light.

It could do this by studying light from far-away galaxies. The light would take different paths to the telescope, generating different images of the same object.

## WHY MAUNA KEA?

The weather at the summit of Mauna Kea tends to be ideal for viewing the skies. At nearly 14,000 feet, its peak is normally above the clouds. Being surrounded by the ocean means air flows tend to be smoother and it has the driest atmosphere of any of the candidate sites.

The mountain is already home to 13 other telescopes.

Ghez used the Keck Observatory there to find our galaxy's black hole. Other discoveries credited to those sites over the years include the first images of exoplanets and helping identify 'Oumuamua, the first object from interstellar space, which turned out to be a comet from a distant star system.

## NEXT GENERATION TELESCOPES

Two other giant telescopes are being built in Chile, which also has excellent conditions for astronomy.

The European Extremely Large Telescope will have a primary mirror measuring 39 meters, or 128 feet, in diameter. The Giant Magellan Telescope's mirror will be 24.5 meters, or 80 feet, in diameter.

The Thirty Meter Telescope is the only one expected to be built in the Northern Hemisphere. Because different spots on Earth look out on different parts of the sky, the next-generation ground telescopes will ensure scientists are able to see the entire universe.

The universities and national observatories behind the Thirty Meter Telescope have selected Spain's Canary Islands as a backup site in case they are unable to build in Hawaii.

## Florida sheriff to investigate Epstein's work release

By **CURT ANDERSON** and **ALI SWENSON** Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — A Florida sheriff launched an investigation Friday into whether his department properly monitored the wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein while he was serving a sentence for soliciting prostitution from underage girls.

The inquiry will focus on whether deputies assigned to monitor Epstein in a work-release program violated any rules or regulations, Palm Beach County Sheriff Ric Bradshaw said in a statement. Under a 2008 plea deal, Epstein was allowed to spend most of his days at the office of his now-defunct Florida Science Foundation, which doled out research grants, rather than in the county jail.

"All aspects of the matter will be fully investigated to ensure total accountability and transparency," Bradshaw said.

Epstein, 66, was convicted on one count of procuring a person under age 18 for prostitution and one count of solicitation of prostitution. He served a 13-month sentence, registered as a sex offender and paid restitution to victims. While only convicted on two counts, prosecutors alleged that Epstein had been involved with dozens of underage teenage girls.

His plea deal helped him avoid more serious federal charges. But news reports of the deal sparked a public outcry, and federal prosecutors in New York charged him with sex trafficking involving underage victims. The charges led to the resignation of President Donald Trump's labor secretary, Alex Acosta, who was Miami U.S. attorney when the deal was signed. Epstein has pleaded not guilty. If convicted, he could be sentenced to up to 45 years in prison. A judge on Thursday denied bail, saying the financier is a flight risk and a danger to the community.

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 35 of 50

After a little more than three months in a Florida county jail, Epstein spent most of his days at his office, according to Palm Beach County sheriff's records released to The Associated Press. The terms of his work release program allowed him to be out of jail from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., six days a week, but records show that on some occasions his personal limousine dropped him off as early as 7:15 a.m. or picked up as late as 10:40 p.m.

Sex offenders are now banned from participating in the county's work release program, but apparently weren't in 2008, according to a copy of the rules at the time.

Brad Edwards, a lawyer for several of Epstein's accusers, held a news conference in New York this week saying he had been in contact with a woman who had "sexual contact" with Epstein in his office while he was still serving his sentence. Edwards wouldn't identify the woman. Epstein's lawyers did not respond to numerous emails requesting comment throughout the week.

One of the deputies who had been assigned to guard Epstein at his office for several days told the AP he did recall young women visiting, but couldn't say whether there was any inappropriate contact because he was stationed in the lobby, with two doors between himself and Epstein's private office.

"I do remember young women coming in and going back into the office area," the now-retired deputy, Jeffrey Rice, said in an interview Thursday.

"Early 20s, maybe. They just kind of said they were office assistants."

Epstein was not allowed to leave the office unless he was returning to jail, but records show sheriff's deputies escorted Epstein to his Palm Beach mansion on at least eight occasions.

Rice said when he escorted Epstein home, he stood guard outside the house, but wasn't aware of what Epstein was doing or if anyone else was inside. He contacted a sergeant for clarification on what he was supposed to do.

"I didn't do an interior sweep of the residence," he said. "I followed instructions to the letter."

Bradshaw said determining whether Epstein's wealth and high-powered legal team resulted in favoritism from the sheriff's department would be a key part of his investigation and a question that would be taken "very seriously."

Two victims have filed a federal lawsuit asking for the Florida plea deal to be thrown out. The suit claims prosecutors did not consult with victims as required by law, and a federal judge earlier this year agreed there was a violation.

---

This story has been edited to clarify that the formal charge against Epstein was soliciting prostitution from underage girls.

---

Swenson reported from New York. Associated Press reporter Jim Mustian in New York contributed to this report.

---

Follow Curt Anderson Twitter: <http://twitter.com/Miamicurt>

## Iran's seizure of UK tanker in Gulf seen as escalation

By **AMIR VAHDAT, GREGORY KATZ and ROBERT BURNS** Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Iran seized a British-flagged oil tanker Friday and briefly detained a second vessel in the Strait of Hormuz, intensifying tensions in the strategic waterway that has become a flashpoint between Tehran and the West.

The seizing of the British tanker marked perhaps the most significant escalation since tensions between Iran and the West began rising in May. At that time, the U.S. announced it was dispatching an aircraft carrier and additional troops to the Middle East, citing unspecified threats posed by Iran.

The ongoing showdown has caused jitters around the globe, with each maneuver bringing fear that any misunderstanding or misstep by either side could lead to war.

Details of what took place Friday remained sketchy after Iran reported that it had seized a British oil

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 36 of 50

tanker in the Strait of Hormuz. The strait at the mouth of the Persian Gulf is a shipping channel for one-fifth of all global crude exports.

The Stena Impero was taken to an Iranian port because it was not complying with "international maritime laws and regulations," Iran's Revolutionary Guard declared.

A statement from Stena Bulk, which owns the seized tanker, said it was unable to make contact with the ship after it was approached by unidentified vessels and a helicopter in international waters. A spokesman for the company's owners said the tanker was in "full compliance with all navigation and international regulations."

The company said the tanker had 23 crew members of Indian, Russian, Latvian and Filipino nationalities and there were no reports of any of them were injured.

The U.K. has featured prominently in the recent tensions with Iran. Britain's Royal Marines assisted in the seizure of an Iranian oil supertanker on July 4 by Gibraltar, a British overseas territory off the southern coast of Spain.

Britain said it would release the vessel if Iran could prove it was not breaching European Union sanctions on oil shipments to Syria.

Gibraltar's government said Friday that its Supreme Court had extended by 30 days the detention of the Panama-flagged Grace, which was loaded with over 2 million barrels of Iranian crude oil.

British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt initially said two ships were seized Friday in the Strait of Hormuz, the second sailing under a Liberian flag.

The owner of the Liberian-flagged tanker later said the ship was briefly boarded by armed guards before being allowed to go. Iran's semi-official Fars news agency tweeted that the Mesdar had left Iran's territorial waters.

"These seizures are unacceptable," Hunt said as he prepared to enter an emergency government meeting Friday night. "It is essential that freedom of navigation is maintained and that all ships can move safely and freely in the region."

"We're not looking at military options, we're looking at a diplomatic way to resolve the situation, but we are very clear that it must be resolved," Hunt later told Sky News, warning that if the situation is not resolved quickly "there will be serious consequences."

U.K. Chamber of Shipping chief executive Bob Sanguinetti said the seizure represented a severe escalation of tensions in the Gulf and made it clear that merchant vessels urgently needed more protection.

The British government should do "whatever is necessary" to ensure the safe and swift return of the ship's crew, Sanguinetti said.

President Donald Trump said U.S. officials would talk with Britain about the unfolding crisis.

"This only goes to show what I'm saying about Iran: Trouble, nothing but trouble," he said.

Central Command said the U.S. has intensified air patrols over the Strait of Hormuz in response to the seizure.

A Central Command spokesman, Lt. Col. Earl Brown, said a small number of additional patrol aircraft are flying in international airspace to monitor the situation.

The incident came two days after Washington claimed that a U.S. warship downed an Iranian drone in the strait. Iran denied that it lost an aircraft in the area.

On June 20, Iran shot down an American drone in the same waterway, and Trump came close to retaliating but called off an airstrike at the last moment.

Tensions in the region have been escalating since Trump withdrew the U.S. last year from Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers and imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Iran, including its oil exports. The sanctions have hit the Iranian economy hard.

Iran's government has desperately tried to get out of the chokehold, pressuring the other partners in the nuclear deal, particularly European nations, to pressure the U.S. to lift the crippling sanctions.

The Europeans — Germany, France, Britain, and the European Union — want to maintain the deal, but have not been able to address Iranian demands without violating the sanctions. Iran has begun breaching

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 37 of 50

some of the restrictions on its activities outlined in the agreement to put pressure on them to find a solution.

The U.S. has asked Mideast allies like Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in past weeks to contribute financially and militarily to a Trump administration proposal called the Sentinel Program — a coalition of nations working with the U.S. to preserve maritime security in the Persian Gulf and keep eyes on Iran.

Late Friday, officials said the U.S. is sending several hundred troops as well as aircraft and air defense missiles to Saudi Arabia to counter Iran. The move has been in the works for many weeks and is not a response to Friday's seizure by Iran of a British tanker.

The arrangement was announced by the Saudi government, which said it was meant to "enhance security" in the region.

Before the British ship was seized, Iran and the United States disagreed over Washington's claim that a U.S. warship downed the Iranian drone. American officials said they used electronic jamming to bring down the unmanned aircraft, while Iran said it simply didn't happen.

Neither side provided evidence to prove its claim.

At the White House, Trump said flatly of the Iranian drone: "We shot it down." But Pentagon and other officials have said repeatedly that the USS Boxer, a Navy ship in the Strait of Hormuz, actually jammed the drone's signal, causing it to crash, and did not fire a missile. The officials spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss sensitive technology.

In Tehran, the Iranian military said all its drones returned safely to their bases.

Maritime security in the Strait of Hormuz has deteriorated in recent weeks after six attacks on oil tankers that the U.S. has blamed on Iran — an allegation the Islamic Republic denies.

There was also a brief, but tense standoff between the British navy and Iranian Revolutionary Guard vessels recently. The British navy said it warned three Guard vessels away after they tried to impede the passage of a commercial British tanker that the navy was escorting.

The incidents have jolted the shipping industry, with some of the 2,000 companies operating ships in the region on high alert and many ordering their vessels to transit the Strait of Hormuz only during the daylight hours and at high speed.

Of the roughly 2,000 companies that operate ships in the Persian Gulf, only a handful of companies have halted bookings outright.

U.K.-flagged vessels represented less than 0.6% of the 67,533 ships sailing through the Strait of Hormuz in 2018, with 427 transits, according to maritime publication Lloyd's List, quoting research from Russel Group.

Crude oil prices climbed following Iran's announcement about the Stena Impero as traders worried the escalating tensions could affect crude supplies.

Jill Lawless in London, Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and David Rising in Berlin contributed.

## US to send asylum seekers back to dangerous part of Mexico

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — The U.S. government on Friday expanded its requirement that asylum seekers wait outside the country to a part of the Texas Rio Grande Valley across from one of Mexico's most dangerous cities.

The Department of Homeland Security said that it would implement its Migrant Protection Protocols in Brownsville, Texas, across the border from Matamoros, Mexico. DHS says it anticipates the first asylum seekers will be sent back to Mexico starting Friday.

Under the so-called "Remain in Mexico" policy, asylum seekers are briefly processed and given a date to return for an immigration court hearing before being sent back across the southern border. Since January, the policy has been implemented at several border cities including San Diego and El Paso, Texas. At least 18,000 migrants have been sent back to Mexico under the policy, according to Mexico's National Migration Institute.

The U.S. is trying to curtail the large flow of Central American migrants passing through Mexico to seek

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 38 of 50

asylum under American law. The busiest corridor for unauthorized border crossings is the Rio Grande Valley, at Texas' southernmost point. Other cities in the region were not immediately included in the expansion.

The policy announcement came as groups of lawmakers visited the region Friday to examine detention facilities operated by the U.S. Border Patrol, including the processing center in McAllen, Texas, where hundreds of adults and children are detained in fenced-in pens.

Standing outside the processing center, Sen. Jeff Merkley of Oregon criticized conditions inside the facilities and other Trump administration programs cracking down on asylum seekers.

"We want them treated with dignity and respect as we would want our family members to be treated," Merkley said.

U.S. Rep. Nanette Barragán, a California Democrat, tweeted that while visiting the processing center, she encountered a 13-year-old girl who was a U.S. citizen and had her passport with her. The girl was held with her mother despite the facility being designed for immigrants in the U.S. without legal permission, not citizens, Barragán said.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection said that the mother and daughter had been apprehended crossing the border illegally after the teenager had crossed into Mexico to meet her mother. CBP said the two were detained at the processing center for about five hours and released Friday afternoon.

DHS said it had coordinated with the Mexican government to expand its "Remain" policy. The Mexican government did not immediately respond to requests for comment. But the Trump administration has pressured Mexico to crack down on migrants, threatening earlier this year to impose crippling tariffs until both sides agreed on new measures targeting migration.

Matamoros is at the eastern edge of the U.S.-Mexico border in Tamaulipas state, where organized crime gangs are dominant and the U.S. government warns citizens not to visit due to violence and kidnappings.

The city is also near where a Salvadoran father and his 23-month-old daughter were found drowned in the Rio Grande, in photos that were shared around the world.

Many people have slept for the last several months in a makeshift camp near one of the international bridges, including families with young children. Thousands more stay in hotels, shelters, or boarding houses. Only a few migrants daily have been allowed to seek asylum under another Trump administration policy limiting asylum processing known as "metering."

A list run by Mexican officials has more than 1,000 people on it, said Elisa Filippone, a U.S.-based volunteer who visits Matamoros several times a week to deliver food and donated clothes. But many others not on the list wait in shelters. There are frequent rumors that migrants are shaken down for bribes to join the list, Filippone said.

She described a desperate situation that could be made worse if people are forced to wait longer in Mexico for their asylum claims to be processed.

"I'm afraid that Matamoros is about to catch on fire," she said.

Filippone said Friday that she saw the camp closest to one of the bridges being cleared away, though it was not immediately clear why or where the people detained would go.

DHS recently implemented the "Remain" policy for migrants in Nuevo Laredo, across from Laredo, Texas. About 1,800 asylum seekers and migrants are currently waiting in Nuevo Laredo, where some have reported being kidnapped and extorted by gangs.

"I don't want to go out on the street. I'm afraid the same men ... will do something to me or my boys," said one woman, insisting on speaking anonymously out of fear for their safety.

People in Nuevo Laredo were told to return in September for U.S. court dates. At other points of the border, wait times have stretched to several months.

Unlike in criminal court, the U.S. government does not have to provide lawyers to people in the immigration court system. Attorneys in South Texas have long questioned where they could meet with potential clients in Tamaulipas.

Many migrants who get to the U.S. have exhausted all their resources by the time they arrive, said Lisa Brodyaga, an attorney who has represented asylum seekers for decades.

"It would be extremely difficult for them to find attorneys who would have the time and the ability and

the willingness to expose themselves to what's going in Matamoros," she said. "I'm not sure how it's going to work."

## **AP FACT CHECK: Trump challenges Fed with dubious theory**

**By JOSH BOAK and CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writers**

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is flipping interest-rate theory on its head as he tries to blame the Fed for holding back growth.

Trump went after the Federal Reserve on Friday after advancing a dubious argument this week that blue-collar workers have gained the most from the strong stock market.

A look at both matters:

THE FED

TRUMP on Twitter: "Because of the faulty thought process we have going for us at the Federal Reserve, we pay much higher interest rates than countries that are no match for us economically. In other words, our interest costs are much higher than other countries, when they should be lower. Correct!" and "We are in a World competition, & winning big,.....but it is no thanks to the Federal Reserve. Had they not acted so fast and 'so much,' we would be doing even better than we are doing right now."

THE FACTS: Trump's support for the Fed slashing rates to rival Europe's lows flies in the face of basic economics.

He's repeatedly said the Fed has been stifling stronger growth and openly criticized Fed Chairman Jerome Powell, his own choice to lead the U.S. central bank.

But the Fed's decision to hike rates four times last year was based on the belief that U.S. growth had strengthened and that there was an eventual risk of inflation or asset bubbles that might hurt the economy if the Fed kept short-term rates too low. The general theory is that central banks cut rates in countries in a downturn or period of weak growth, a bit of stimulus meant to get an economy back on track.

In fact, Trump was mistakenly critical of Fed efforts to revive growth during Barack Obama's presidency, when he argued the issue from the other side. Trump tweeted in 2011 that "reckless policies of low interest and flooding the market with dollars" would cause record inflation. But that inflation never materialized because the economy was still recovering from the Great Recession.

Even with last year's Fed rate hikes, the borrowing costs of the U.S. government are historically low. They've even declined recently as financial markets have adjusted to the likelihood of slower economic growth this year and the possibility of Fed rate cuts.

The interest charged on U.S. 10-year Treasury notes has fallen from nearly 16% in 1981 to roughly 2% today despite an explosion in government borrowing. This decline has made it easier to finance deficit spending such as Trump's 2017 tax cuts that were meant to achieve stronger growth over the long term.

Still, the interest rates being charged on 10-year debt are higher for the United States than for other countries such as Britain (0.74, France (-0.07%), Germany (-0.32%) and Japan (-0.14%).

So, why is that?

One clear reason is that growth is anemic in those countries.

According to data provider FactSet, the U.S. economy is expected to grow significantly faster than the economies of Britain, France, Germany and Japan. The market and the central banks judge that those countries need the stimulus from rates that are close to zero, or even negative.

Still, investors believe the U.S. economy also needs a boost because the benefits of Trump's tax cuts have waned and uncertainty over the administration's trade battles with China and other nations. They expect a rate cut at the Fed's July meeting — a sign that lower rates might be needed to keep the economy on course rather than propel it faster.

THE MARKET

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 at Cabinet meeting 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.

Find AP Fact Checks at <http://apne.ws/2kx8bd>

Follow @APFactCheck on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APFactCheck>

## ‘Go back’? Omar and the squad are building strength at home

By STEVE KARNOWSKI and BRIAN SLODYSKO Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — President Donald Trump can tell Rep. Ilhan Omar to “go back” to Somalia all he wants. All indications suggest she’s not going anywhere.

Safely entrenched in liberal, urban districts, Omar and most of her fellow “squad” mates of progressive Democrats have been posting impressive fundraising numbers, so far scaring away serious primary challenges and quieting some critics on their home turf. While their leftist policies and uncompromising tactics may roil Democratic leaders and draw Trump’s fire, they’ve only bolstered their standing at home. The squad is poised to be a foil for Trump and a complication for Democratic leaders.

“We are going to continue to be a nightmare to this president because his policies are a nightmare to us,” Omar, the first Somali American to serve in the U.S. House, told the crowd of supporters who gave her a hero’s welcome at the airport Thursday as she returned to her Minneapolis district from Washington.

She spent the week as Trump’s top target, after he tweeted Sunday that lawmakers should “go back” to their countries if they want to criticize the U.S. He was referring to Omar and her fellow congresswomen Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York, Rashida Tlaib of Michigan and Ayanna Pressley of Massachusetts — four freshmen women of color known as the “squad.” All four are U.S. citizens, and only Omar was born outside the U.S. Her family fled violence in Somalia when she was a child.

“We are not deterred. We are not frightened,” she said. “We are ready.”

Omar hasn’t always been so celebrated at home. Some Democrats were dismayed by remarks she



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 41 of 50

made earlier this year that they considered anti-Semitic. Some believed she was vulnerable to a primary challenge from her district's sizable Jewish community. But none has emerged. The three little-known Republicans who have filed to run against her are given almost no chance of winning in the district that covers the heart of the city's large Somali community, as well as some first-ring suburbs. Trump drew only 18% of the vote in 2016.

Omar's campaign bank account is likely a deterrent for any Democrat. At least \$1.2 million of the \$2.4 million that Omar has raised since 2017 comes from outside her state, according to an analysis of fundraising data by The Associated Press.

Ocasio-Cortez has amassed \$1.4 million, records show. At least \$1.2 million of the money she has raised since launching her campaign comes from outside her home state, according to the AP's analysis. Their squad mates have more modest but still respectable bank balances.

The cash — particularly Omar and Ocasio-Cortez's hauls — sets them up to become kingmakers. They have started to share the wealth with like-minded candidates — potentially including progressives who will take on Democratic incumbents.

"Nancy Pelosi has been minimizing the significance of the squad. Her phrase was just four votes. But this fundraising haul suggests it's more than four votes — it's millions of dollars that are going to be distributed around the country to advance progressive candidates," said Larry Jacobs, a political scientist at the University of Minnesota.

And that could mean challenging establishment Democrats, just as Ocasio-Cortez and Pressley did with stunning success in 2018.

"If you're a moderate Democrat in the U.S. House, the money raised by the squad presents an imminent danger to your political survival," Jacobs said.

The appetite for more confrontational politics among the Democratic base is clear.

James Ehresman-Tsagong, a 22-year-old community college student, dismissed talk of progressives like Omar pulling the party to the left. Their agenda, which includes Medicare for All, free college and ambitious climate change goals, is "the only path to being a party that represents working people," he said at a town hall hosted by Omar on Thursday.

"I've never been so proud of a politician that represents Minnesota," he said.

Of the four lawmakers, Tlaib appears most likely to court a primary challenge. The Palestinian American won her seat by eking out a victory in a crowded Democratic primary. Her Detroit-area district — one of the poorest in the country — is majority black and was represented by Rep. John Conyers, the longest-serving African American in Congress, until his retirement in 2017.

Tlaib hasn't drawn a primary challenger yet. But all eyes are on a possible rematch with Detroit City Council President Brenda Jones, a black woman, who lost to Tlaib in the primary but actually defeated her on the same day in the special election to serve out the rest of Conyers' term. Jones did not respond to inquiries about her plans.

In New York, where Ocasio-Cortez represents parts of the Bronx and Queens, the political star has capitalized on her celebrity to become a fundraising powerhouse and a local force. No Democrat has announced plans to challenge her.

One measure of her popularity: After Ocasio-Cortez endorsed a public defender's outsider campaign for Queens district attorney, the first-time candidate managed to mount a serious challenge to the Democratic establishment pick. The race is now locked in a recount.

Pressley, who made history by defeating a longtime incumbent in a primary to become the first black woman elected to represent Massachusetts in Congress, also appears safe. No Republican ran against her, and she remains popular in her Boston-area district, which was formerly represented by President John F. Kennedy. No one has launched a primary challenge against her.

In Minnesota, Omar and her star power have quickly become part of state Democrats' strategy. The chairman of Minnesota's Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, Ken Martin, said he expects her to use her cash to help Sen. Tina Smith keep her seat and deny Trump his often-expressed hope of carrying the state. Trump lost Minnesota by 1.5 percentage points in 2016.

"She's all in on this election. She's been a great team player with our party and other elected officials, and will be investing a lot of her personal, her campaign effort to help elect Democrats up and down the ballot here in Minnesota," Martin said.

Slodysko reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Steve LeBlanc in Boston, David Eggert in Lansing, Mich., Karen Matthews in New York and Kathleen Hennessey in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

## Why no hush-money charges against Trump? Feds are silent

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — When special counsel Robert Mueller closed the books on the Russia investigation, he produced a report of more than 400 pages, and Attorney General William Barr held a news conference outlining the reasons the Justice Department didn't charge President Donald Trump.

But in stark contrast to the Mueller inquiry, federal prosecutors in Manhattan have remained tight-lipped about their rationale for charging only Michael Cohen, Trump's former attorney and fixer, in a hush-money scandal in which they publicly implicated the president and investigated others in his orbit.

There was no news conference or press release announcing the end of the investigation this week. The U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York, Geoffrey Berman, has stayed silent on the matter. His office declined to answer questions.

The closure of the case became public only because news organizations, including The Associated Press, petitioned a judge to release search warrants related to the FBI raid of Cohen's office and hotel room last year.

It was amid that litigation — and at the behest of a federal judge— that prosecutors revealed in a court filing this week that they had closed their investigation into the campaign finance violations Cohen committed when he arranged payments to silence two women who claimed they had extramarital affairs with Trump.

That probe, begun in 2017, turned up evidence that Trump himself was aware of the payments, despite his initial public claims to know nothing about them, including a recording in which Trump can be heard speaking to Cohen about efforts to buy the continued silence of Karen McDougal, a Playboy model.

Prosecutors went as far as saying in court filings that Trump directed Cohen to make the payments, though they referred to him in court filings as "Individual 1," not by name.

The U.S. House Oversight Committee on Friday asked prosecutors to produce documents and evidence in the case, saying they wanted to get to the bottom of the decision to charge Cohen but no one else.

"The committee is seeking to determine whether the internal Department of Justice policy against indicting a sitting president — the same policy that prevented Special Counsel Robert Mueller from bringing an indictment against President Trump for obstruction of justice in the Russian election interference investigation — played any role in your office's decision not to indict President Trump for these hush money crimes," the committee's chairman, Maryland Democrat U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings, wrote in the letter.

"The office of the president should not be used as a shield for criminal conduct," Cummings added.

They asked that the records be produced by Aug. 2.

The U.S. attorney's office declined to comment.

Federal prosecutors generally don't offer public explanations for investigations that fail to lead to criminal charges, but they sometimes make exceptions in cases of public importance.

The U.S. attorney in Brooklyn this week, for instance, summoned reporters to explain why the Justice Department decided not to prosecute a white New York City police officer accused of using a banned chokehold in the 2014 death of an unarmed black man, Eric Garner, calling the case a "terrible tragedy" but one that didn't warrant civil rights charges.

Former FBI Director James Comey made detailed public statements after deciding not to recommend charges in an investigation of Hillary Clinton's use of a private email server during her time as secretary of

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 43 of 50

state. Comey told reporters he believed the "American people deserve those details in a case of intense public interest."

In 2017, acting U.S. Attorney Joon Kim announced he would not bring public corruption charges against New York Mayor Bill de Blasio, a Democrat now running for president, after an investigation into alleged campaign finance violations.

"I find it odd they haven't made clear what happened here," Matthew Miller, a former Justice Department spokesman during the Obama administration, said of the Justice Department's decision not to say anything publicly about the end of the Cohen investigation.

"They've set up this system in which the president is treated differently than anyone else in the country," Miller said. "Given that they publicly named the president as having directed a crime, it makes no sense for them to end this investigation without at least telling Congress what they found."

Bruce Green, a former prosecutor in the Southern District of New York, disagreed, saying it is "unusual and extreme" for federal prosecutors to explain a decision not to prosecute.

"It's not the ordinary practice," said Green, who directs the Louis Stein Center for Law and Ethics at the Fordham University School of Law. "I don't think there's an exception in this case."

Trump has said the payments to McDougal and another woman, the porn actress Stormy Daniels, were a private matter and didn't violate campaign finance rules. While castigating Cohen as a liar, Trump has also said he doesn't believe his former lawyer should have pleaded guilty to the charges.

Federal prosecutors revealed in a court filing this week that they also had investigated whether anyone had given false statements during the inquiry or otherwise obstructed justice, but didn't reveal who those people were.

---

Associated Press Writer Michael Balsamo in Washington contributed to this report.

---

This story has been updated to correct language in the second-to-last paragraph to say that Trump has said the payments were a private matter and didn't violate campaign finance rules, not denied that they were a private matter and didn't violate rules.

## Lowry, Holmes share Open lead as McIlroy leaves with cheers

By DOUG FERGUSON AP Golf Writer

PORTRUSH, Northern Ireland (AP) — Everyone in the massive grandstand rose to cheer and celebrate a bold performance by Rory McIlroy, who longed for such support and affection on his walk toward his final hole at Royal Portrush in the British Open.

Except this was Friday.

And now McIlroy can only watch on the weekend as one of his best friends, Shane Lowry of Ireland, goes after the claret jug. Lowry birdied four of his opening five holes on his way to a 4-under 67 and shared the 36-hole lead with J.B. Holmes, who had a 68.

Lee Westwood and Tommy Fleetwood were one shot behind. Brooks Koepka and Jordan Spieth were three back.

That can wait.

This day was all about McIlroy, who kept the sellout crowd on edge as he tried to make the cut after opening with a 79. The roars had the intensity of a final round as McIlroy ran off five birdies in seven holes to brighten a gloomy sky over the North Atlantic. Needing one last birdie, his approach took a wrong turn along the humps left of the 18th green.

He made par for a 65.

"It's a moment I envisaged for the last few years," McIlroy said. "It just happened two days early."

He was disappointed. He was proud of his play. Mostly, though, he said he was "full of gratitude toward every single one of the people that followed me to the very end and was willing me on."

"As much as I came here at the start of the week saying I wanted to do it for me, by the end of the

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 44 of 50

round there today I was doing it just as much for them," he said.

Tiger Woods and Phil Mickelson won't be around, either. It was the first time in 77 majors they have played as professionals that both missed the cut in the same major. Darren Clarke, who honed his game on the Dunluce Links as a junior and now calls Portrush home, missed the cut in a most cruel fashion with a triple bogey on his final hole.

And now the first British Open in Northern Ireland since 1951 moves on without them, still with the promise of a great show.

Lowry was so nervous he was shaking on the tee when the tournament began Thursday, swept up in the emotion of an Open on the Emerald Isle, and on a course he knows. He gave fans plenty to cheer when he opened his second round with three straight birdies, added a birdie on the fifth and holed a 40-foot birdie putt on No. 10 to reach 10 under, making him the only player this week to reach double figures under par. The cheers were as loud as he has heard.

"Just incredible," Lowry said. "You can't but smile, but can't but laugh how it is. There's no point trying to shy away from it. It's an incredible feeling getting applauded on every green, every tee box. I'm out there giving my best, trying to do my best for everyone."

He three-putted the 14th, saved par on the next three holes with his deft touch around the greens, and closed with a bogey to fall back into a tie with Holmes, who played earlier in the day and was the first to post at 8-under 134.

Holmes won at Riviera earlier this year, and then failed to make the cut in eight of his next 12 tournaments as he battled a two-way miss off the tee and felt so bad that he never thought he'd recover. But he did enough in Detroit three weeks ago to regain some confidence, and he has been in a groove at Portrush.

"You can have that great round and that day where everything goes right. But it's nice to get two rounds in a row," Holmes said. "It shows a little consistency. And two days in a row I've hit the ball really well and putted well."

Fleetwood and Westwood, two Englishmen at different stages in their careers, each had a 67 and will play in the group ahead of Lowry and Holmes. Westwood is 46 and can make a case as the best active player without a major considering his status — a former No. 1 in the world and on the European Tour — and the number of near misses in the majors, such as Muirfield and Turnberry at the Open, Torrey Pines in the U.S. Open and Augusta National when Mickelson out played him in 2010.

Is it too late? Westwood wasn't willing to look that far ahead.

"There's too much ground to cover before Sunday night," Westwood said. "There's a long way to go in this tournament. I've never felt under that much pressure, to be honest. You lads write about it. I've always gone out and done my best. If it's going to happen, it's going to happen, and if it doesn't, it doesn't."

The experience of winning majors was behind them.

Justin Rose had a 67 and was two shots behind, along with Cameron Smith of Australia and Justin Harding of South Africa. Another shot back was a group that included Koepka, who has won three of the last six majors. He was in a tie for eighth, the 16th time in his last 17 rounds at the majors he has ended a round in the top 10.

Koepka wasn't happy with much about his 2-under 69, calling it "a little bit disappointing," perhaps because he played in dry weather and only a mild wind.

"But at the same time, I'm close enough where I play a good weekend, I'll be in good shape," he said.

Spieth hasn't quite figured out how to get the ball in play more often — too many bunkers on Thursday, too much high grass on Friday. But that putter is not a problem, and it carried him to a collection of mid-range birdie and par putts for a 67.

"I'm in contention. I feel good," Spieth said, winless since his Open title at Royal Birkdale two years ago. "I feel like if I can continue to improve each day, hit the ball better tomorrow than I did today, and better on Sunday than Saturday, then I should have a chance with how I feel on and around the greens."

Graeme McDowell, born and raised in Portrush, played well enough to make the weekend. He finished with four straight pars for a 70 to make the cut on the number at 1-over 143, and felt the pressure of sticking around for the home crowd.

Woods, meanwhile, began this major championship season as the Masters champion, ended it as a mystery. He missed the cut in two of the next three majors, and never seemed fully fit or engaged at the British Open. He was 3 under for his round through 11 holes with hopes of making it to the weekend, but he had no more birdies and finished with two bogeys for a 70 to miss by five shots.

"I'm going to have my hot weeks. I'm going to be there in contention with a chance to win, and I will win tournaments," Woods said, facing the reality of a 43-year-old who has gone through eight surgeries on his knee and back. "But there are times when I'm just not going to be there."

More AP golf: <https://apnews.com/apf-Golf> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Labor nominee Scalia has long record of opposing regulations

By **MARK SHERMAN, KEVIN FREKING and JILL COLVIN Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Eugene Scalia has a decades-long record of challenging Labor Department and other federal regulations, as well as a famous last name. The combination proved irresistible to President Donald Trump.

Trump selected Scalia Thursday to be his new labor secretary. If formally nominated and confirmed, he'll join an administration that has moved aggressively to reverse regulations and work under a president who had repeatedly lauded Scalia's late father, Justice Antonin Scalia.

The president announced the news on Twitter less than a week after his previous secretary, Alexander Acosta, said he would resign amid renewed criticism of how, as a federal prosecutor, he handled a 2008 secret plea deal with wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein. The financier was indicted this month on charges of sexually abusing underage girls and pleaded not guilty.

Friday was Acosta's last day on the job. His deputy, Patrick Pizzella, will serve as acting secretary until Scalia is confirmed.

"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.

Scalia, 55, served for a year as the Labor Department's top lawyer, its solicitor, during the George W. Bush administration. But most of his career has been spent as a partner in the Washington office of the Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher firm, where he has run up a string of victories in court cases on behalf of business interests challenging labor and financial regulations. "Suing the Government? Call Scalia!" was the headline on a 2012 profile by Bloomberg.

His most prominent labor case helped undo an Obama-era rule to put stricter requirements on professionals who advise retirement savers on investments. He also criticized a Clinton-era rule to protect workers from repetitive stress injuries that was ultimately repealed early in the Bush administration. Scalia defended Boeing from a labor union lawsuit and fought on behalf of Wal-Mart against a Maryland law aimed at improving workers' health care.

Scalia represented the Chamber of Commerce opposing rules requiring mutual fund companies to put independent overseers on their boards of directors, and insurance companies challenging the SEC's authority to regulate certain annuities with values tied to stocks. Annuities are a sort of hybrid of insurance and investments.

In 2016, he successfully argued for removal of a designation given to insurance giant MetLife by federal regulators that would have brought stricter government oversight. The process of regulators selecting certain large financial companies as "systemically important financial institutions" deemed "too big to fail" was mandated under the 2010 Dodd-Frank Act that overhauled regulation of Wall Street and the banking industry in the wake of the financial crisis.

Scalia's record drew unqualified praise from the chamber. "He is whip smart and knows the Department's mission and operations well from prior service as solicitor," said Glenn Spencer, a senior vice president.

The American Securities Association, a trade association representing investment banks, financial advisers, and wealth managers called Scalia a "fantastic pick."

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 46 of 50

Labor and consumer advocates were pessimistic that Scalia would serve their clients' interest.

"It's difficult to see how the lawyer who aggressively represented clients against one of the most important retiree protections rules of the Department of Labor in many, many decades is somehow going to flip 180 degrees and become somebody who effectively protects worker and retiree interests," said Dennis Kelleher, president of Better Markets, a financial industry and government watchdog.

Mary Kay Henry, president of the Service Employees International Union, urged the Senate to reject Scalia. "The last thing working people need is another Secretary of Labor who sides with corporate CEOs instead of hard-working Americans and makes it harder to join together in unions," Henry said on Twitter.

If Trump was attracted to Scalia's record, he also has made no secret of his fondness for the Scalia family.

Eugene Scalia accompanied his mother to Trump's first speech to a joint session of Congress in February 2017, where they sat in a box for the president's guests. She received a standing ovation when Trump introduced her. Maureen Scalia also was on hand at the White House when Trump announced both of his Supreme Court nominees, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh.

During the presidential campaign, Trump repeatedly praised the justice, who died in February 2016, and said, "I am looking to appoint judges very much in the mold of Justice Scalia." Last year, Trump posthumously awarded the justice a Presidential Medal of Freedom, and Maureen Scalia was again at the White House to receive it. He remarked how Maureen Scalia had become a great friend to the Trump family and himself.

When Bush nominated Eugene Scalia as the Labor Department solicitor, unions howled in protest and Senate Democrats refused to hold a confirmation vote. Bush gave him a temporary, recess appointment to the job.

Even with strong Democratic opposition again, he has a clear path to confirmation in a Senate controlled by Republicans and stripped of the procedural requirement that nominees need 60 votes to proceed.

He would be reunited in Trump's Cabinet with two former bosses. Elaine Chao, now the transportation secretary, was head of the Labor Department when Scalia worked there. For a time he was special assistant to Attorney General William Barr, during Barr's first stint in charge of the Justice Department in the early 1990s.

---

Associated Press writer Marcy Gordon contributed to this report.

## Plan to slow Western wildfires would clear strips of land

By BRADY McCOMBS Associated Press

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — The Trump administration is proposing an ambitious plan to slow Western wildfires by bulldozing, mowing or revegetating large swaths of land along 11,000 miles (17,700 kilometers) of terrain in the West.

The plan that was announced this summer and presented at public open houses, including one in Salt Lake City this week, would create strips of land known "fuel breaks" on about 1,000 square miles of land (2,700 square kilometers) managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management in an area known as the Great Basin in parts of Idaho, Oregon, Washington, California, Nevada and Utah.

The estimated cost would be about \$55 million to \$192 million, a wide range that illustrates the variance in costs for the different types of fuel breaks. Some would completely clear lands, others would mow down vegetation and a third method would replant the area with more fire-resistance vegetation.

It would cost another \$18 million to \$107 million each year to maintain the strips and ensure vegetation doesn't regrow on the strips of land.

Wildfire experts say the program could help slow fires, but it won't help in the most extreme fires that can jump these strips of land. The breaks could also fragment wildlife habitat.

An environmental group calls it an ill-conceived and expensive plan that has no scientific backing to show it will work.

A U.S. Geological Survey report issued last year found that fuel breaks could be an important tool to

# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 47 of 50

reduce damage caused by wildfires, but the agency cautioned that no scientific studies have been done to prove their effectiveness and that they could alter habitat for sagebrush plants and animal communities.

The Bureau of Land Management says it has done about 1,200 assessments of fuel breaks since 2002 and found they help control fires about 80 percent of the time.

The strips of land that would be 500 feet or less would be created along highways, rural roads and other areas already disturbed such as right of ways for pipelines, said Marlo Draper, the Bureau of Land Management's supervisory project manager for the Idaho Great Basin team.

They won't prevent fires, but they should reduce the costs of having to battle major blazes because fuel breaks reduce the intensity, flame length and spread of fires and keep firefighters safe, Draper said.

It cost about \$373 million over the last decade to fight 21 fires that were larger than 156 square miles (404 square kilometers) on lands managed by the bureau in Utah, Nevada and Idaho, according to a report explaining the proposal.

"It gives us a chance to get in front of it and put fires out more quickly," Draper said.

Western wildfires have grown more lethal because of extreme drought and heat associated with climate change and by housing developments encroaching on the most fire-prone grasslands and brushy canyons. Many of the ranchers and farmers who once managed those landscapes are gone, leaving terrain thick with vegetation that can explode into flames.

The proposal is out for public comment and pending environmental review. If approved, some of the land could be cleared as soon as next year while other projects could take several years, she said.

The plan comes after President Trump last December issued an executive order last December calling on the Interior Department to prioritize reducing wildfire risks on public lands.

This proposal doesn't include U.S. National Forest Service lands. Most states have their own separate plans for fire prevention, which sometimes include thinning of forests.

These fuel breaks are a useful tool if used along with other wildfire prevention methods that can keep firefighters safer and potentially help out in broad scopes of land because they are long and thin, said Lenya Quinn-Davidson, the area fire adviser for University of California Cooperative Extension. They can especially help by providing perimeters for prescribed burns. But they must be in the right places and don't stop fires, she said.

David Peterson, an ecology professor at the University of Washington and former federal research scientist, said the plan will likely produce mixed success slowing down fires. But Peterson said the plan will not help with extreme fires that produce embers and flames that jump over these fire breaks. He said the risk of fragmenting important habitat and harming animals like sage grouse is real.

The U.S. government must also be committed to the chore of maintaining the areas or the plan won't help and could open the door for more cheat grass to grow in, which fuels fires.

"We are buying into a long-term commitment of funding," Peterson said.

Patrick Donnelly, the Center for Biological Diversity's Nevada state director, said the plan could break up habitat for sage grouse, deer and the Pygmy rabbit. He said the money would be better spent planting native seed and sagebrush to get rid of non-native plants that make fires worst.

"This seems like the Interior is trying to demonstrate they are doing something, and they want something that is impressive to people, like: 'Look at us, we've bulldozed 11,000 miles of desert,'" Donnelly said. "Ultimately, this is a misguided effort."

## Plastic or paper? Trump campaign weighs in on straw debate

WASHINGTON (AP) — The president and his reelection campaign are mocking efforts to replace plastic straws with paper ones and turning that disdain into a fundraising gimmick.

The president's 2020 campaign manager, Brad Parscale, tweeted that he was "so over paper straws. #LiberalProgress."

He said liberals would do the same to the economy: "Squeeze it until it doesn't work."

Later, Parscale tweeted a link to the campaign's online store, where supporters could buy a pack of 10

recyclable and laser engraved "Trump Straws" for \$15. Sure enough, the site now says the straws have already sold out.

Some cities are banning plastic straws because of their impact on oceans. Over 8 million metric tons of plastic enter the ocean each year — though plastic straws make up less than 1% of ocean waste.

Most recycling centers don't accept plastic straws because they're so small that they fall through the cracks of machinery at processing plants.

The president weighed in Friday when asked about the plastic straw debate before departing for New Jersey, saying, "I do think we have bigger problems than plastic straws."

He wasn't done though: "You know, it's interesting about plastic straws. So you have a little straw, but what about the plates, the wrappers and everything else that are much bigger? And they're made of the same material," Trump observed. "Everybody focuses on the straws. There's a lot of other things to focus. But it's an interesting question."

## Reined-in rate-cut expectations, Iran tensions hit S&P 500

By **STAN CHOE** and **DAMIAN J. TROISE** AP Business Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — U.S. stocks pulled further back from their records on Friday to cap the weakest week for the S&P 500 since May.

Indexes slogged between small gains and losses for much of the day before turning lower in the afternoon after Iran said it seized a British oil tanker, the latest escalation of tensions between Tehran and the West. Reined-in expectations for how deeply the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates at its next meeting also weighed on stocks.

The S&P 500 fell 18.50 points, or 0.6%, to 2,976.61. After setting its record high on Monday, the index see-sawed mostly lower and lost 1.2% for the week. It's just the second down week for the index in the last seven.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average fell 68.77, or 0.3%, to 27,154.20, and the Nasdaq composite lost 60.75, or 0.7%, to 8,146.49.

Momentum for stocks has slowed since early June, when they began soaring on expectations that the Federal Reserve will cut interest rates for the first time in a decade to ensure the U.S. economy doesn't succumb to weaknesses abroad. The Fed's next meeting is scheduled for the end of this month.

Late Thursday, Treasury yields sank after comments by Fed officials raised expectations that it may cut rates by half a percentage point, rather than the typical quarter point. But yields climbed Friday as the market grew more convinced that the Fed will cut just 0.25 percentage points on July 31.

"It could be 25 wasted," said Brent Schutte, chief investment strategist at Northwestern Mutual Wealth Management Company, who said a half-point cut would be more effective. "I think it's more important to shock the market a bit and convince the market they're serious about pushing inflation above 2%."

The yield on the 10-year Treasury rose to 2.05% from 2.04% late Thursday. The two-year yield, which is more influenced by expectations of Fed moves on rates, climbed to 1.81% from 1.77%.

Until the Fed's meeting, investors are focusing on whether companies can top the meager expectations Wall Street has for the profits they made during the spring.

Microsoft jumped in morning trading after reporting stronger earnings for April through June than analysts expected, though it faded as the afternoon progressed and ended the day with just a 0.1% gain.

Several banks climbed after reporting stronger-than-expected earnings, but financial stocks in the S&P 500 were down overall. That was partly because of a 2.8% drop for American Express, which reported stronger earnings for the latest quarter than analysts forecast but did not raise its forecast for full-year earnings.

"The biggest overall trend is if you beat, you may be mildly rewarded, and if you miss, you are going to get pounded," said J.J. Kinahan, chief market strategist for TD Ameritrade.

Energy stocks had the biggest gains in the S&P 500 after the price of oil climbed on worries about possible supply disruptions.



# Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 49 of 50

Britain's foreign secretary said Iranian authorities seized two vessels in the Strait of Hormuz, one British-flagged and the other under Liberia's flag. The move comes two days after the United States said it downed an Iranian drone in the strait, which is a key waterway for moving oil.

Benchmark U.S. crude oil climbed 33 cents, or 0.6%, to settle at \$55.63 after being down earlier in the day. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 54 cents, or 0.9%, to \$62.47 per barrel.

Boeing had one of the biggest gains in the S&P 500, even though it said it will take a \$4.9 billion charge to cover possible compensation it will pay airlines following the grounding of its 737 Max jet. That's a huge number, analysts concede, but it may provide some certainty to investors who had worried the payments could be much higher. Boeing also said the figure assumes its 737 Max jets return to service later this year, which would be earlier than some investors thought.

Boeing shares rose 4.5% and helped drive industrial stocks to one of the biggest gains of the 11 sectors that make up the S&P 500, at 0.5%.

In the commodities markets, wholesale gasoline rose 1 cent to \$1.84 per gallon. Heating oil climbed 3 cents to \$1.89 per gallon. Natural gas fell 4 cents to \$2.25 per 1,000 cubic feet.

Gold fell \$1.00 to \$1,425.10 per ounce, silver was unchanged at \$16.12 per ounce and copper rose 4 cents to \$2.74 per pound.

The dollar rose to 107.81 Japanese yen from 107.52 yen on Thursday. The euro weakened to \$1.1219 from \$1.1266.

Asian stock markets were strong, with Japan's Nikkei 225 index up 2%, South Korea's Kospi gaining 1.3% and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong up 1.1%.

The FTSE 100 in London added 0.2%, the German Dax rose 0.3% and the French CAC 40 was virtually flat.

## Today in History By The Associated Press

### Today in History

Today is Saturday, July 20, the 201st day of 2019. There are 164 days left in the year.

### Today's Highlights in History:

On July 20, 1969, astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin became the first men to walk on the moon after reaching the surface in their Apollo 11 lunar module.

### On this date:

In 1861, the Congress of the Confederate States convened in Richmond, Virginia.

In 1923, Mexican revolutionary leader Pancho Villa was assassinated by gunmen in Parral.

In 1944, an attempt by a group of German officials to assassinate Adolf Hitler with a bomb failed as the explosion only wounded the Nazi leader. President Franklin D. Roosevelt was nominated for a fourth term of office at the Democratic convention in Chicago.

In 1960, a pair of Polaris missiles were fired from the submerged USS George Washington off Cape Canaveral, Fla., at a target more than 1,100 miles away.

In 1968, the first International Special Olympics Summer Games, organized by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, were held at Soldier Field in Chicago.

In 1976, America's Viking 1 robot spacecraft made a successful, first-ever landing on Mars.

In 1977, a flash flood hit Johnstown, Pennsylvania, killing more than 80 people and causing \$350 million worth of damage. The U.N. Security Council voted to admit Vietnam to the world body.

In 1982, Irish Republican Army bombs exploded in two London parks, killing eight British soldiers, along with seven horses belonging to the Queen's Household Cavalry.

In 1989, Burmese activist Aung San Suu Kyi (soo chee) was placed under house arrest by the military government of Myanmar.

In 1990, Supreme Court Justice William J. Brennan, one of the court's most liberal voices, announced he was stepping down.

# Groton Daily Independent

**Saturday, July 20, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 020 ~ 50 of 50**

In 1993, White House deputy counsel Vincent Foster Jr., 48, was found shot to death in a park near Washington, D.C.; his death was ruled a suicide.

In 2012, gunman James Holmes opened fire inside a crowded movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, during a midnight showing of "The Dark Knight Rises," killing 12 people and wounding 70 others. (Holmes was later convicted of murder and attempted murder, and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.)

Ten years ago: A roadside bomb killed four American troops in eastern Afghanistan. The astronauts aboard the shuttle-station complex celebrated the 40th anniversary of man's first moon landing with their own spacewalk.

Five years ago: Pro-Moscow rebels piled nearly 200 bodies from downed Malaysia Airlines Flight 17 into four refrigerated boxcars in eastern Ukraine, and cranes at the crash scene moved big chunks of the Boeing 777, drawing condemnation from Western leaders who said the rebels were tampering with the site. Rory McIlroy completed a wire-to-wire victory in the British Open to capture the third leg of the career Grand Slam, closing with a 1-under 71 for a two-shot victory over Sergio Garcia and Rickie Fowler.

One year ago: President Donald Trump escalated his threats to punish China for its trade policies, warning in an interview airing on CNBC that he was prepared to impose tariffs on all Chinese imports. Ohio Gov. John Kasich spared the life of condemned killer Raymond Tibbetts, commuting his sentence to life without parole, after a juror came forward and said information about the extent of Tibbetts' tough childhood wasn't properly presented at trial. Charlotte, North Carolina, was chosen to host the 2020 Republican National Convention.

Today's Birthdays: Actress-singer Sally Ann Howes is 89. Author Cormac McCarthy is 86. Rockabilly singer Sleepy LaBeef is 84. Former Sen. Barbara A. Mikulski, D-Md., is 83. Actress Diana Rigg is 81. Artist Judy Chicago is 80. Rock musician John Lodge (The Moody Blues) is 76. Country singer T.G. Sheppard is 75. Singer Kim Carnes is 74. Rock musician Carlos Santana is 72. Rock musician Jay Jay French (Twisted Sister) is 67. Rock musician Paul Cook (The Sex Pistols, Man Raze) is 63. Actress Donna Dixon is 62. Rock musician Mick McNeil (Simple Minds) is 61. Country singer Radney Foster is 60. Actor Frank Whaley is 56. Actor Dean Cain is 55. Rock musician Stone Gossard (Pearl Jam) is 53. Actor Reed Diamond is 52. Actor Josh Holloway is 50. Singer Vitamin C is 50. Actress Sandra Oh is 48. Actor Omar Epps is 46. Actor Simon Rex is 45. Actress Judy Greer is 44. Actor Charlie Korsmo is 41. Singer Elliott Yamin (yah-MEEN') (American Idol) is 41. Supermodel Gisele Bündchen is 39. Rock musician Mike Kennerty (The All-American Rejects) is 39. Actor Percy Daggs III is 37. Actor John Francis Daley is 34. Country singer Hannah Blaylock (Edens Edge) is 33. Dancer-singer-actress Julianne Hough is 31. Washington Nationals pitcher Stephen Strasburg is 31. Actress Billi Bruno is 23.

Thought for Today: "We may well go to the moon, but that's not very far. The greatest distance we have to cover still lies within us." — Charles de Gaulle, French statesman (1890-1970).