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CLOSED: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

Swimming Pool Hours

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

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

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

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

July 19-21

State Junior Teener Tournament in Elkton

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

Pharis' Pizza Ranch franchisee wins top national honor

Jeremy Fugleberg, Sioux Falls Argus Leader

A Sioux Falls pizza restaurant franchise has won a top honor from a major trade publication.

Todd and Patty Pharis, Pizza Ranch franchise owners in Sioux Falls, have been named one of 50 Rock Star Franchise Owners in 2019 by Franchise Business Review, out of 27,000 franchises surveyed. Todd is a 1980 Groton High School graduate.

"There are some many fantastic success stories out there; it was painful to narrow our list down to just 50 Rockstar Franchisees," said Michelle Rowan, president of Franchise Business Review, in a news release. "There were



Todd and Patty Pharis pose at the Pizza Ranch on Wednesday, Sept. 5, 2018 in Sioux Falls, S.D. (Photo: Loren Townsley / Argus Leader,)

hundreds of deserving business owners. In the end, we picked 50 that really stood out. Franchisees that not only excel in their businesses, but provide strong leadership within their franchise organizations and their local communities."

The couple has opened eight Pizza Ranches and now own the Pizza Ranch location at the corner of 41st Street and Kiwanis Avenue in Sioux Falls, along with partners Mark Moeller and their son Michael. The location was recognized last year as the No. 1 franchise in all of Pizza Ranch.

"They're our No. 1 store, and they've been our No. 1 store since they opened up," Pizza Ranch President Adrie Groeneweg told the Sioux Falls Business Journal for an October article which follows:

Sure, Pizza Ranch has pizza. But you can't talk to local franchisees Todd and Patty Pharis for more than a minute without them showing you the many other things driving Pizza Ranch's success.

"I've got to show you my system for deliveries," Todd Pharis said, ushering the Sioux Falls Business Journal into the kitchen and before a screen that shows the location of every one of his delivery vehicles and sends notifications if the driver takes a corner too fast or speeds. Does a customer want to know where their food is? Easy.

"We can go right to this and say, 'They're a half a block away,'" Pharis said.

The Pharis family is reinventing the pizza game through technology, video games and event rooms. They're transforming the idea of a humble pizza restaurant into what their Pizza Ranch is now: an entertainment complex centered around selling good pizza and chicken, with a side of fundraising for good causes.

"It's very tough for our competitors to offer what we offer," Pharis said. "And that is a game room, meeting and party rooms at no charge, fundraiser nights where twice a week we give 10 percent of the sales and 100 percent of the tips to the groups."

Their work earned them recognition from Pizza Ranch as the No. 1 franchisee, serving about 30,000 customers a month from their location at the corner of 41st Street and Kiwanis Avenue in Sioux Falls.

"We get so many people just because we are the full package," Pharis said.

"They're our No. 1 store, and they've been our No. 1 store since they opened up," said Pizza Ranch President Adrie Groeneweg. "And he's not just No. 1. I won't give specific numbers, but he's set the bar high, and no one has come close to him."

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The switch from corporate to pizza

The Pharises weren't always at the top of the pizza game. Todd Pharis was a vice president of GE Capital in Los Angeles, with plans to move for the company to London. But they were also owners of half the Pizza Ranch location in Brandon. Then they built a new Pizza Ranch in Hartford and bought the location in Lennox.

"Now I had three, and I had to figure out how I was going to be active in three when I'm living over in London for three years," he said. "That's when we decided it would be a good time for us to leave corporate life in 1994 and move back to Sioux Falls."

Since then, growth has been the story. Pizza Ranch, which is based in Orange City, Iowa, was founded in 1981. When Pharis left GE Capital, Pizza Ranch had just under 60 locations. It now has more than 200, and it has expanded both regionally and in restaurant size and into larger markets.

Focus on technology, event space, new ideas

Baking a pizza might seem like a low-tech endeavor. But offering it in a Pizza Ranch is anything but. In addition to the real-time delivery tracking system, there's plenty of other technology to be found behind Pizza Ranch's buffet tables.

Workers can keep a watchful eye on the buffet tables via video cameras to track what needs to be replenished. Parents can watch their children in the Fun Zone on video screens in the dining room. Anyone who hits a buzzer to seek help in the Fun Zone sets off alarm lights in the dining room and kitchen.

Ultimately, serving pizza and chicken is an information game.

"We need to know exactly what's going on in the dining room and the kitchen," Pharis said. "We need to know in the kitchen and the dining room what's going on in the Fun Zone; we need to know in the kitchen where our delivery drivers are."

Pizza Ranch is also working to grow its customer base by staying on top of online ordering, which Groeneweg says makes up 40 percent of Pizza Ranch's business.

Pharis' Pizza Ranch has also made a name for itself as an event space, with multiple dividable rooms that can seat dozens for events, presentations, parties, reunions and more. At one time, there was a basketball court in the back of the store. That's now been converted into additional seating space.

"I think we'll have 12 parties on Saturday, at least 12, and it's not unusual for us to do that," Pharis said.

The Fun Zone

Pharis cooked up the Fun Zone arcade and game room concept and fleshed it out over several months before installing it in his own store, in additional space he was fortunate to obtain from his landlord.

The concept is this: Put the latest video and arcade games and a prize booth into a room. But the Fun Zone concept makes Pizza Ranch an entertainment destination for children and adults alike and provides an additional revenue stream.

Pharis is now evangelizing the Fun Zone concept to other franchisees. So far, 12 Pizza Ranches have Fun Zones, and there are 19 in development.

"Todd really put Fun Zone on the map for us," Groeneweg said, "It's actually becoming part of our concept, and I give him full credit for that."

Pharis attends amusement expos to stay on top of the latest developments in games and pricing. And he pays a premium to buy the newest games. He later replaces them with even newer games, selling the older games to local arcades or his main buyer -- the arcade at the Mall of America in Minnesota.

The Fun Zone also provides additional insulation against competition, Pharis said.

"If you're going to take customers away from me, you've got to have good pizza, good chicken and an entertainment area like Fun Zone," he said.

Pizza Ranch regularly works to adopt franchisee ideas, Groeneweg said, as a way of both growing its bottom line and staying ahead of competition. Todd Pharis is a great example of a franchisee leader who both mentors others and comes up with ideas worth replicating, he said.

"When you do business together, even though he's a franchisee, he's still in business for himself almost," Groeneweg said. "We learn from each other, and we learn we have to help each other, and that's good for the brand. It's a great relationship."

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New ideas, technology match growing footprint concept

The company has grabbed hold of its stores' volume potential, a trend that fits perfectly with the Pharis model of using technology and additional space to create an experience that transcends buffet service.

Pizza Ranch was previously willing to open in towns of any size, but they shifted to a minimum population of 3,000. Now the minimum is 30,000 population. As the Pizza Ranch store concept has grown in size, it has boosted the cost of opening a new location. A new Pizza Ranch, including the land on which it's built, prices out at \$3.4 million, Pharis said.

"So if you're going to spend \$3.4 million on a Pizza Ranch, you have to be in towns with a lot of people, heavy population," he said.

When Pharis and his partners opened the 41st and Kiwanis location, it had an impact not unusual for a new Pizza Ranch, he said.

"Usually when we go into a market, we are the No. 1 place. When we opened up here, Pizza Hut closed the day before we opened. That happens a lot in towns where there is a competitor, they'll actually close before, knowing they're probably not going to survive, if you have a good (Pizza Ranch) operator."

Pharis' son Michael is now a partner in the store, which isn't an unusual move in Pizza Ranch's corporate offices or its franchises, Pharis said, where family members are frequent business partners.

"A lot of us owners, their sons and daughters came in the business, and they'll be the new leaders of Pizza Ranch," he said. "It puts a different pressure on us, because now we're not just looking at the next five to 10 years to make sure we're the No. 1 in our market."

"We have to make sure 30 to 40 years down the road, those younger people are also going to be the No. 1 pizza and chicken restaurants in their community."

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

MS/HS Administrative Assistant/Study Hall
Supervisor

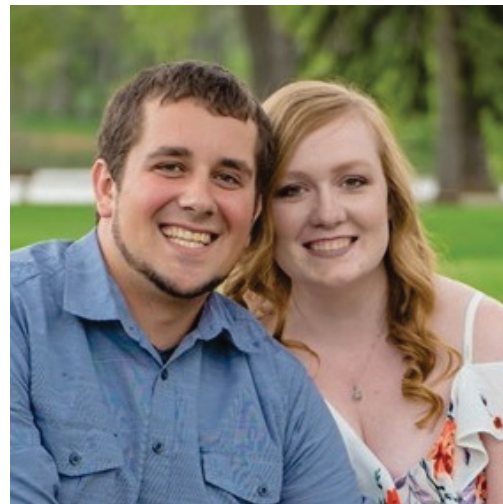
Yearbook Advisor

Assistant Boys Basketball Coach

Applications are available at www.grotonrea.com
under the employment tab. Contact Joe Schwan,
Superintendent with questions at 605-397-2351.

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

The Groton Area School District is an Equal
Opportunity Employer.



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

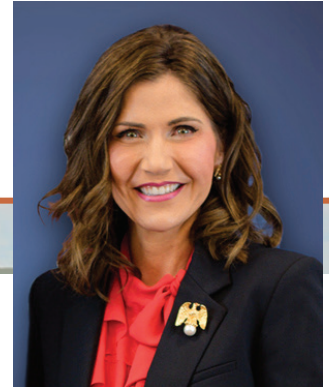
The couple is registered at Target, on
Amazon.com, and Lori's Pharmacy

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



Living Within Our Means

South Dakotans value the dollar. We don't spend money we don't have. We live within our means. We understand the importance of the bottom line.

Whether it's a family-run tourist attraction in the Black Hills or a farm in the James River Valley, small businesses and families don't get to spend money they don't have, and the government shouldn't either. In my first address to the legislature as governor, I promised that fiscal discipline would be the foundation of my governorship. Because fiscal discipline creates stability in the state. Fiscal stewardship sets us up for success.

On June 30, we finished the fiscal year with a \$19.4 million surplus. This is good news. We were able to tuck that money into our state reserves, further securing our investment into the future.

If you look at our financial report, you'll see that ongoing revenues finished lower than we projected. This is partially due to the tough ag economy and the extreme weather we experienced earlier this year. Folks just weren't out spending as much. Thankfully, we made some decisions in advance that reduced our spending, and even with the smaller revenue stream, we were able to stay in the black and boost our state reserves.

It's also important to note the conversation surrounding online sales tax that we've been having for about a year now. It's still early, but it is good we didn't budget for any additional sales and use tax from online and remote sellers as this year's overall sales tax numbers didn't hit the projections. We'll continue monitoring the data coming to see how the Wayfair decision and the tax changes impact our state's bottom line.

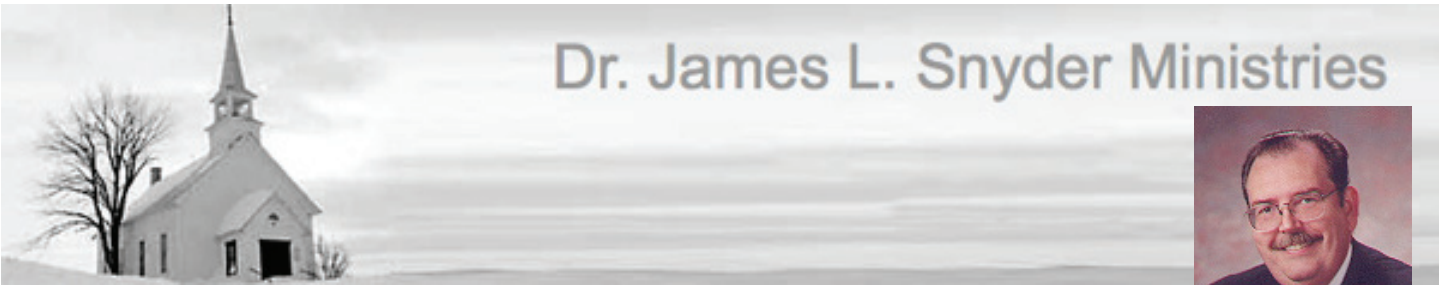
And we will continue living within our means.

Earlier this year, I worked with the legislature to develop and enact a balanced budget for fiscal year 2020, which started July 1. In this budget, we provided a 10 percent funding increase for nursing homes providers and set aside \$5 million to help us rethink the systems of care for our parents and grandparents. We increased teacher pay by 2.5 percent. We raised support for technical institutes. We invested in Ellsworth, bolstering our national defense. We designated substantial funds to confront our meth epidemic and internet shortage.

We're addressing critical needs, and we're operating on a balanced budget – without raising taxes. I am committed to maintaining this legacy of fiscal responsibility.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



After All, It Is Monday

I do not consider myself lazy. I think of myself as an Energy Conservative. I am saving my energy for sometime down the road when I may need it, and who knows when.

This, however, is not the opinion of the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. If there is a lazy bone in her, it has sprouted wings and flown away a long time ago. She works hard, which I do not mind, except she expects me to keep up with her.

I enjoy slouching around, busily engaged in doing nothing. I have become an expert in this, which has become more than a hobby with me.

Occasionally my wife will say, "What are you doing right now?"

To which I answer, "Nothing."

Her response is, "I thought so. Could you come and help me now?"

I guess everybody has their own definition of "nothing." To be sure, my wife's definition is not the same as mine. At this point, I am not quite sure who has the right definition.

Some people have the idea that if you are doing nothing, you are being lazy. I like to contradict that. Nothing and lazy are two different things. Don't ask me the difference because I'm not quite sure I could explain the difference, I'm just too lazy.

The best day of the week for me to be lazy is Monday. Weekends are always busy with church work and such that Monday is a wonderful time to chill out and unwind. Over the years, I have become an expert in this weekend recovery exercise.

I guess everybody is lazy to some degree. Again, it depends on your definition of lazy. Everybody needs an opportunity to relax a little and get ready for the next activity.

The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage has a different idea about this. If you are up and it is daylight, you have to be working and doing something. "You can sleep tonight when you go to bed," is one of her famous sayings.

There are times when I wish I were living in Alaska, where they have about 67 days of night. Can you imagine sleeping for 67 days and actually doing nothing?

My wife would like the other time of the year in Alaska, where they have sunlight 24 hours a day.

A person should regulate his life and not be overwhelmed with anything, particularly work activity.

I'm not against work at all. I just do not want my work to interfere with those lazy moments so predominant in my life. I schedule my work around my laziness as much as possible.

After all, what is wrong with being lazy? I know, as my wife has reminded me, that there is work that must be done. Yet, there are times when we need to live above our work schedule. Or, maybe live below it, I'm not sure.

I try to take Monday's off and schedule nothing that day. I'm not always successful, I will admit. But it is not because I do not try.

We had come through six or seven weeks of work every day. Just when I wanted to take a day off something came up and I had to cancel my day off and focus on the work before me.

It was a Thursday afternoon and I came into the house, sat down in my chair and in a few moments found myself sleeping. Actually, my wife found me sleeping.

"You're not sleeping?" she asked.

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It startled me and I woke up and saw her there and gently said, "No, my dear. I was praying for you and the kids and the grandkids."

She smiled very graciously and said, "Okay, that's quite all right, keep praying."

I was so excited that I got something over on her that I could not go back to sleep. I was so glad that it worked. I plan to use that ploy in the future.

Several weeks ago, we had a very busy weekend. Not only church programs but also other activities that took up most of Saturday. Come Monday morning I was completely worn out. I said to myself as I got out of bed, "I'm going to practice my lazy exercises all day today."

I went out, sat in my chair and just relaxed. It felt so good. Being lazy has a good feeling to it at times. Of course, only people who work hard can appreciate those lazy moments. I was appreciating my lazy moment.

I then heard the front door open and in came my wife who had been shopping for groceries. She looked at me and said, "You're not still in that chair doing nothing, are you?"

I could not use the prayer strategy because my eyes were open watching TV. Looking at her with a grin all over my face I said, "I'm exercising my lazy rights. After all, it is Monday."

She smiled back, went into the kitchen and began putting away the groceries. I leaned back in my chair and said to myself, "Isn't lazy something special!"

It was then that I thought about a verse in Genesis. "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made" (Genesis 2:2).

Even God ended his work and rested one day during the week. He is my example.



The Border Crisis has Reached Unprecedented Levels

The crisis at our southern border shows no signs of slowing down, as the number of individuals attempting to cross our border illegally continues at a rapid pace. In May of this year, border patrol agents made 132,887 apprehensions. That is three times more than the same month in 2018, and nine times more than the same month in 2017. This has overwhelmed our system as our border patrol agents are overburdened and detention facilities are growing more crowded every day by individuals who have illegally crossed our border. The result has been both a border security crisis and a humanitarian crisis along our southern border.

How did we get here in the first place? Our broken immigration policy is primarily to blame. Central Americans, living in countries without the opportunities and freedoms we have in the U.S., want to come here for a better, more prosperous life. Due to our generous asylum laws, word has spread among citizens in Central America that if they can reach our soil, they can claim asylum and stay in the United States until their court hearing, in which a decision is made whether their asylum claim is legitimate. Because immigration judges are overwhelmed with backlogged cases, the court date is often years away. According to the administration, 90 percent of the asylum seekers fail to show up to their court date. There is currently a backlog of more than 875,000 immigration cases.

Asylum is meant to provide a safe haven for individuals fleeing persecution. It should be a last resort for those sincerely fearing for their lives – not be used as a free ticket into the United States for those who would simply prefer to live in our country. Under current law, those who want to live in the U.S. should go through the legal immigration process instead of falsely claiming asylum to get across the border, and those who want to legitimately claim asylum should do so at the ports of entry at our southern border.

President Trump's administration has recently taken steps to help stem the flow of illegal immigrants by issuing an interim rule that changes the process for those seeking asylum. Under the rule, migrants who enter through our southern border will be ineligible for asylum unless they apply for and are denied asylum in one of the countries they traveled through first.

It's not often that I agree with the New York Times, but a recent editorial declared that "The United States needs an immigration policy that combines border security, justice and humanity." I couldn't agree more. The status quo fails to protect our borders, fails to address the humanitarian crisis and fails to uphold legal immigration which is meant to meet our country's needs. The administration's rule is a good start, as is the border supplemental bill passed in June that provides \$4.59 billion in additional funding to help improve the situation at the border. Additionally, the administration authorized the deployment of more troops to the border, for a total force of 6,600 who are tasked with providing support to Customs and Border Patrol. But these are only temporary patches and they don't address the entire problem.

Congress must take action if we are ever to find a long-term solution to strengthen our borders, fix the humanitarian crisis and make certain our legal immigration system is merit-based so we can adequately meet our workforce needs. We must do better, and I continue to stand ready to work with my colleagues – on both sides of the aisle – to fix the crisis once and for all.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

GROTON C & MA CHURCH

706 N. MAIN

JULY 21 – JULY 25


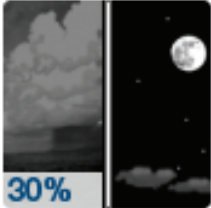



FOR AGES 3 THROUGH GRADE 6

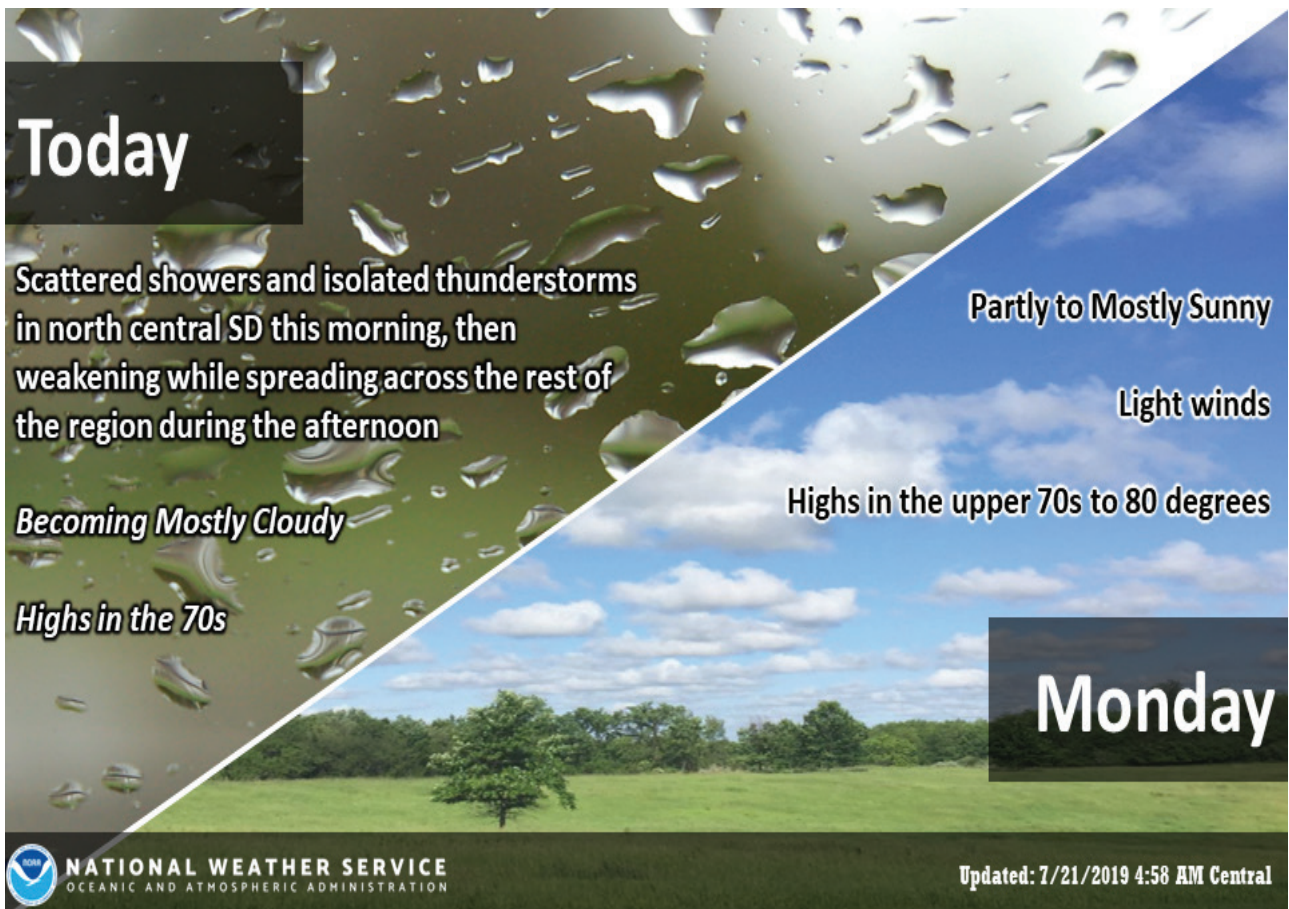
6:15 – 8:30 PM

QUESTIONS? CALL JANA 397-7471

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Today	Tonight	Monday	Monday Night	Tuesday
				
Mostly Sunny then Chance Showers	Chance Showers then Mostly Clear	Sunny	Clear	Sunny
High: 75 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 79 °F	Low: 56 °F	High: 82 °F



Today

Scattered showers and isolated thunderstorms in north central SD this morning, then weakening while spreading across the rest of the region during the afternoon

Becoming Mostly Cloudy


Highs in the 70s

Partly to Mostly Sunny

Light winds

Highs in the upper 70s to 80 degrees

Monday

 NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

Updated: 7/21/2019 4:58 AM Central

Published on: 07/21/2019 at 1:01AM

Scattered showers and a few thunderstorms are expected today. They will start out in north central SD this morning, then weaken and spread south and east through the afternoon. High pressure will build into the area tonight, bringing dry weather for the start of the work week.

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Today in Weather History

July 21, 1940: From near Miller, an estimated F2 tornado moved southeast, destroying a barn, garage, and two windmills.

July 21, 2000: 3.25-inch hail was reported near Okreek in northeastern Todd County.

1983: At Vostok Station in Antarctica, the temperature dropped to 128.6 degrees below zero. This reading is the coldest temperature ever recorded.

1987: An F4 tornado ravages the Teton Wilderness and Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. The tornado's violent winds destroy millions of trees on a 24.3-mile track that traverses the Continental Divide at an elevation of 10,170 feet.

1911 - The temperature at Painter, WY, dipped to 10 degrees to equal the record low for July for the continental U.S. (The Weather Channel)

1934 - The temperature reached 109 degrees at Cincinnati, OH, to cap their hottest summer of record. The state record for Ohio was established that day with a reading of 113 degrees near the town of Galipolis. (David Ludlum)

1975 - Six inches of rain fell across Mercer County, NJ, in just ten hours causing the worst flooding in twenty years. Assunpink Creek crested eleven feet above flood stage at Hamilton and Trenton, the highest level of record. Traffic was brought to a standstill, and railway service between New York City and Washington D.C. was cut off for two days. Flooding left 1000 persons homeless, and caused an estimated 25 million dollars damage. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Utah to North Dakota, spawning a dozen tornadoes in North Dakota. Thunderstorms in North Dakota also produced baseball size hail at Clifford which caused four million dollars damage, and high winds which toppled a couple of eighty foot towers cutting off power to the town of Blanchard. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - While cool air invaded the central U.S., unseasonably hot weather continued over the western states. The temperature at Spring Valley, NV, soared from a morning low of 35 degrees to an afternoon high of 95 degrees. Fallon, NV, reported an all-time record high of 108 degrees, and Death Valley, CA, reported their sixth straight day of 120 degree heat. (The Weather Channel) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Afternoon thunderstorms over Florida produced wind gusts to 92 mph at Jacksonville, damaging thirteen light planes at Herlong Field. Five cities in Texas reported record low temperatures for the date. Corpus Christi, TX, equalled their record low for the date with a reading of 71 degrees, and then tied their record high for the date that afternoon with a reading of 97 degrees. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 81 °F at 5:59 PM

Low Temp: 59 °F at 7:24 AM

Wind: 25 mph at 7:19 AM

Day Rain: 0.08

Record High: 106° in 1899

Record Low: 41° in 1902

Average High: 84°F

Average Low: 60°F

Average Precip in July.: 2.06

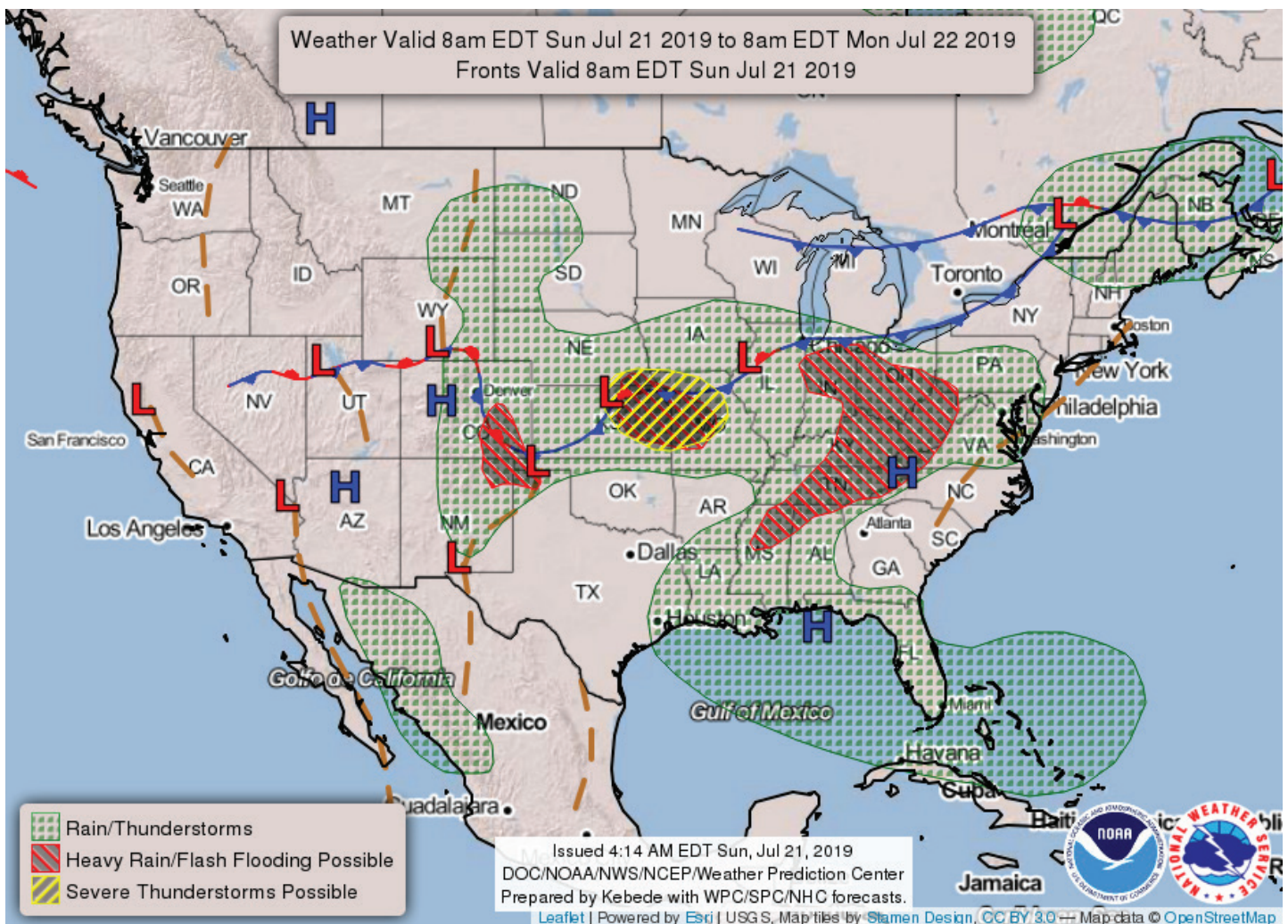
Precip to date in July.: 2.87

Average Precip to date: 12.90

Precip Year to Date: 15.59

Sunset Tonight: 9:14 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:07 a.m.



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GIVING OR DOING: WHICH MATTERS MOST

Many guide their lives by The Golden Rule - Do unto others what you would have them do unto you. They do what they do, not from the goodness of their hearts, but what they want or expect from others in return for doing something. It is the old adage: If you scratch my back, Ill scratch yours. Their lives become a trading post.

Others give what they give because their goal is to obligate or control people. They cannot give without grumbling. After presenting an object, large or small, they wait and watch to see if they will receive something appropriate in return for their goodness. If nothing comes, gifts stop.

Some give for recognition. They want to be praised in public places for their contributions or rewarded for being kind or being seen as a generous person. Many give because they expect to be recognized and blest by God for their gifts, trying to obligate Him for what He already owns.

Giving and doing are both good. But is there something more? To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifices. This proverb makes a profound statement: We can make any number of sacrifices for many different reasons, but if we do not give because we love God, live righteously, and treat others with justice, dignity and respect, it seems as though giving and doing is less than acceptable in Gods sight.

We must never forget that sacrifice is at the heart of the gospel: God sent His only begotten Son to die for us. But our giving, even sacrificially, must be done for the right reasons. We must realize that being is what God wants from us - beginning with being born again, followed by being righteous and just, and then followed by being generous for the right reasons.

Giving reflects gratitude. And if we are grateful for our salvation, we will give generously - but for the right reasons.

Prayer: May we understand, Lord, that our giving reflects our love for You. First our heads, then our hearts, and then giving things with our hands! In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 21:3 To do what is right and just is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifices.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

2020 Groton SD Community Events

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

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News from the  Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Saturday:

Dakota Cash

20-24-27-33-35

(twenty, twenty-four, twenty-seven, thirty-three, thirty-five)

Estimated jackpot: \$32,000

Lotto America

05-08-09-25-38, Star Ball: 8, ASB: 2

(five, eight, nine, twenty-five, thirty-eight; Star Ball: eight; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$2.1 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$168 million

Powerball

05-26-36-64-69, Powerball: 19, Power Play: 3

(five, twenty-six, thirty-six, sixty-four, sixty-nine; Powerball: nineteen; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$53 million

High winds down trees in South Dakota

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Storms that passed through eastern South Dakota on Saturday morning brought high winds that toppled trees and damaged farm outbuildings.

The National Weather Service says a wind gust of 66 mph was reported at the Sioux Falls airport, while the Brookings airport reported a 75 mph wind gust.

The Argus Leader reports that damage from the storms delayed JazzFest by several hours. The city of Sioux Falls closed a public swimming pool due to storm damage and Pioneer Spray Park was also closed due to electrical issues from the storm.

Dozens of Twitter users posted pictures of downed trees and power lines. Some photos showed large trees blocking streets.

The storms followed intense heat and humidity on Friday. A portion of Interstate 229 in Sioux Falls buckled Friday under the extreme heat.

Police: Fire that spread to Sioux Falls home was intentional

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Sioux Falls authorities say a fire that spread from a parked car to a nearby garage and house was intentionally set.

Six people escaped from the house and were not injured.

The fire was reported early Saturday. Fire officials say they arrived to find a single family home and attached garage fully engulfed in flames.

The Sioux Falls Police Department says the fire spread from a car that was parked near the garage. Two vehicles and the garage were destroyed, and the house was significantly damaged.

Police say the fire started "as a result of an intentional act" and is under investigation.

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Exit polls: Japan's ruling bloc secures upper house majority

By MARI YAMAGUCHI and KAORI HITOMI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's ruling coalition appeared certain to hold onto a majority in Japan's upper house of parliament following Sunday's election, with exit polls indicating he could even close in on the super-majority needed to propose constitutional revisions.

NHK public television said that Abe's Liberal Democratic Party and its partner Komei were sure to win from 67 to 77 seats in the upper house, and that the two-thirds majority needed for constitutional revision could be within reach if the bloc is joined by supporters from another party.

Up for grabs were 124 seats in the less powerful of Japan's two parliamentary chambers. There are 245 seats in the upper house — which does not choose the prime minister — about half of which are elected every three years.

If the exit polls prove accurate, the results would match or even exceed pre-election polls that indicated Abe's ruling bloc was to keep ground in the upper house, with most voters considering it a safer choice over an opposition with an uncertain track record.

Opposition parties have focused on concerns over household finances, such as the impact from an upcoming 10% sales tax increase and strains on the public pension system amid Japan's aging population.

Abe has led his Liberal Democratic Party to five consecutive parliamentary election victories since 2012.

He has prioritized revitalizing Japan's economy and has steadily bolstered the country's defenses in the backdrop of North Korea's missile and nuclear threats and China's growing military presence. He also has showcased his diplomatic skills by cultivating warm ties with President Donald Trump.

Abe hopes to gain enough upper house seats to boost his chances for constitutional revision, his long-cherished goal before his term ends in 2021.

But Abe and his conservative backers also face challenges because voters seem more concerned about their jobs, the economy and social security.

The main opposition Constitutional Democratic Party of Japan and three other liberal-leaning parties teamed up in some districts. They stressed support for gender equality and LGBT issues — the areas Abe's ultra-conservative lawmakers are reluctant to back.

At a polling station in Tokyo's Chuo district on Sunday, voters were divided over Abe's 6 1/2-year rule.

A voter who identified himself only as a company worker in his 40s said he chose a candidate and a party that have demonstrated an ability to get things done, suggesting he voted for Abe's ruling party and its candidate, as "there is no point in casting my vote for a party or a politician who has no such abilities."

Another voter, Katsunori Takeuchi, a 57-year-old fish market worker, said it was time to change the dominance of Abe and his ultra-conservative policies.

"I think the ruling party has been dominating politics for far too long and it is causing damage," he said.

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

Big league ballparks broil as heat wave grips much of majors

By BEN WALKER AP Baseball Writer

At Wrigley Field, misters in the back of the bleachers tried to cool the crowd. At Yankee Stadium, only one player took batting practice on the field. In Cleveland, rules were relaxed on what fans could bring into the park.

Even for a sport that promotes high heat, Saturday was a scorcher across the majors. The National Weather Service said it was part of "a dangerous heat wave" gripping much of the country.

From the Northeast through the Midwest, no player, manager or umpire was spared as temperatures soared near triple digits in big league broilers.

Hours before Baltimore played Boston at sweltering Camden Yards, Orioles manager Brandon Hyde pulled aside starting catcher Chance Sisco and issued a stiff directive.

"I told Chance, 'Do not go outside until the game starts,'" Hyde said.

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Sisco went all nine innings Friday night and was in the lineup again while backup Pedro Severino recovers from an illness.

"I told Chance, I don't want him hustling on and off the field. I want to see him walking," Hyde said. "When you're a catcher in these type of games, it's not easy. After the eighth inning, his face was beet red."

It was 97 degrees for the first pitch and no relief in sight, either. The temperature was forecast to top 100 for Sunday afternoon's series finale.

At Great American Ball Park in Cincinnati, where it was a sizzling 94 as the Reds played St. Louis, the stadium PA system got in the swing, sort of. The pregame songs? "Let It Snow" and "Tenth Avenue Freeze-Out," among others with winter-sounding titles.

In Chicago, where it also was 94 when the Cubs started against San Diego, there was a big ovation in the seventh inning — for the weather.

That's when the wind suddenly shifted and began blowing in. The temperature immediately dropped and many in the crowd of 40,314 cheered the wind in the Windy City.

For those sitting in the stands with no cover, it was hard to take.

Jaclyn Jendrisak, 31, was in town from St. Louis for a bachelor/bachelorette party. Fortunately for her group, the Cubs created a cooling station in right field.

"Standing in the shade, have some air conditioning blowing on us. We're sticking to water and not having beer. It's helping a little bit," she said.

The thermometer read 94 in New York, too, the hottest for a Yankees game this season.

The Yankees set up supplemental hydration stations in all three decks and the bleachers, and made announcements over the public address system reminding fans to keep drinking water.

Chris Del Vecchio, 33, from Verona, New Jersey, and his pal Bruna Silva walked around the ballpark with bags of ice on their neck and shoulders as the Yankees topped Colorado 11-5.

"Sitting in the bleachers is where our seats are and we made it about two innings, they scored about six runs, so it kind of extended those innings and made it seem a little longer. But, it's pretty brutal out there," Del Vecchio said.

Injured Yankees outfielder Cameron Maybin was the only player who took BP on the field. In the steamy conditions, Colorado's Tony Wolters had the bat accidentally slip from his hands on a swing and sail into the Yankees dugout.

Rockies star third baseman Nolan Arenado exited in the late innings with a leg cramp, presumably caused by the weather.

"It was fine when we were walking on the grass, but as soon as you got to the plate it was like a cone of heat. It was awful," Yankees catcher Austin Romine said. "It was a struggle out there."

All over, portable bench coolers helped teams in hot spots, while umpires ducked off the field between innings to stay fresh.

At Comerica Park, where the scoreboard showed 94 degrees about an hour before Detroit hosted Toronto, there was a message on the markerboard in the Tigers clubhouse saying the team would do its work indoors because of the heat.

"We're not going to be silly. Just let them hit in the cages, and hopefully we'll be ready to play the game. I think we hit enough. We take enough groundballs," Tigers manager Ron Gardenhire said.

By the fourth inning, it had cooled off a bit, with heavy rain causing a delay.

At Progressive Field, the Cleveland Indians eased the regulations on what fans could carry into the ballpark. Empty thermos bottles were permitted for the game against Kansas City.

"They didn't have Gatorade when I played," Royals manager Ned Yost recalled. "No, we didn't have the knowledge about hydration back then. It was take a couple salt pills and drink a little bit of water. We didn't know anything about hydrating."

The Red Sox didn't take batting practice Friday or Saturday, and planned to skip the session Sunday in Baltimore.

"You've got to be smart in the way you spend your energy," manager Alex Cora said. "It's that part of

the schedule. We knew we were going to run into something like this. And we did.”

The weather began to break in some spots.

A day after it was 94 when Minnesota hosted Oakland — the second-hottest start in Target Field’s 10-year history — it was about 20 degrees cooler in the Twin Cities.

On Friday night, All-Star pitcher Jake Odorizzi struggled with the A’s lineup and the humid setting.

“It was only like pitching in a rain forest,” he said.

AP Baseball Writers Ronald Blum and Noah Trister, AP Sports Writer David Ginsburg and AP freelance writers Charles O’Brien, John Jackson, Michal Dwojak, Brian Dulik and Mark Schmetzer contributed to this report.

More AP MLB: <https://apnews.com/MLB> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Female suicide bomber strikes hospital in Pakistan, 9 killed

By ISHTIAQ MAHSUD Associated Press

DERA ISMAIL KHAN, Pakistan (AP) — A female suicide bomber struck outside a hospital in Pakistan on Sunday as the wounded were being brought in from an earlier shooting against police, in a complex assault claimed by the Pakistani Taliban that killed a total of nine people and wounded another 30.

Salim Riaz Khan, a senior police officer in Dera Ismail Khan, said gunmen on motorcycles opened fire on police in a residential area, killing two. He says the bomber then struck at the entrance to the hospital, killing another four police and three civilians who were visiting their relatives. He said eight police were among the wounded, and that many of the wounded were in critical condition.

Inayat Ullah, a local forensics expert, said the female attacker set off 7 kilograms (15 pounds) of explosives packed with nails and ball-bearings.

The blast damaged the emergency room and forced it to shut down, according to a hospital official, who said the wounded were taken to a military hospital. The official spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisal.

The Pakistani Taliban claimed the attack but did not acknowledge that the bomber was a woman. The group has launched scores of attacks going back nearly two decades, but almost all of them were carried out by men.

Pakistan’s military has carried out several major operations in recent years against the Pakistani Taliban and other militants in areas along the porous border with Afghanistan. The violence has declined, but the militants still make their presence known through occasional attacks, mainly targeting security forces and religious minorities.

Later on Sunday, police said they had arrested 16 suspects in the attack, all of whom belong to banned organizations. Police officer Habib Ahmed said authorities also seized weapons during the manhunt.

Associated Press writer Riaz Khan in Peshawar and Asim Tanveer in Multan, Pakistan contributed.

UK navy heard in audio trying to thwart Iran ship seizure

By AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — In an audio recording released Sunday, a British naval officer can be heard saying the transit of a British-flagged vessel through the Strait of Hormuz must not be impaired under international law as Iranian naval forces warn the vessel to change course.

The audio, released by maritime security risk firm Dryad Global, shows how the British navy was unable to prevent the ship’s seizure by Iranian Revolutionary Guard forces on Friday. The seizure has prompted condemnation from the U.K. and its European allies as they continue to call for a de-escalation of tensions in the critical waterway.

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In the recording, an Iranian officer can be heard telling the Stena Impero to change course, saying: "You obey, you will be safe."

"Alter your course to 360 degrees immediately, over," the officer says, before saying the ship is wanted for security reasons.

A British naval officer from the HMS Montrose frigate patrolling the area around the Strait of Hormuz is heard telling the Stena Impero, which had a crew of 23 on board, that its passage must be allowed.

"Sir, I reiterate that as you are conducting transit passage in a recognized international strait, under international law your passage must not be impaired, intruded, obstructed or hampered," the British officer says.

The British officer then tells an Iranian patrol boat: "Please confirm that you are not intending to violate international law by unlawfully attempting to board the MV Stena."

Iranian officials say the seizure of the British oil tanker was a response to Britain's role in impounding an Iranian supertanker two weeks earlier.

Friday's incident comes amid heightened tensions between the U.S. and Iran stemming from President Donald Trump's decision last year to pull the U.S. from Iran's nuclear accord with world powers and reinstate sweeping sanctions. The U.S. has expanded its military presence in the region, while Iran has begun openly exceeding uranium enrichment levels set in the nuclear accord to pressure Europe to alleviate the pain caused by the sanctions.

Britain's Defense Secretary Tobias Ellwood reiterated calls for de-escalation on Sunday in an interview with Sky News.

"Well, firstly we need to try and de-escalate this. There has been a ratcheting up of tensions in the Middle East," he said, before adding that Friday's seizure is "a hostile act" by Iran.

Ellwood also noted that the British Royal Navy "is too small to manage our interests across the globe" and that this would be an issue for the next prime minister to recognize.

The free flow of traffic through the Strait of Hormuz is of international importance because one-fifth of all global crude exports pass through the narrow waterway between Iran and Oman.

In Tehran, some 160 lawmakers on Sunday issued a joint statement praising the interception of the British-flagged vessel by Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which has released video of the seizure showing Iranian commandos in black ski masks and fatigues rappelling from a helicopter onto the vessel.

Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif used the opening session of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) forum in Venezuela on Saturday to blast U.S. foreign policy under Trump.

"A new wave of extreme one-sided adventurism from the United States is the main theme and the challenge that we all face in one way or another," he said. "It's threatening peace and stability all around the world in different ways."

Meanwhile, British Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt spoke to reporters after an emergency government meeting over the "totally and utterly unacceptable" interception of the Stena Impero.

He defended Britain's role in seizing the Iranian tanker on July 4 as a legal move because it was suspected of breaching EU sanctions on oil shipments to Syria. Officials in Spain, near Gibraltar, initially said the ship's seizure had been requested by the U.S.

Hunt said Iranian officials "see this as a tit-for-tat situation, following Grace1 being detained in Gibraltar. Nothing could be further from the truth."

Germany's foreign minister meanwhile warned Iran that its seizure of commercial vessels is contributing to an "escalation spiral" that could lead to war.

Heiko Maas said in comments to Bild newspaper's Sunday edition that the seizure of the British tanker and the temporary detention of another has made the situation in the Gulf "a lot more serious and dangerous than it has been." He said European efforts are focused on keeping diplomatic channels open with "voices of reason" despite the challenges involved.

"This is about preventing war," he said.

Hong Kong protesters continue past march's end point

By ALICE FUNG and YANAN WANG Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Protesters in Hong Kong pressed on Sunday past the designated end point for a march in which tens of thousands repeated demands for direct elections in the Chinese territory and an independent investigation into police tactics used in previous demonstrations.

Around 10,000 people gathered in Admiralty, the district housing the city's government complex, despite orders from police to disperse immediately. Others continued toward Central, a key business and retail district and the site of the 2014 Umbrella Movement sit-ins.

Large protests began last month in opposition to a contentious extradition bill that would have allowed Hong Kong residents to stand trial in mainland China, where critics say their rights would be compromised.

Hong Kong's leader, Carrie Lam, has declared the bill dead, but protesters are dissatisfied with her refusal to formally withdraw the bill. Some are also calling for her to resign amid growing concerns about the steady erosion of civil rights in city.

A former British colony, Hong Kong was handed back to China in 1997, and was promised certain democratic freedoms under the framework of "one country, two systems." Fueled by anger at Lam and an enduring distrust of the Communist Party-ruled central government in Beijing, the demonstrations have ballooned into calls for electoral reform and an investigation into alleged police brutality.

Walking in sweltering heat, protesters dressed in black kicked off Sunday's march from a public park, carrying a large banner that read "Independent Inquiry for Rule of Law."

"Free Hong Kong! Democracy now!" the protesters chanted, forming a dense procession through Hong Kong's Wan Chai district as they were joined by others who had been waiting in side streets.

"I think the government has never responded to our demands," said Karen Yu, a 52-year-old Hong Kong resident who has attended four protests since last month. "No matter how much the government can do, at least it should come out and respond to us directly."

Marchers ignored orders from police to finish off the procession on a road in Wan Chai, according to police and the Civil Human Rights Front, the march's organizers.

Protesters repeated the five points of their "manifesto," which was first introduced when a small group of them stormed the legislature earlier this month. Their main demands include universal suffrage — direct voting rights for all Hong Kong residents — as well as dropping charges against anti-extradition protesters, withdrawing the characterization of a clash between police and protesters as a "riot" and dissolving the Legislative Council.

Protesters read the demands aloud in both English and Cantonese in videos released Saturday.

"We did not want to embark on this path of resisting tyranny with our bare bodies," they said, "but for too long, our government has lied and deceived, and refused to respond to the demands of the people."

While the demonstrations have been largely peaceful, some confrontations between police and protesters have turned violent. In Sha Tin district last Sunday, they beat each other with umbrellas and bats inside a luxury shopping center. Demonstrators broke into the Legislative Council building on July 1 by moving past barricades and shattering windows. Meanwhile, police officers have used pepper spray, tear gas, bean bag rounds and rubber bullets to quell the crowds.

On Friday, Hong Kong police discovered a stash of a powerful homemade explosive and arrested a man in a raid on a commercial building. Materials voicing opposition to the extradition bill were found at the site, local media said, but a police spokesman said no concrete link had been established and the investigation was continuing.

Wang reported from Beijing.

ESPN reasserts political talk policy after attack on Trump

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — ESPN is reminding employees of the network's policy to avoid talking about politics after radio talk show host Dan Le Batard criticized President Donald Trump and his recent racist comments and ESPN itself on the air this week.

The reminder went out Friday to all employees, including Le Batard, according to an ESPN employee who spoke on condition of anonymity Saturday because the person was not authorized to speak publicly about personnel matters.

ESPN has not spoken publicly about Le Batard's comments, including whether he faces any disciplinary action.

Reached on Saturday, Le Batard also declined comment.

For ESPN, the episode raises comparisons to what happened following anti-Trump tweets by its former anchor Jemele Hill nearly two years ago. Following that case, and criticism among some conservatives about left-leaning remarks on ESPN's air, network president Jimmy Pitaro decreed that its employees should avoid political talk unless they're reporting on issues raised by sports figures.

Le Batard spoke in the wake of the president's rally in North Carolina, where Trump renewed his attacks on four Democratic congresswomen of color, prompting a chant from his audience of "send her back" directed at U.S. Rep. Ilhan Omar, of Minnesota. The ESPN host said he found the attacks on Omar to be un-American and deeply offensive, and that it was wrong of Trump to seek re-election by dividing people.

"We here at ESPN don't have the stomach for the fight," Le Batard said. "We don't talk about what is happening unless there is some sort of weak, cowardly sports angle that we can run it through."

Le Batard's criticism of ESPN's policy sets him apart from Hill, who in September 2017 tweeted on her personal account that Trump was a "white supremacist" and "bigot." The White House called that a fire-able offense, but Hill apologized and the network accepted it.

She was suspended a month later for violating the network's social media policy when she tweeted in favor of an advertiser boycott against the Dallas Cowboys, whose owner Jerry Jones had said players who disrespected the American flag would not play on his team.

Hill has said she regretted putting her bosses in a difficult position, and amicably left ESPN within a year. She now writes for The Atlantic and has a weekly podcast on Spotify.

Along with the White House call for Hill's firing, Trump tweeted in October 2017 that "with Jemele Hill at the mike, it is no wonder ESPN ratings have 'tanked,' in fact, tanked so badly it is the talk of the industry!"

The president's Twitter account has been silent about Le Batard so far.

With Boris Johnson tipped to win PM race, UK eyes rocky ride

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain is getting a new prime minister. Buckle up for a rocky ride.

On Tuesday, the U.K.'s governing Conservatives will announce the winner of a contest to replace Theresa May as leader of the party and the country. Just over three months later, on Oct. 31, Britain is scheduled to leave the European Union.

With the new British leader on a collision course with both the EU and Britain's Parliament over Brexit, the U.K. could be heading for a political crisis, a recession, an election, a referendum — or several of those options at the same time.

"It's a very fluid situation, said Nick Wright, an expert on EU politics at University College London. "Literally, anything could happen."

ENTER BORIS

Barring a major upset, Britain's next prime minister will be Boris Johnson. The buoyant former foreign secretary is so far ahead with bookies and pollsters that it will be a huge shock if rival Jeremy Hunt is declared the victor on Tuesday.

Johnson, who sometimes has an ambiguous relationship with facts, campaigned with characteristic

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bluster, vowing to revive the country's "mojo" and making one main promise: Britain will leave the EU on Oct. 31, "come what may."

He may find that promise hard to keep. The new leader heads a government with no parliamentary majority in a deeply divided country that is facing off with a mistrustful EU.

IMMEDIATE CHALLENGE

The prime minister is due to take office Wednesday in a smoothly choreographed political handover. May will travel to Buckingham Palace and ask Queen Elizabeth II to invite her Conservative successor to form a government. Johnson — or, less likely, Hunt — will speak to the nation in front of his new home at 10 Downing St. that afternoon.

The new leader could face a challenge before he's even had a chance to unpack. The opposition Labour Party is considering calling a no-confidence vote in the Conservative government on Thursday. It would only take a handful of Conservative rebels to defeat the government and — unless it can overturn that vote within 14 days — trigger an early election.

The good news for the prime minister is that Parliament is due to start its six-week summer break on Friday and Labour will probably decide to wait until the fall before making a move.

MAKE ME AN OFFER

Both Johnson and Hunt say they will immediately start talks with the EU about changing the Brexit withdrawal agreement agreed upon by May's government, a pact that has been rejected three times by Britain's Parliament.

Yet Britain may struggle to get the bloc's full attention during August, a sleepy holiday period in much of Europe. And in any case, EU leaders have insisted they won't renegotiate. They also have a special distrust for Johnson, who began his career as a Brussels-based journalist spinning exaggerated stories of outrageous EU red tape for a British newspaper.

Johnson, like Hunt, says the key to winning Parliament's backing for a Brexit deal is to ditch the "backstop," an insurance policy designed to guarantee that the U.K.'s only land border with the EU — between Northern Ireland and Ireland — remains free of customs posts and other obstacles.

The EU, however, is adamant that without the backstop there can be no deal.

"Part of me thinks that Prime Minister Boris Johnson thinks he can just get away with it through sheer force of personality," Wright said. "But I don't see why the EU would make compromises to him that they wouldn't make to Theresa May."

DESTINATION NO DEAL

The new leader's EU negotiations will go hand-in-hand with intensified British planning for a no-deal exit: bolstering border staff, working with businesses and reassuring the public. Johnson claims that if Britain prepares properly, a no-deal Brexit will be "vanishingly inexpensive."

Experts disagree. The government's Office for Budget Responsibility said last week that crashing out of the bloc would shrink the British economy by 2% within a year, drive down the pound currency and plunge Britain into a prolonged recession.

Leaving without a deal would mean tariffs and customs checks for goods traveling between Britain and the EU, and would rip up thousands of rules governing everything from trade to aviation to telecommunications.

The House of Commons Exiting the European Union Committee says a no-deal Brexit "could lead to severe disruption of the economy, pose a fundamental risk to the competitiveness of key sectors of the U.K. economy and put many jobs and livelihoods at risk."

HALLOWEEN SHOWDOWN

While some British lawmakers think the dire warnings are exaggerated, a majority is determined to halt a no-deal Brexit. In a pre-emptive strike, lawmakers last week passed a measure that prevents the new prime minister from suspending Parliament in the fall — something Johnson has suggested he could do if legislators try to stop Brexit.

But halting a prime minister who is determined to press for a no-deal Brexit could be hard. By law, Britain will cease to be a member of the EU on Oct. 31, with or without a deal, unless Britain revokes its

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decision or the EU grants a delay.

Brexit Secretary Stephen Barclay said last week that the chances of a no-deal Brexit have been "underpriced."

"I think it's the will of many members of Parliament for there to be a deal. But the question then will be 'is there a deal that is palatable to Parliament?'" he told Parliament's Leaving the European Union Committee. "And if not, will Parliament vote to revoke or will we leave with no deal?"

UNPREDICTABLE OUTCOME

The crisis could come to a head at an EU summit on Oct. 17, just two weeks before Brexit day. EU leaders are sick of the Brexit soap opera, and could resist if Britain asks for a further delay. Newly elected European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen says Britain can have an extension if it's for a strong reason such as an election or a new referendum.

Britain is not scheduled to have an election until 2022, but could hold an early poll if the government loses a no-confidence vote, or if the prime minister calls one to seek a mandate for his version of Brexit.

An election might shake up Parliament and break the Brexit deadlock, but could also result in yet another divided legislature. Another potential deadlock-breaker, a new referendum on Britain's EU membership, could settle the issue, or prove as divisive as the last.

Once Britain does leave the bloc, its leader faces a fresh set of challenges in negotiating new trade deals around the world. The most coveted deal is with the United States, but "America First" President Donald Trump is guaranteed to drive a hard bargain.

A visit to Washington will be high on the new prime minister's agenda. Trump has warmly praised Johnson, but he can be a fickle friend.

Inconsistency of speech is something he and Johnson have in common.

Johnson may be hoping no one reminds Trump that in 2015 he accused him of "stupefying ignorance" and said Trump was "unfit to hold the office of president of the United States."

Last month, Johnson said the American president had "many good qualities."

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

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

By AMIR VAHDAT and AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran's seizure of a British oil tanker was a response to Britain's role in impounding an Iranian supertanker first, senior officials said Saturday, as newly released video of the incident showed Iranian commandos in black ski masks and fatigues rappelling from a helicopter onto the vessel in the strategic Strait of Hormuz.

The seizure prompted condemnation from the U.K. and its European allies as they continue to call for a de-escalation of tensions in the critical waterway.

U.K. Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt said Britain's response "will be considered but robust."

In comments on Twitter on Saturday, he said he spoke with Iran's foreign minister and expressed extreme disappointment that the Iranian diplomat had assured him Iran wanted to de-escalate the situation but "they have behaved in the opposite way."

Speaking to reporters later Saturday after an emergency government meeting, Hunt said the "totally and utterly unacceptable" interception of the British-flagged Stena Impero "raises very serious questions about the security of British shipping and indeed international shipping" in the Strait of Hormuz.

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 narrow waterway sits between Iran and Oman.

The Stena Impero was intercepted late Friday by Iran's powerful Revolutionary Guard forces. The ship's

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owner, Stena Bulk, said the vessel was stopped by "unidentified small crafts and a helicopter" during its transit through the Strait of Hormuz. The vessel was seized with a crew of 23 crew aboard, although none are British nationals.

In a dramatic video released by the Revolutionary Guard, several small Guard boats can be seen surrounding the larger tanker as it moves through the strait. Above, a military helicopter hovers and then several men wearing black masks begin to rappel onto the ship.

The high-quality video was shot with at least two cameras, one from a speed boat-like vessel and one from the chopper, which captured the fatigue-clad men as they prepared to slide down a rope and also took aerial footage of the tanker.

Hunt said the ship's seizure shows worrying signs Iran may be choosing a dangerous and destabilizing path. He also defended the British-assisted seizure of Iran's supertanker two weeks ago as a "legal" move because the vessel was suspected of breaching European Union sanctions on oil shipments to Syria.

Iranian officials "see this as a tit-for-tat situation, following Grace1 being detained in Gibraltar. Nothing could be further from the truth," Hunt said later Saturday.

The view from Iran was different.

In comments on Twitter on Saturday, Iran's Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif characterized the seizure of Iran's tanker July 4 as "piracy." Politician and former Guard commander, Maj. Gen. Mohsen Rezai, wrote that Iran was not seeking conflict, "but we are not going to come up short in reciprocating."

The spokesman for Iran's Guardian Council, Abbas Ali Kadkhodaei, was also quoted in the semi-official Fars news agency describing Friday's seizure as a legal "reciprocal action." 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. The council works closely with Khamenei, who has final say on all state matters.

The tit-for-tat move by Iran drew condemnation from European signatories to Iran's nuclear accord with world powers. Germany and France both called on Iran to immediately release the ship and its crew, with Berlin saying the seizure undermines all efforts to find a way out of the current crisis.

Europe has struggled to contain the tensions that stem from President Donald Trump's decision to pull the U.S. from Iran's nuclear deal, which had lifted sanctions on Iran in exchange for compliance on its nuclear program.

Trump has since re-imposed sweeping sanctions on Iran, including its oil exports, and Iran recently increased uranium enrichment levels beyond limits of the deal in a bid to pressure Europe into finding a workaround the crippling economic sanctions.

Britain, which remains a signatory to the nuclear accord, has figured prominently in rising U.S. tensions with Iran ever since Royal Marines took part in the seizure of the Iranian oil tanker 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, which was carrying more than 2 million barrels of Iranian crude, if Iran could prove it was not breaching EU sanctions. However, a court in Gibraltar just Friday extended the detention of the Panama-flagged Grace 1.

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.

Britain's defense secretary Penny Mordaunt told Sky News the takeover was a "hostile act" by Iran. She said a British Royal Navy frigate deployed to help protect shipping in the Strait of Hormuz was roughly 60 minutes from the scene when the Iranians took control of the tanker.

That same frigate had previously warned off Iranian Guard vessels from impeding the passage of a British commercial vessel the navy was escorting through the Strait of Hormuz.

There are concerns that with each new maneuver a 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 with airstrikes.

The U.S. has increased its military presence in the Persian Gulf region in recent weeks. The U.S. will also send more than 500 U.S. troops as well as aircraft and air defense missiles to Iran's rival, Saudi Arabia.

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It marks the first such deployment of U.S. troops to Saudi Arabia since America's withdrawal from the country in 2003. King Salman approved hosting the American forces "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.

'Survive, not enjoy': Heat, humidity gripping half the US

By JENNIFER PELTZ Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Americans from Texas to Maine sweated out a steamy Saturday as a heat wave canceled events from festivals to horse races, chased baseball fans out of their seats and pushed New York City to order steps to avoid straining the electrical system.

The National Weather Service said "a dangerous heat wave" sent temperatures into the 90s, with high humidity that made it feel considerably hotter. It was expected to stay warm at night, in the upper 70s to low 80s, with more heat on the way Sunday for the East Coast.

"It's brutal," Jeffrey Glickman said as he paused during a run in Washington.

The 37-year-old got out early to try to escape the worst of the heat but still planned to cut his route short on an already 90-degree (32-degree Celsius) morning.

"You just have to power through it the best you can," he said.

Many people in areas facing excessive heat this weekend have no air conditioning, and cities opened shelters for people to cool off. With record- or near-record-high temperatures at night when many air conditioned places are closed, the weather can become especially dangerous for people who don't get a chance to cool down, experts say. The risks are greater for young children, the elderly and the sick.

Over three days in July 1995, more than 700 people died during a heat wave in Chicago as temperatures rose above 97 degrees (36 degrees Celsius). Many of the dead were poor, elderly and lived alone.

While the Midwest will get some relief Sunday as a cold front brings storms and lower temperatures, the East won't be so lucky until Monday, the weather service warned. The heat will be the worst from the Carolinas to Maine.

In Norwich, Connecticut, Larry Konecny watched as one of his workers a couple of stories up in a boom lift cleaned the outside of an office building. The pair had no choice but to work in 90-degree heat and stifling humidity because the job needed to be done when office workers were away, Konecny said.

"He's pressure-washing, so the water is splashing. So at least there's some degree of refreshment," he said.

New York City authorities canceled a Times Square commemoration of the 1969 moon landing and an outdoor festival featuring soccer star Megan Rapinoe, musician John Legend and "Daily Show" host Trevor Noah.

Still, Megan Vallerie ran 5 miles (8 kilometers) in Brooklyn's Prospect Park.

"It's not the day to be out here. I should have been up much earlier," she said Saturday morning. "You've got to take your time and drink a lot of water and survive, not enjoy. That's the goal."

The city also directed owners of many office buildings to set thermostats no lower than 78 degrees (26 degrees Celsius) through Sunday to reduce strain on the electrical grid.

The measure came after a power outage related to an equipment failure, not heat, caused a roughly five-hour blackout July 13 that affected a 40-block stretch of Manhattan, including Times Square and Rockefeller Center.

Storms have knocked out power to hundreds of thousands of people in parts of Michigan and Wisconsin, heightening the misery. Strong wind and rain were expected to persist Saturday night and into Sunday in the Midwest and Central Plains.

In Philadelphia, several hundred people were evacuated from a retirement community due to a partial power outage, though it wasn't immediately clear whether the problem was heat related. Residents were

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taken to a nearby shelter, and police said some went to a hospital for evaluation.

In Chicago, heat nixed several outdoor events, including a 5k run in Grant Park and a morning workout at Millennium Park.

It hit 94 degrees (34 degrees Celsius) by first pitch at the San Diego Padres-Chicago Cubs game at Wrigley Field, but some fans didn't want to stay away, largely watching from shaded concourses as the Cubs won 6-5.

"We're sticking to water and not having beer. It's helping a little bit," said Jaclyn Jendrisak of St. Louis.

In New Jersey, operators of the Monmouth Park horse racing track canceled six races and pushed back others, including the \$1 million Haskell Invitational, until early evening. Maximum Security, the horse that crossed the finish line first in this year's Kentucky Derby and then was disqualified, headlines the Haskell field.

Races were set to resume just before sunset.

Animal rights activists protested outside the New Jersey Shore track, where temperatures hit the high 90s.

The track set up misting fans in the paddock and saddling areas for the 14-race card, shortened post parades before the race to limit track time for the horses and hosed them down after they ran.

Amid pressure over a series of horse deaths in California, several tracks canceled their Saturday races, including Saratoga Race Course and Finger Lakes in New York and Laurel Park in Maryland.

At New York's Yankee Stadium, the temperature hit 94 degrees when the home team and Colorado Rockies took the field for what turned into an 11-5 Yankees romp. Extra hydration stations were set up in all three decks and the bleachers. Announcements reminded fans to keep drinking water.

Yankees manager Aaron Boone said he was mindful of the heat, too.

"You tend to monitor guys a little more closely, want to see how your pitchers are doing," he said.

Associated Press writers Julie Walker and Ronald Blum in New York; Michael Balsamo in Washington; Susan Haigh in Norwich, Connecticut, and Tom Canavan in Oceanport, New Jersey, and Michal Dwojak in Chicago contributed to this report.

Russian capsule carrying 3 docks with space station

BAIKONUR, Kazakhstan (AP) — A Russian space capsule with three astronauts aboard has docked with the International Space Station after a fast-track trip to the orbiting laboratory.

The Soyuz capsule docked at 22:48 GMT Saturday, just six hours and 20 minutes after blasting off from Russia's launch complex in Baikonur, Kazakhstan.

The launch took place on the 50th anniversary of the day U.S. astronauts landed on the moon.

The capsule is carrying Andrew Morgan of the United States on his first spaceflight, Russian Alexander Skvortsov on his third mission to the space station and Italian Luca Parmitano.

They will join Russian Alexey Ovchinin and Americans Nick Hague and Christina Koch have been aboard since March.

The crew patch for the expedition echoes the one from Apollo 11's 1969 lunar mission.

This story has been corrected to show the last name of the Russian cosmonaut in space since March is Ovchinin, not Ovechkin.

Mueller's testimony poses risk for Trump, but also Democrats

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Robert Mueller's testimony before Congress will depend not so much on what he says, but that he's even saying it at all.

For Democrats, the special counsel's appearance Wednesday creates a moment many have been waiting for: Mueller finally speaking out, piercing the public consciousness about President Donald Trump's

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response to the Russia investigation and whether anything should be done about it.

The political stakes are high for Trump, but also for Democrats, who have spent the past two years pushing toward this day. As public attention has drifted and views have hardened, Democrats are counting on Americans hearing what most have not likely read — the stunning findings of Mueller's 448-page report .

"Let us listen, let us see where the facts will take us," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif. "And then, we'll see what happens after that."

Yet there's a real possibility that Mueller may not bring clarity.

It took months to negotiate his appearance before Congress and he has been reluctant to speak beyond what he and his team wrote. Few bombshells are expected. As the House Judiciary Committee and the House Intelligence Committee gavel in, the buttoned-down prosecutor, once envisioned as a trusted last word, may deliver just-the-facts responses that leave more questions than answers.

Rather than galvanizing public opinion and the questions of impeachment, Mueller's reluctant appearance may become just another chapter in the Trump era that won't be closed until the 2020 election.

Trump tried to project a lack of interest, claiming he will not tune in to Wednesday's hourslong hearings and saying Democrats are "just playing games."

"I won't be watching Mueller," he told reporters.

The nation, though, will likely pay attention.

Mueller's appearance comes more than two years since the start of the Russia investigation, an extraordinary moment in Trump's presidency when, after Trump had fired FBI Director James Comey, his Justice Department appointed Mueller to take over the inquiry into election interference and the potential role that Trump and his winning 2016 campaign may have played.

Mueller spoke publicly only once, saying his team's report, released in April, should speak for itself.

The report found that while there was no evidence the campaign colluded with Russia to swing the election, Trump could not be cleared of trying to obstruct the investigation . But Mueller believed he couldn't be indicted in part because of a Justice Department opinion against prosecuting a sitting president.

The special counsel's team appeared to punt the question to Congress to decide next steps. More than 80 House Democrats now say there should be impeachment proceedings, and it's likely that Mueller's testimony increases that number.

But time has a way of changing the political dynamic.

While Mueller's testimony was once envisioned as a crystalizing event, a Watergate-style moment to uncover truths, public attention has drifted in the months since the report was released.

Trump, a master at changing the subject, has easily shifted the public's attention to his racist attacks on four women of color in Congress.

"Timing matters," said Julian E. Zelizer, a professor of history and public affairs at Princeton University. He and others who favor opening impeachment proceedings say Mueller should have testified months ago.

A June poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research found 31% of Americans said they didn't know enough to say whether Mueller's report had completely cleared Trump of coordination with Russia and 30% didn't know whether it had not completely cleared Trump of obstruction. A CNN poll found that just 3% said they had read the whole report.

Democrats are counting on Mueller's presence to capture public attention in ways the report alone has been unable to do, with some comparing it to the movie version of the book.

"I do think that the contents of the report are so significant, and so damning, that when Mr. Mueller brings them to life, and actually tells the American people ... it will have an impact," said Rep. David Cicilline, D-R.I., a member of the House Judiciary Committee.

"This will be really the first opportunity for the American people to hear directly from Mr. Mueller about what he found about Russian interference in the American presidential election and efforts by the president to impede, undermine or stop the investigation," he said.

It's not lost on Democrats that they are brushing up against a narrative already set, by Trump's claims of no collusion or obstruction, and Attorney General William Barr's own framing of the report before its

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public release with his stamp of no wrongdoing.

"There are still millions of people who think, absurdly, that there is no evidence of presidential obstruction or collusion in the report," said Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md., a member of the House Judiciary Committee and also a professor of constitutional law. He said Trump and Barr have left a "fog of propaganda" hanging over the country. "We just want to clear the fog," he said.

Congress has oversight of the executive branch, and lawmakers on the committees plan to delve into key areas of the report where Trump interfered with the investigation. Democrats often note that obstruction was included in the articles of impeachment against President Richard Nixon.

One focus will be on the conversations Trump had with the former White House counsel, Don McGahn, first as the president tried to fire Mueller over the Russia probe, and later to direct the lawyer to deny that he had ordered for Mueller be dismissed.

There will be questions about potential witness tampering, and the suggestions of a presidential pardon for Trump's former campaign manager, Paul Manafort, and conversations with Trump's former personal attorney, Michael Cohen. Both men are now in custody, serving sentences on other charges.

At the same time, Republicans will likely try to turn the tables, casting doubt on the Russia investigation and its origins during the Obama administration.

But Mueller, 74, who hews to standards of an earlier era, is not expected to stray beyond the document his team produced. Aides to lawmakers say they have been reviewing his past congressional appearances and are expecting one-word answers and few surprises.

That could lead to an unfulfilling conclusion for Democrats, and others, who are hoping Mueller's testimony will bring some resolution.

The top Republican on the Judiciary Committee, Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia, said the hearing will be "like an old TV show that you watched years ago. ... After a few minutes you could quote what the characters could say, and nothing is new anymore."

"Frankly, the American people have moved on," Collins said.

Nation marks 50 years after Apollo 11's 'giant leap' on moon

By **MARCIA DUNN AP Aerospace Writer**

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) — A moonstruck nation celebrated the 50th anniversary of Apollo 11's "giant leap" by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin at parties, races, ball games and concerts Saturday, toasting with Tang and gobbling MoonPies.

At NASA's Kennedy Space Center, Aldrin showed Vice President Mike Pence the launch pad where he flew to the moon in 1969. At the same time halfway around the world, an American and two other astronauts blasted into space on a Russian rocket. And in Armstrong's hometown of Wapakoneta, Ohio, nearly 2,000 runners competed in "Run to the Moon" races.

"Apollo 11 is the only event in the 20th century that stands a chance of being widely remembered in the 30th century," the vice president said.

Wapakoneta 10K runner Robert Rocco, 54, a retired Air Force officer from Centerville, Ohio, called the moon landing by Armstrong and Aldrin "perhaps the most historic event in my lifetime, maybe in anybody's lifetime."

At the Museum of Flight in Seattle, Gilda Warden sat on a bench and gazed in awe at the Apollo 11 command module, Columbia, on display. "It's like entering the Sistine Chapel and seeing the ceiling. You want to just sit there and take it in," said Warden, 63, a psychiatric nurse from Tacoma, Washington.

On July 20, 1969, Armstrong and Aldrin undocked from Columbia in lunar orbit and then descended in the lunar module Eagle to the Sea of Tranquility. The Eagle landed with just 17 seconds of fuel to spare. Six hours later, Armstrong was the first to step onto the lunar surface, proclaiming for the ages: "That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." It was humanity's first footsteps on another world.

In a speech at Kennedy, Pence paid tribute to Armstrong, Aldrin and command module pilot Michael Collins — if they're not heroes, "then there are no heroes" — as well as the 400,000 Americans who worked

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tirelessly to get them to the moon.

Aldrin, 89, grabbed the right hand of Neil Armstrong's older son, Rick, at Pence's mention of heroes. He then stood and saluted, and received a standing ovation. Armstrong died in 2012. Collins, 88, did not attend the Florida ceremony. But Apollo 17's Harrison Schmitt, the next-to-last man to walk on the moon in 1972, was there.

Pence reiterated the Trump administration's goal of sending American astronauts back to the moon within five years and eventually on to Mars. He said this next generation of astronauts will spend weeks and months on the lunar surface, not just days and hours like the 12 Apollo moonwalkers did. Alongside the stage was the newly completed Orion capsule that will fly to the moon and back, on a test flight without a crew, in another year or two.

NASA had other celebrations going on Saturday, most notably at Johnson Space Center in Houston, home to Mission Control; the U.S. Space and Rocket Center next door to Marshall Space Flight Center in Huntsville, Alabama, where the Saturn V moon rockets were born; and the Smithsonian Institution's National Air and Space Museum in Washington.

And where better to celebrate than Apollo, Pennsylvania — located in Armstrong County not far from Moon Township and the town of Mars. The historical society revived the annual moon-landing celebration in honor of the big 50. All of the Apollo astronauts have long been honorary citizens of Apollo, the society's Alan Morgan said.

At New York's Yankee Stadium, former space shuttle astronaut Mike Massimino threw out the ceremonial first pitch to former pitcher Jack Aker, who was on the mound when the July 20, 1969, baseball game was interrupted to announce that the Eagle had landed. Armstrong and Aldrin were "A1, No. 1, higher than major league," Aker recalled Saturday. "It's a mutual feeling," Massimino agreed.

Across the country in Seattle, Tim Turner was first in line Saturday to see Columbia, the mother ship piloted by Collins as Armstrong and Aldrin moonwalked.

"Good grief! It's still amazing, the No. 1 feat of the 20th century, if not all of modern history, that first time there," said Turner, 57, a computer programmer from Poulsbo, Washington.

As he waited to get in to see Columbia, Craig Smith, 58, a veterinarian from Tacoma, Washington, recalled thinking as a boy: "Dang! Seriously? A dude on the moon? I thought that was nifty."

Clocks all over counted down to the exact moment of the Eagle's landing on the moon — 4:17 p.m. EDT — and Armstrong's momentous step onto the lunar surface at 10:56 p.m. EDT. The powdered orange drink Tang was back in vogue for the toasts, along with marshmallow and chocolate MoonPies, including a 55-pound (25-kilogram), 45,000-calorie MoonPie at Kennedy's One Giant Leap bash.

About 100 visitors and staff at the American Space Museum in Titusville, across the Indian River from Kennedy, cheered and lifted plastic champagne glasses of Tang at the moment of touchdown.

"This is what we're here for, to share the American space experience," explained executive director Karan Conklin, who led the toast.

For the late night-crowd, "first step" concerts were on tap at the Kennedy Center in Washington, outside in the shadow of a replica Saturn V rocket in Huntsville, and other sweltering locales.

A real rocket lit up the night sky in Kazakhstan.

Blasting off aboard a Russian Soyuz rocket in 100-degree heat (38 degrees Celsius), American Andrew Morgan, Italian Luca Parmitano and Russian Alexander Skvortsov flew to the International Space Station. Only Skvortsov was alive at the time of Apollo 11. The three already living on the space station also were born long after the moon landings.

The crew deliberately modeled its mission patch after Apollo 11's: no astronaut names included to show the universal nature of space flight. Morgan explained in a NASA interview that Apollo 11, and now his flight, represents "an accomplishment of the world and not one single country."

AP reporters Angie Wang in Wapakoneta, Ohio, and Carla K. Johnson in Seattle, and freelance writer Charles O'Brien contributed to this report.

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

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Some asylum seekers forced to wait in Mexico help each other

By **ASTRID GALVAN** Associated Press

SAN LUIS RIO COLORADO, Mexico (AP) — A small group of asylum seekers sit under a canopy on the side of a road leading into the United States, chatting to pass the time as a blazing desert sun pushes the heat into triple digits and fumes roll in from dozens of cars lined up to cross the U.S.-Mexico border.

Coming from Guatemala, Nicaragua, Mexico, Cuba and many other countries, they're waiting in San Luis Río Colorado, Mexico, to seek asylum at the official border crossing just south of San Luis, Arizona.

Under the canopy, surrounded by little but fencing and some stores and restaurants, they look like old friends. They have banded together around their small fold-up table, where they spend hours waiting.

They assign people with children to early morning shifts when the heat isn't as bad. A daily "colecta" — a collection of cash — pays for water and snacks for those guarding the table.

"Here, you have nobody but each other," Julio Montenegro, a 33-year-old Guatemalan who has been waiting for several weeks, said on a hot afternoon in late June.

Despite their bond, this group has just met. They're among roughly 950 people on the waitlist in San Luis Río Colorado that's moving slowly — only a few people each day get called for the chance to start a new life, and there are days when none do.

President Donald Trump's administration forces asylum seekers to wait in Mexican cities before they can start the asylum process, a policy referred to as "metering."

As a result, thousands of people along the Mexican border don't get an interview with an asylum officer for months and face danger even after fleeing violence and poverty in their home countries.

For the few who get an interview, the U.S. government still forces many to wait in Mexico while their immigration cases wind through court, which can take years.

The fate of those seeking asylum at the southern border is uncertain after the Trump administration this week said it was banning migrants from seeking U.S. protections if they pass through another country first. The rules have been challenged in court.

Metering and other policies that make it hard to seek asylum have led some migrants to cross the border illegally out of desperation, including Óscar Alberto Martínez Ramírez and his young daughter, Valeria, who were seen in a widely shared photo last month after drowning in the Rio Grande.

On some parts of the border, asylum seekers camp out in tents for weeks. They did in San Luis Río Colorado until late spring, when temperatures became dangerously high.

Now, most stay in hotels or rent rooms in houses, paid for by relatives in the U.S. They rely on each other to ensure a constant presence at the border to know when U.S. officials call someone for an interview. Typically, a person has a brief period to show up or they can be skipped over on the list, which is ordered by when people arrived at the border.

Despite the heat, San Luis Río Colorado is relatively safe compared with other Mexican border cities, where kidnapping and murder are rampant. It's a small place that supplies many of the farmworkers who tend fields of lettuce and other leafy greens in Yuma, Arizona, about a 40-minute drive north.

Many migrants waiting to get to the U.S. can feel comfortable walking down the street here, said Martin Salgado, who runs a shelter in the city of less than 200,000 people. He also helps manage the wait list, getting word from the Mexican government when the U.S. approves a number of people for asylum interviews.

Migrants at the top of the list stay at his 30-person shelter less than a 10-minute drive from the border. His mother founded it decades ago to feed and house immigrants deported from the U.S. — usually adults

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— before they made their way home.

Casa del Migrante la Divina Providencia now is filled with the voices of young children at play. There are a few small rooms with bunk beds, one specifically for families with children and others for single adults.

Of the approximately 950 people on the waitlist here, 65% are Mexican, 20% are Cuban and the rest are from various countries, with people from African nations increasingly passing through the city, Salgado said. On average, the government calls about eight people a day, although some days, none are called, he said.

Montenegro, the Guatemalan, said he has been waiting for weeks to reunite with his daughters in California. The truck driver, who rents a room in a house near the border, said he left his home country because he feared for his life after threats from gangs trying to extort money.

"They knew my kids' schedules," he said. "We left with what we had on our backs."

Jesse Telleria, 32, said she fled Nicaragua because of deep political turmoil that has caused chaos and poverty. The hairstylist said she left her young son with her mom and hopes to work and send money home.

Telleria said she has been waiting to seek asylum for three months and expects to wait at least another month. Life in Nicaragua is "not calm, there's no opportunity," she said.

Claudio Aviles, 25, of Guerrero, Mexico, was in San Luis Río Colorado with his wife and two young children for over three months and helped Salgado, the shelter operator, coordinate the waitlist.

At the border, waitlists are managed by local shelters or asylum seekers themselves. There have been reports of bribery and cheating to move up the list, so Aviles was dedicated to making it fair. He's now in Alabama with relatives, who had sent money so his family could rent a house while they waited.

"There's a lot of crime in Guerrero," Aviles said. "We're looking for a better life."

This story has been corrected to show that Jesse Telleria's last name was misspelled.

Iran's poking at West heightens risks of military missteps

By **ROBERT BURNS** AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Rather than tangle with a stronger U.S. military, Iran is poking and prodding its Western antagonists in ways apparently designed to avoid triggering war but that nonetheless seem to heighten the risk of missteps and miscalculation that could lead to an armed conflict with global consequences.

The tensions picked up Friday with Iran reporting it had seized a British-flagged oil tanker in the Persian Gulf, one day after the U.S. said it destroyed an Iranian drone that had flown within threatening range of an American warship in the Strait of Hormuz. In June the Iranians shot down a U.S. Navy drone in the same area, prompting President Donald Trump to authorize a military strike on Iran, only to call it off at the last moment.

Trump's response to the latest escalation in the Gulf captured both the urgency and the unending difficulty of dealing with the Islamic Republic.

"Trouble, nothing but trouble," Trump told reporters when asked about Iran's Revolutionary Guard saying it had seized a British tanker.

From Iran's point of view, the real trouble is Trump, who withdrew the United States last year from a 2015 nuclear deal that offered new hope for Iran's faltering economy.

The British government said two vessels had been seized by the Iranians, but Iran later said the second ship had departed Iranian waters. The Iranians said the seizure was in response to Britain's role in impounding an Iranian supertanker two weeks earlier.

The incidents highlighted the precarious state of maritime security in the Gulf and reinforced the Trump administration's argument for launching a new effort to intensify the monitoring of commercial shipping in and around the Gulf, which handles a large volume of international oil traffic. The administration is organizing what it calls Operation Sentinel with like-minded nations to deter Iran from interfering with commercial shipping.

In the meantime, U.S. Central Command said Friday it put additional patrol aircraft into international

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airspace in the Strait of Hormuz to monitor the situation. A spokesman, Lt. Col. Earl Brown, said U.S. Naval Forces Central Command was in contact with U.S. ships operating in the area to "ensure their safety."

The U.S. also is sending American forces, including fighter aircraft, air defense missiles and likely more than 500 troops, to a Saudi air base that became a hub of American air power in the Middle East in the 1990s. Putting U.S. combat forces back in the kingdom after an absence of more than a decade adds depth to the regional alignment of U.S. military power, which is mostly in locations on the Persian Gulf that are more vulnerable to Iranian missile attack.

The high-stakes sparring between Iran and the West is playing out while diplomats maneuver for the real prize: new negotiations to put tighter and longer-lasting wraps on Iran's nuclear program in exchange for relief from economic sanctions that are strangling Iran's already weak economy.

Trump believes the international agreement he withdrew from is too short-term and too narrow because it does not address Iran's ballistic missile program and its support for extremist militias across the Middle East. His administration has imposed additional sanctions on Iran, including ending a waiver on penalties against nations that buy Iranian oil.

Iran's foreign minister, Mohammad Javad Zarif, hinted this past week at Tehran's interest in a diplomatic solution. He said Iran would be willing to move up parliamentary ratification of an agreement it made with the International Atomic Energy Agency that outlined the agency's access to Iranian nuclear sites and other information. He said this could be done before the scheduled 2023 ratification if the United States eased sanctions.

The Trump administration showed no immediate interest in that offer, but senior officials, including Trump, periodically emphasize their hope that war is avoided and that both sides can take the preferred diplomatic path.

"We need them to come to the table," Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said at the State Department on Friday. "It's the right way to resolve these challenges."

Critics question whether the administration has a viable approach to Iran that can be executed without pushing the U.S. toward war.

"My fundamental question to this administration is: What is the strategy? I know that it is about maximum pressure, but to what end?" said Wendy Sherman, the former undersecretary of state for political affairs who helped the Obama administration negotiate the 2015 nuclear deal.

She said Friday at the Aspen Security Forum in Colorado that she believes the Iranians are weighing the likelihood that they will have to deal with Trump beyond 2020.

"If they think he will be re-elected or think there's a good chance that he will be, I think we will continue to see proposals from the Iranians," she said.

The administration faces pressure from members of its own party in Congress to take more aggressive action to punish Iran.

"The ayatollahs will continue their campaign of terror as long as we let them," said Sen. Tom Cotton, R-Ark. "Outrageous and lawless acts such as this hijacking call for international condemnation and punishment."

Trump suggested U.S. pressure is hitting Iran's economy so hard that Iran will be forced at some point to come to the negotiating table.

"Iran is in big trouble right now," he said. "Their economy is crashing. It's coming to a crash. They're trying to bring soldiers back home because they can't pay them. A lot of bad things are happening to them. And it's very easy to straighten out or it's very easy for us to make it a lot worse."

Associated Press reporter Deb Riechmann contributed to this report.

Trump's 'go back' remark: In workplace, it might be illegal

By DAVID CRARY and ALEXANDRA OLSON Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump's suggestion that four activist Democratic congresswomen of color "go back" to countries "from which they came" has excited some in his political base. Yet in many

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of America's workplaces and institutions, the same language would be unacceptable and possibly illegal.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which enforces federal laws against workplace bias, explicitly cites comments like "go back to where you came from" as examples of "potentially unlawful conduct."

Similar phrases routinely show up in lawsuits that the EEOC files against employers alleging discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on race or national origin.

Apart from its legality in workplaces, Trump's language has ignited impassioned responses across racial, ethnic and political divides.

"It wasn't Racist!" tweeted Terrence Williams, a black comedian who supports Trump. "No matter what color you are YOU can go back home or move if you don't like America."

By contrast, Rachel Timoner, a senior rabbi at a Reform Jewish synagogue in Brooklyn, said such language would never be tolerated among members of her congregation.

"I'd want to sit down with them and ask them, where that's coming from?" she said. "If a person persistently degraded other human beings, I would need to say to them they could no longer participate. It's really important for us to create an environment where people of color and people of all identities feel welcome."

Facing an uproar from critics accusing him of racism, Trump has insisted that he wasn't being racist when he tweeted this week that the four Democratic members of Congress — all but one of them born in the United States — "originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe." Trump urged them to "go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came."

Rather, his message, the president explained the next day was: "If you hate our country, if you're not happy here, you can leave."

Yet Trump's exhortation for the four minority congresswomen to "go back" to their countries of origin, if uttered by an employee in a workplace, could constitute a firing offense or cause for a costly lawsuit.

Sam P. Israel, a New York lawyer who handles harassment cases, noted that plaintiffs usually must prove that an offensive comment wasn't made in isolation but as part of a broader hostile environment. If Trump were an employer facing a lawsuit, Israel said, there would arguably be enough examples to suggest a pattern of racially or ethnically disparaging remarks.

"All of those things are actionable if you have enough of them, and it could be illegal," Israel said. "The EEOC teaches that all of these things are bad and should be avoided, and the president is making a mockery of it."

In the aftermath of Trump's "go back" tweet, a suburban Chicago gas station clerk was fired after a video posted on social media appeared to show him telling Hispanic customers to "go back to their country."

Stephen Kalghorn, general counsel for the parent company of Bucky's Mobil gas station in Naperville, said the employee's comments couldn't be clearly heard on a surveillance video. But he was fired for engaging in a verbal confrontation with the customers.

Elizabeth Tippet, a professor at the University of Oregon School of Law, suggested that Trump's comments could make things worse for anyone who tried to echo him in a workplace. Tippet explained that the president's rhetoric would make it difficult to argue that a similar comment was made innocuously or out of ignorance of its racist connotations.

"When you have these cultural environments, you might see repeated comments from multiple people," she said. "The more frequent the comments are, the stronger the harassment claim."

Most Republican leaders have declined to characterize Trump's comments as racist. And a few supporters have parroted his remarks, including some at a Trump rally in North Carolina this week who chanted "send her back!" in reference to Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota.

Donna Givens, an African-American neighborhood organizer who leads the Eastside Community Network in Detroit, said Trump's tweets were deeply hurtful.

"It immediately reminded me of being a child and being told to 'go back to Africa, (n-word)' — that got

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said to me repeatedly," she said. "My grandmother used to tell me to tell them to 'go back to their caves in Europe.' "

In light of the inflammatory rhetoric, "I don't think that we can pretend like the American workplace is a safe place for immigrants, for people of color or for women," Givens said. "The president has a bully pulpit. And the president sets the tone. And so there are people who feel justified in their hatreds now."

Andrew Pappas, a self-described conservative Republican who holds elective office in Anderson Township, Ohio, acknowledged that Trump's language, taken in a vacuum, was "not appropriate." Yet he expressed some understanding of it.

"I think that when you see Donald Trump react in a human way, it upsets a lot of people that are expecting maybe your true quintessential politician," Pappas said. "But it also resonates exponentially with the common American who says, 'You know what? I'd react that way, too.' "

The Rev. Tom Lambrecht, general manager of the conservative United Methodist magazine Good News, cautioned against any rush to declare certain forms of political rhetoric unacceptable

"The difficulty here is, who decides what is unacceptable?" Lambrecht said by email. "And how is that unacceptability enforced? Censorship?"

"At the same time," he added, "such despicable rhetoric is a teachable moment. It is incumbent upon Christians and others of good will to call out racism when we hear it in public debate or private conversation and to teach our children and grandchildren what is wrong with such attitudes."

Another pastor, E.W. Lucas of Friendship Baptist Church in Appomattox, Virginia, has firmly backed Trump, even posting sign outside the church declaring "America: Love or Leave It," explicitly echoing the president.

"People that feel hard about our president and want to down the president and down the country ... they ought to go over there and live in these other countries for a little while," Lucas told ABC 13 in Lynchburg.

Some advocates of free speech argued that censorship of political rhetoric should never be the solution, suggesting that there were better ways to combat it.

"Every American has the right to make up his or her own mind about what public officials say and how they say it —and if enough people disagree with a politician, they have the right make those opinions known in peaceful protest, or at the ballot box," said Robert Shibley, executive director of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education. "Censorship of political speech only serves to rob citizens of the right to make up their own minds, which is fatal to a democratic society."

Chris Finan, executive director of the National Coalition Against Censorship, agreed that attempts to ban racist rhetoric "will never solve the problem."

Instead, Finan said, "It has to be challenged and refuted wherever it occurs."

Retired college football coach Bill Curry, who grew up in the segregated South, had some advice based on playing in the NFL under legends Vince Lombardi at Green Bay and Don Shula in Baltimore.

"One racist word out of your month and you were gone," said Curry, 76. "It didn't matter who you were. Period."

During college coaching stints at the University of Alabama and elsewhere, Curry followed the same policy.

"When you put down those rules like those great coaches did, it doesn't become a problem," he said. "You cannot let that racist thing get started. It will destroy unity, just like is going on in our country now."

AP video journalist Angie Wang in Cincinnati and AP writers Leanne Italie in New York, Jay Reeves in Birmingham, Alabama, and Corey Williams and Mike Householder in Detroit contributed to this report.

Native Hawaiians say telescope represents bigger struggle

By JENNIFER SINCO KELLEHER Associated Press

HONOLULU (AP) — Walter Ritte has been fighting for decades to protect Native Hawaiian rights, inspiring a new generation of activists trying to stop construction of a giant telescope they see as representative of a bigger struggle.

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In his early 30s, Ritte occupied a small Hawaiian island used as a military bombing range. Now at 74, he's still a prolific protester, getting arrested this week for blocking a road to stop construction of the one of the world's most powerful telescopes on Hawaii's tallest peak, which some Native Hawaiians consider sacred.

For activists who say they're protecting Mauna Kea, the long-running telescope fight encapsulates critical issues to Native Hawaiians: the 1893 overthrow of the Hawaiian kingdom, clashes over land and water rights, frustration over tourism, attempts to curb development and questions about how the islands should be governed.

It's an example of battles by Native Americans to preserve ancestral lands, with high-profile protests like Dakota Access pipeline leading to arrests in southern North Dakota in 2016 and 2017.

For Native Hawaiians, opposition to the \$1.4 billion Thirty Meter Telescope isn't universal — some support the educational opportunities from the project and are facing backlash from those questioning their identity.

Ritte's first taste of activism came during a resurgence of cultural pride and identity that began in the late 1960s and 1970s. He and other Native Hawaiian men hid on the small island of Kahoolawe that the military used for bombing practice. They were arrested, but the U.S. eventually stopped the training.

"We didn't know anything about ourselves as Hawaiians," Ritte said of his youth. "When we got involved with Kahoolawe, we had no language, no history."

The young people leading the fight against the telescope grew up learning about his experiences and speaking Hawaiian amid an ongoing cultural renaissance. A 30-year-old leader of the telescope protest, Kaho'okahi Kanuha, credits Ritte and the Hawaiian movement for allowing him to grow up rooted to his culture.

"Uncle Walter can talk about not knowing the language and not knowing the history. But he knew how to stand up, and he knew how to fight," Kanuha said. "Because of the things they did, the results were Hawaiian language programs. The results were revitalization of the culture and of understanding and of awakening."

At Mauna Kea, Kanuha wears a traditional battle helmet as he speaks Hawaiian with protesters and negotiates with law enforcement. Thanks to the movement, he said he was able to learn Hawaiian at an immersion preschool and eventually earn a bachelor's degree in Hawaiian language from the University of Hawaii.

He's fighting a project that dates to 2009, when scientists selected Mauna Kea after a global campaign to find the ideal site for what telescope officials said "will likely revolutionize our understanding of the universe." The mountain on the Big Island is revered for its consistently clear weather and lack of light pollution.

The telescope won a series of approvals from Hawaii, including a permit to build on conservation land in 2011. Protests began during a groundbreaking in 2014 and culminated in arrests in 2015.

Last year, the state Supreme Court upheld the construction permit, though protesters are still fighting in court and at the mountain.

Thirty-four people, mostly elders, were arrested this week as officials try to start building again.

The swelling protest is a natural reaction to the pain Native Hawaiians have endured and the changes the islands have seen, said Glen Kila, program director of Marae Ha'a Koa, a Hawaiian cultural center.

"The pain began when they took people off the land," he said. "And then they took governance and stewardship of the land, like Mauna Kea."

The battle is bigger than the telescope, said Hinaleimoana Wong-Kalu, a teacher and cultural practitioner.

"The TMT and Mauna Kea is just the focal point. For me it's just a galvanizing element," she said. "It goes back to the role that foreigners played and continue to play in Hawaii."

From 18th century explorer James Cook's arrival in the islands, to laborers brought to plantations and today's tourism, the telescope is another example of outside interests overtaking Hawaiian culture, she said.

"They capitalize and commercialize our culture," Wong-Kalu said. "They prostitute the elements that make us Hawaiian. They make it look pretty and make it look alluring in an effort to bring more money into this state."

But not all Native Hawaiians see the telescope as representative of past wrongs.

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"My family feels that they're trying to use the TMT to boost their sovereignty issue," said Annette Reyes, a Native Hawaiian who supports the telescope project. "I want sovereignty for the Hawaiian people. I want them to have their country back. But TMT shouldn't be the lightning rod for it."

Reyes pointed to telescope officials' pledge to provide \$1 million every year to boost science, technology, engineering and math education. She said opponents have called her a fake Hawaiian for supporting the project.

For some, it's not just a political issue. It's spiritual for Kealoha Pisciotta, who's long fought the telescope. "The problem is being Hawaiian today is a political statement," she said. "We have to take political action to practice religion."

Mauna Kea is a "living entity" that "gives life," Kila said.

"So that's a different philosophy from the scientific world, that it's just a mountain that can be used for an observatory. It can be developed. For us, that's sacrilegious," he said.

For Ritte and others, the telescope is the latest battle over Hawaiian culture. He spent 11 hours Monday lying attached to a grate in the road leading up to Mauna Kea's summit with seven other protesters.

"We protected and saved Kahoolawe from the United States military," Ritte said. "Now we have to save and protect the rest of our islands."

Florida 'pill mills' were 'gas on the fire' of opioid crisis

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Florida survives on tourism, but a decade ago thousands of visitors made frequent trips to the state not to visit its theme parks or beaches. Instead, they came for cheap and easy prescription painkillers sold at unscrupulous walk-in clinics.

For a while, few in authority did much about it even though it was all done in the open with little oversight.

The clinics started in the 1990s and began proliferating in about 2003, their parking lots filled with vehicles sporting license plates from Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia and elsewhere. The customers were drawn by billboards on southbound interstates advertising quick and easy relief — code for "We're a pill mill and we're ready to deal."

The clinics' doctors did no diagnostic work. They just signed prescriptions and shuffled the "patients" to the clinics' onsite pharmacies to buy oxycodone and other narcotics at \$10 a pill, cash-only. Some pill-mill tourists would visit a dozen or more clinics before returning home with thousands of pills, which would be sold to their neighbors for up to \$100 each. Within a few days, many again headed south to buy more.

The thriving "pill mills" helped seed an overdose epidemic that ended up devastating many of the communities where the pills were sent. This week's release of federal data showing the flow of prescription opioids throughout the U.S. from 2006 through 2012 has again put the spotlight on Florida's pill mill industry, which in hindsight provided a blaring fire alarm about a crisis that eventually would claim tens of thousands of lives every year.

"You could think about the manufacturers as having lit the fire, and the distributors and pill mills were really pouring gas on the fire," said Andrew Kolodny, who researches addiction at Brandeis University.

Lindsay Acree, an assistant professor at the University of Charleston in West Virginia, said the pipeline to Florida provided easy access to large quantities of the drugs for people who already were getting hooked on them.

"It was very, very accessible and very, very cheap if they got them from Florida," she said.

By the clinics' peak in 2010, 90 of the nation's top 100 opioid prescribers were Florida doctors, according to federal officials, and 85 percent of the nation's oxycodone was prescribed in the state. That year alone, about 500 million pills were sold in Florida. The number of people who died in Florida with oxycodone or another prescription opioid in their system hit 4,282 in 2010, a four-fold increase from 2000, with 2,710 of the deaths deemed overdoses, according to a state medical examiners' report.

Even today, Florida struggles with opioid addiction. The state was second only to Ohio in the number of opioid-related overdose deaths in 2017, the most recent year for which official figures are available.

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Florida's pill mills "opened fast and furious because there was very little regulation ... and the majority of law enforcement was not trained to handle the movement of legal drugs for illegal purposes," said Lisa McElhaney, then a sheriff's narcotics investigator in Broward County, the epicenter of the pill-mill boom.

"Our laws were geared toward your traditional street-level drugs — cocaine, heroin, marijuana, methamphetamine — and not so much on prescription drugs."

Ohio drug dealer Gerald Dixon said during a 2012 prison interview with The Associated Press that he would visit Florida clinics, tell the doctors that years of weightlifting and boxing had left him in pain, and then they would prescribe him pills, usually without examination. He would take the pills home to sell.

"It's all about cash, cash, cash," he said then about the pill-mill doctors. "You go, you pay the money, and they're going to come back and say, 'Yeah, you're right, you was hurt.'"

A perfect storm helped Florida pill mills take off in the early 2000s, said McElhaney, who is now president of the National Association of Drug Diversion Investigators.

Other states were putting in computerized systems tracking the sale of legal narcotics, but Florida did not. That allowed unscrupulous operators to go undetected. The state also allowed doctors and clinics to sell the drugs they prescribed.

And, she said, there was the aftermath of the 2001 al-Qaida attacks. Federal policies tightening border security that prevented terrorists and weapons from entering the country also curtailed the heroin trade.

Opioid dealers needed to find a substitute to supply their customers and learned that Florida was the spot for prescription painkillers; advertisements popped up all over the internet and in alternative newspapers.

With much of America struggling economically even before the Great Recession, people were willing to risk traveling to Florida to buy pills to sell for huge profits back home.

"If we closed down one clinic, you could watch the patients, literally a wave, go to another physician by word of mouth. It was a cash-pay business, and it was a big business," McElhaney said.

McElhaney and others tried to get the Legislature to toughen the state's laws, but lawmakers balked. One reason might be that the pharmaceutical companies became major players in state politics. Between 2006 and 2015, drugmakers that produce opioids spent almost \$4 million in Florida on campaign contributions and lobbying, a joint 2016 investigation by The Associated Press and the Center for Public Integrity showed. Republicans, who control the state, received almost \$3 million while Democrats got almost \$1 million.

"The hardest part was holding the hands of family members that lost children — and not just one, some families lost two and three — and the first thing out of their mouths is, 'Why are physicians allowed to do this?'" McElhaney said.

The tide turned against Florida's pill mills in 2011 when the pressure in the media and the public reached critical mass after several newspaper and TV investigations of the industry.

The new Republican governor, Rick Scott, reversed his opposition and agreed to a state narcotics tracking system. The newly elected Republican attorney general, Pam Bondi, made shutting down the pill mills a top priority, and the Legislature tightened the state's drug laws. That included a ban on doctors and clinics dispensing opioids onsite, which is where the big money was made, and set limits on the number of pills most patients could receive.

Law enforcement received \$3 million to target pill mills that violated the new laws.

The impact was immediate: Within a year, the number of pain treatment clinics registered with the state fell from 921 to 441 and by 2014 there were 371. Jim Hall, a Nova Southeastern University epidemiologist who studies Florida's drug problems, said any pill mills that didn't close voluntarily or comply with the new laws got raided.

"They would hit 16 or 20 a day," Hall said.

But while the pill mills closed, their legacy is the current heroin crisis. Opioid addicts switched back to heroin after foreign cartels learned how to bypass post-9/11 security, both Hall and McElhaney said.

In 2018, because of the abuse of heroin and its even deadlier synthetic cousin, fentanyl, Florida's opioid death rate reached 25 deaths per 100,000 residents, according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, a 67% jump from the peak of the pill mill crisis.

Hall said every day the pill mills were open they created more addicts, and those numbers would have continued to rise if they hadn't eventually been targeted. The pills mills, he said, were "the gateway."

Associated Press writer Geoff Mulvihill in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, contributed to this report.

Follow Terry Spencer at <https://twitter.com/terrysten>

Ex-Marine, professor, MLB draft pick among high court clerks

By JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A former Marine who deployed twice to Afghanistan. A patent law professor. A woman who's blind. Two Rhodes scholars.

They're among the lawyers starting work this summer as law clerks at the Supreme Court.

The group of 16 women and 23 men hired by the justices were already on paths to become leading judges, professors and Supreme Court advocates. The one-year clerkship will cement their high-profile status.

"I think clerking on this court affects everybody's career who does it. ... You put it on your resume and all of a sudden doors open, sometimes justifiably so and sometimes not," Justice Elena Kagan has said.

She should know.

Kagan, who clerked for Justice Thurgood Marshall, is one of five current justices who was once a Supreme Court clerk. So was Chief Justice John Roberts. Justices Stephen Breyer, Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh also clerked.

Justices hire four clerks annually; retired justices hire one. The clerks review potential cases, help their justice prepare for arguments, conduct research and write draft opinions.

Scholars disagree about how much influence the clerks have. But what is clear is that while the justices are the public face of the court, the clerks are their behind-the-scenes assistants who help the place run. Clerks generally decline to give interviews until after their clerkships are over. Even then, they are careful about what they will say.

For their work, they're paid about \$83,000. When they're done, law firms have recently been offering bonuses of \$400,000 to clerks who join them.

This year's clerk group is not without some controversy.

One Kavanaugh clerk is Sophia Chua-Rubinfeld, whose mother, Yale law professor Amy Chua, wrote a Wall Street Journal article praising Kavanaugh as a mentor to women following his nomination. The article came out before Kavanaugh was accused of a sexual assault alleged to have happened decades ago; he denied the accusation. Chua's article was criticized as self-serving given that her daughter already was in line to clerk for Kavanaugh before President Donald Trump nominated the federal appeals court judge.

Another incoming clerk is Clayton Kozinski, who clerked for Kavanaugh at the appeals court and is now working for retired Justice Anthony Kennedy. Kozinski's father, Alex Kozinski, retired abruptly in 2017 from the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals following accusations by women, including former law clerks, that he had touched them inappropriately, made lewd comments and shown them pornography. Kozinski said at the time that many of the things being said about him were not true.

Justices are looking for different things in their clerks.

Top academic credentials are a must. Half the group this year attended law school at Harvard or Yale.

Justice Sonia Sotomayor has said she wants clerks "committed to making a contribution to the world." Kavanaugh, during his confirmation hearing last year, highlighted his record of hiring female and minority clerks as an appeals court judge. His first group of Supreme Court clerks was all women, a court first.

"There's all sorts of quirky reasons to explain choices," said law professor Todd Peppers, who wrote a book about clerking and noted that Chief Justice William Rehnquist liked clerks who played tennis. Justice John Marshall Harlan II preferred golfers.

While most clerks are relatively recent law school graduates, two Breyer and two Gorsuch clerks are

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older. One Gorsuch clerk is Notre Dame law professor Stephen Yelderman, who clerked for Gorsuch when Gorsuch was an appeals court judge.

The clerks have accomplishments beyond academics.

Kagan clerk Jordan Bock rowed at Harvard, where she studied physics, astrophysics and government. Roberts clerk Joseph Falvey served in the Marines. Megan Braun, another Roberts clerk, played college water polo and was a Rhodes scholar. Mark Jia, retired Justice David Souter's clerk, was also a Rhodes scholar. Like other clerks for retired justices, he'll also help a current justice.

Justice Clarence Thomas has said he likes to have clerks who come from different parts of the country and from modest backgrounds. He tends to hire clerks who share his conservative legal philosophy. Among his hires this year is Notre Dame graduate Laura Wolk, who lost her eyesight to retinal cancer as a child.

Wolk, only the second blind person to clerk at the court, seems to share with Thomas a passionate opposition to abortion. Thomas this year likened abortion to eugenics. Wolk has said that "even the most severely disabled" can teach others "about what it means to be human."

Thomas also chose for his team this year James "Matt" Rice, a law school graduate of the University of California, Berkeley. A catcher at Western Kentucky, he was picked 1,525th — dead last — in the 2010 major league draft but returned to school for his senior year. He signed with Tampa Bay after being chosen in the ninth round the next year and then played two summers in the minor leagues.

Follow Jessica Gresko on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jessicagresko>

War-weakened South Sudan tries to prepare for Ebola

By SAM MEDNICK Associated Press

JUBA, South Sudan (AP) — With the deadly Ebola outbreak in Congo now an international emergency, neighboring South Sudan and its war-weakened health system is a major concern, especially after one case was confirmed near its border. Health experts say there is an urgent need to increase prevention efforts.

The World Health Organization on Wednesday made the emergency declaration for the year-old outbreak, a rare move that usually leads to more global attention and aid. More than 1,600 people have died in what has become the second-worst Ebola outbreak in history.

Health experts worry about what would happen if Ebola reaches South Sudan as the shattered nation tries to recover from a five-year civil war that killed nearly 400,000 people and displaced millions. Many health facilities were badly damaged or destroyed, and unrest continues in parts of the country despite a fragile peace deal signed in September.

Last month a 41-year-old woman was discovered with Ebola in northeastern Congo, just 70 kilometers (43 miles) from South Sudan. She had traveled 500 kilometers from Beni, the epicenter of the outbreak, despite having been exposed to the virus and warned not to travel.

South Sudan has sent a health team to strengthen surveillance at one of its busiest border posts, Kaya in Central Equatoria state, near where the woman's case was confirmed. Hers was the closest confirmed case to South Sudan since this outbreak was declared.

"The risk of cases of Ebola coming across the border into South Sudan is very high," said Sudhir Bunga, South Sudan country director for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "A person who comes into contact with a confirmed case of Ebola in (Congo) could travel to South Sudan, or any neighboring country, undetected during the 21-day incubation period and spread the disease once contagious."

That recently happened in neighboring Uganda, a more stable country with a more developed health system and experience with past Ebola outbreaks, as millions of people flow across borders in the densely populated region. Three people died in Uganda before other family members were taken back to Congo for treatment and Ugandan officials quickly declared the country was again free of the disease.

Ebola's spread into South Sudan would pose more of a challenge.

Even though Ebola preparedness, including vaccinations for some health workers, began several months ago the current phase of the country's \$12 million response plan is just 36% funded, according to a report

this month by the country's health ministry.

Fighting in places such as Central Equatoria has hampered efforts to prepare for Ebola. The United Nations' migration agency manages 15 screening sites along the border but three others have yet to be established in part because of access challenges.

Many South Sudan communities lack the basic resources to respond to one of the world's most notorious diseases. The phone network in Central Equatoria is limited, meaning most people cannot call the emergency help line. Many hospitals don't have staff trained to deal with the virus or the isolation wards needed to control its spread.

The country is about 60% ready to deal with a potential Ebola outbreak, Richard Lako with South Sudan's national Ebola task force has told The Associated Press.

But he expressed concern about the border: "There are forest areas between communities in South Sudan and the Congo and these people can't be screened from the other side. It's a big worry if those people sneak in and we have a case. It'll take us time to get in and control the issue."

South Sudan's prevention efforts include educating communities to dispel myths about Ebola that have posed a major challenge for disease responders in Congo. Health workers in South Sudan's border towns are going door-to-door trying to inform people, with support from WHO and people who responded to West Africa's devastating outbreak in 2014-2016 that killed more than 11,000 people.

At one animated training session earlier this year in an army barracks outside Yei, a major city in western South Sudan near the Congo border, two U.N. staffers playfully bumped elbows, showing how to greet others without shaking hands. Ebola is spread via close contact with bodily fluids of those infected.

"Don't touch each other, don't play with saliva, yours or someone else's," a WHO staffer from Sierra Leone said.

This month diplomats and other officials made a special visit to Yei, one of the hardest-hit cities during South Sudan's civil war, to observe Ebola preparations.

"It is really the most important place in South Sudan right now," U.S. Ambassador Thomas Hushek said, according to the U.N. mission in South Sudan. "This is where we are most worried about what might happen."

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What consumers can do as regulators weigh compounds' risks

By ELLEN KNICKMEYER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — At first, Tomas Monarrez didn't notice the labels when he went shopping for pots and pans.

"Completely toxin free!" said a big green message on a line of nonstick frying pans in the cookware aisle at a store in the nation's capital.

"No PFOA!" boasted the label on a 12-piece kitchen set. "Will never release any toxic fumes," another label promised.

"Oh, wow," Monarrez, an economist at a think tank, said, when asked if he had ever heard of the toxic chemicals that manufacturers were declaring their products free of.

"I didn't know anything. Should I buy these?" Monarrez asked. "So all these are bad?"

Federal regulators are sorting out how to handle health risks from a group of widely used nonstick and stain-resistant compounds. But even reading labels may not be enough to guide consumers who want to limit their exposure to the manmade industrial material, known as perfluoroalkyl and polyfluoroalkyl substances, or PFAS.

Scientists say there are many steps people can take to minimize their contact with the compounds, which federal toxicologists say show links to health problems.

Some changes are simple, such as checking on the safety of your drinking water or buying different pots and pans. Others require spending and lifestyle changes — for example, passing up fast food or other

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takeout because the containers the food may be packaged in.

For those concerned about exposure, there's one critical thing to know about PFAS compounds: "They're everywhere," Linda Birnbaum, head of the National Institute for Environmental Health Sciences, told a recent gathering of her agency's advisory council.

"The carpets and the chairs and maybe the clothes you're wearing," Birnbaum said. She noted she used to love the ritual of spraying Scotchgard on newly bought tablecloths. No more, she made clear.

There are thousands of different versions of the compounds, including PFOA and another early version, both now phased out of production in the U.S. PFAS are used in products including nonstick cookware, but also in stain- and steam-resistant bags for microwave popcorn and many other food containers and packaging, shaving cream, dental floss, stain protection for fabrics and rugs and outdoor gear — for starters.

Federal studies of people heavily exposed to the compounds have found links between high blood levels of older kinds of PFAS and a range of health problems, including liver issues, low birth weights, and testicular and kidney cancer. High levels also have been found in many drinking water systems. Military installations that use PFAS-laden firefighting foam and businesses that work with PFAS are two big sources of water contamination.

It's probably impossible to avoid all exposures, says Leonardo Trasande, a children's environmental health specialist and vice chair for research at New York University's pediatrics department, and a PFAS expert.

But there are "safe and simple steps to limit exposure based on what we know," Trasande says.

Trasande himself recommends two precautions. One is shunning nonstick cookware in favor of cast iron or stainless steel, Trasande said. That's despite statements from industry and manufacturers that newer forms of PFAS in nonstick cookware are safe.

The other is eschewing food packaging as much as possible. In practice, that can require changing habits — cutting your consumption of takeout and packaged food, and committing to cooking more at home, from scratch.

"Literature does suggest that diet is a major route of exposure," Trasande noted.

People also can contact their local water utility to find out if their water system is one of those testing with higher levels of PFAS, Environmental Protection Agency spokeswoman Andrea Drinkard said.

Eating certified organic food can guard against PFAS exposure from fields treated with treated human sewage sludge because federal rules prohibit use of the sludge on organically raised crops and livestock, environmental groups say.

Older forms of the compounds are known to build up in people's bodies for years. And the chemical bonds holding PFAS compounds together are among the toughest going, so they are expected to take thousands of years to degrade.

There's no across the board consensus on whether newer versions of the thousands of kinds of PFAS are safe. Industry says they are and that there's no reason to swear off all nonstick cookware and PFAS-treated food packaging.

"Consumers should have confidence in the safety of products manufactured with today's PFAS because they have been reviewed by regulators globally and found to meet relevant standards that are protective of health and the environment," Jessica Bowman, executive director of the FluoroCouncil industry trade group, said in an email.

"Studies show that the newer PFAS do not present significant health concerns — they're not carcinogenic and not endocrine disruptors."

Several nonindustry researchers dispute that, and the Food and Drug Administration noted last month studies showing that that newer forms of the nonstick, grease- and water-repelling compounds may also be a health concern.

Iran tanker seizure linked to earlier act by UK marines

By GREGORY KATZ Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Taken on its own, Iran's seizure of a British-flagged oil tanker in the Strait of Hormuz may seem like a brazen act of aggression, a provocative poke in the nose to both Britain and its ally, the United States.

But Iran seems to view the armed takeover of the Stena Impero as a carefully calibrated response to the July 4 taking of an Iranian supertanker off the coast of Gibraltar, an operation in which Britain's Royal Marines played a major role.

Though the official reasons for the takeovers differ, it's fairly clear now that the seizure of the British vessel may give Tehran more leverage to get its own ship back.

While Britain says it acted near Gibraltar because the Iranian tanker Grace 1 was busting sanctions by delivering oil to Syria, Iran says it intervened because the British-flagged tanker hit an Iranian fishing boat.

The current tensions between Iran and the West have been escalating since President Donald Trump withdrew the U.S. last year from the 2015 nuclear deal with Tehran with world powers and imposed sweeping economic sanctions on Iran, including its oil exports. The 2015 accord, of which Britain was a signatory, was designed to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons in return for a lifting of sanctions.

Tensions have risen further since May, when the U.S. announced it was dispatching an aircraft carrier and additional troops to the Middle East, citing unspecified threats posed by Iran.

With the U.S. sanctions hitting the Iranian economy hard, Tehran is desperate for economic support and has been urging Britain, France and Germany to cobble together a package that will keep the nuclear deal on track.

Veteran British diplomat Malcolm Rifkind, who served as British foreign secretary and defense secretary in the 1990s, says Iran sees its action against the Steno Impero as a direct result to the U.K.'s involvement in the takeover of the Grace 1.

"From the point of view of the Iranians, there is a direct relationship," he told The Associated Press Saturday. "They were very, very angry at being caught out. But the Royal Navy was not acting against Iran; it was acting against Syria to enforce sanctions. But the Iranians don't see it that way."

Rifkind says Iran may carry its "macho" actions too far and make it harder for Britain to continue with efforts to keep the nuclear accord alive.

Iran made the link between the two separate seizures this month explicit on Saturday.

"The rule of reciprocal action is well-known in international law," the semi-official Fars news agency quoted Abbas Ali Kadkhodaei, a spokesman for Iran's Guardian Council, as saying.

He said Iran made the right decision in the face of an "illegitimate economic war and seizure of oil tankers."

The precise timing may have been a coincidence, but it's a fact that Iran took action against the Stena Impero only hours after the government of Gibraltar — a British overseas territory — said it would continue to hold the Iranian tanker and its precious crude oil cargo, rejecting Iran's demands for its immediate return.

The action against the Stena Impero, carried out by high speed patrol boats with a helicopter overhead, could hardly have been a surprise. Iran's leaders have publicly called Britain's seizure of the Grace 1 an act of "piracy" and warned they were considering taking a British tanker in retaliation.

Britain has offered to have the Iranian supertanker released if Iran pledges not to deliver the crude oil to Syria, an approach that has not borne fruit. A Gibraltar government hearing on the matter is set for August 15.

The hope has to be that a diplomatic solution — the release of both seized vessels, with cargo and crew intact and unharmed, for example — can defuse this latest escalation in one of the most important sea passages on the planet.

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, July 21, the 202nd day of 2019. There are 163 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On July 21, 1969, Apollo 11 astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin "Buzz" Aldrin blasted off from the moon aboard the ascent stage of the lunar module for docking with the command module.

On this date:

In 1861, during the Civil War, the first Battle of Bull Run was fought at Manassas, Virginia, resulting in a Confederate victory.

In 1925, the so-called "Monkey Trial" ended in Dayton, Tennessee, with John T. Scopes found guilty of violating state law for teaching Darwin's Theory of Evolution. (The conviction was later overturned on a technicality.)

In 1944, American forces landed on Guam during World War II, capturing it from the Japanese some three weeks later. The Democratic National Convention in Chicago nominated Sen. Harry S. Truman to be vice president.

In 1955, during a summit in Geneva, President Dwight D. Eisenhower presented his "open skies" proposal under which the U.S. and the Soviet Union would trade information on each other's military facilities and allow aerial reconnaissance. (The Soviets rejected the proposal.)

In 1980, draft registration began in the United States for 19- and 20-year-old men.

In 1990, a benefit concert took place in Germany at the site of the fallen Berlin Wall; the concert, which drew some 200,000 people, was headlined by Roger Waters, a founder of Pink Floyd. (The concert ended with the collapse of a mock Berlin Wall made of styrofoam.)

In 1994, Britain's Labor Party elected Tony Blair its new leader, succeeding the late John Smith.

In 1999, Navy divers found and recovered the bodies of John F. Kennedy Jr., his wife, Carolyn, and sister-in-law, Lauren Bessette (bih-SEHT'), in the wreckage of Kennedy's plane in the Atlantic Ocean off Martha's Vineyard.

In 2000, Special Counsel John C. Danforth concluded "with 100 percent certainty" that the federal government was innocent of wrongdoing in the siege that killed 80 members of the Branch Davidian compound near Waco, Texas, in 1993.

In 2011, the 30-year-old space shuttle program ended as Atlantis landed at Cape Canaveral, Florida, after the 135th shuttle flight.

In 2008, former Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic (RA'-doh-van KA'-ra-jich), one of the world's top war crimes fugitives, was arrested in a Belgrade suburb by Serbian security forces. (He was sentenced by a U.N. court in 2019 to life imprisonment after being convicted of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes.)

In 2017, White House press secretary Sean Spicer abruptly quit over President Donald Trump's decision to name financier Anthony Scaramucci as the new White House communications director. Scaramucci announced from the White House briefing room that Sarah Huckabee Sanders, who had been Spicer's deputy, would take over for Spicer. (Scaramucci was fired on July 31 after 11 days on the job; he had used vulgar language to insult White House aides during a phone call to a reporter.)

Ten years ago: The Senate voted to terminate further production of the Air Force's topline F-22 fighter jets. Prosecutors in Cambridge, Massachusetts, dropped a disorderly conduct charge against prominent black scholar Henry Louis Gates Jr., who was arrested by a white officer at his home near Harvard University after a report of a break-in. Taco Bell mascot Gidget the Chihuahua died in Santa Clarita, California, at 15.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama ordered employment protection for gay and transgender employees who worked for the federal government or for companies holding federal contracts, telling advocates at a White House signing ceremony he embraced the "irrefutable rightness of your cause." Pro-Moscow separatists, bowing to international pressure, agreed to turn over flight data recorders from the downed

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Malaysia Airlines plane four days after it plunged into eastern Ukraine.

One year ago: Reacting to the disclosure that his former lawyer had secretly taped their discussion about a potential payment for a former Playboy model, President Donald Trump called such taping "totally unheard of & perhaps illegal," but added that he "did nothing wrong." A store employee was shot and killed when a gunman who was being chased by police ran into a busy Los Angeles supermarket, where he held hostages for about three hours before handcuffing himself and surrendering; police determined that the employee, Melyda Corado, had been hit by a bullet fired by a police officer during an exchange of fire with the suspect.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Norman Jewison is 93. Actor Leigh Lawson is 76. Singer Yusuf Islam (also known as Cat Stevens) is 71. Cartoonist Garry Trudeau is 71. Actor Jamey Sheridan is 68. Rock singer-musician Eric Bazilian (The Hooters) is 66. Comedian Jon Lovitz is 62. Actor Lance Guest is 59. Actor Matt Mulhern is 59. Comedian Greg Behrendt is 56. Rock musician Koen Lieckens (K's Choice) is 53. White House budget director Mick Mulvaney is 52. Soccer player Brandi Chastain is 51. Rock singer Emerson Hart is 50. Rock-soul singer Michael Fitzpatrick (Fitz and the Tantrums) is 49. Actress Alysia Reiner is 49. Country singer Paul Brandt is 47. Christian rock musician Korey Cooper (Skillet) is 47. Actress Ali Landry is 46. Actor-comedian Steve Byrne is 45. Rock musician Tato Melgar (Lukas Nelson & Promise of the Real) is 42. Actor Justin Bartha is 41. Actor Josh Hartnett is 41. Contemporary Christian singer Brandon Heath is 41. Actress Sprague Grayden is 41. Reggae singer Damian Marley is 41. Country singer Brad Mates (Emerson Drive) is 41. MLB All-Star pitcher CC Sabathia (suh-BATH'-ee-uh) is 39. Singer Blake Lewis ("American Idol") is 38. Latin singer Romeo Santos is 38. Rock musician Will Berman (MGMT) is 37. Rock musician Johan Carlsson (Carolina Liar) is 35. Actress Vanessa Lengies (LEHN'-jeez) is 34. Actor Rory Culkin is 30. Actor Jamie Waylett ("Harry Potter" films) is 30. Figure skater Rachael Flatt is 27.

Thought for Today: "There is no bigotry like that of 'free thought' run to seed." — Horace Greeley, American journalist (1811-1872).