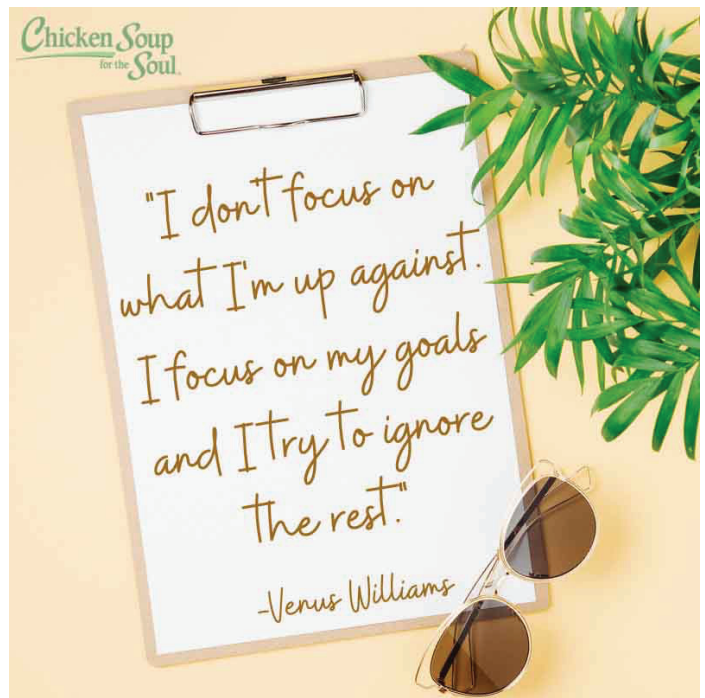


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It's Finally Back!

OPEN: 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 8:15 p.m.

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

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.

ImpACT Concussion testing will take place on Monday, August 5 and Tuesday, August 6 from 1pm to 4pm at the Groton Area Elementary computer lab. Students participating in athletics are required to complete a baseline assessment every two years (typically in grades 7, 9, and 11).

The fall athletics meeting is today. Athletes participating in fall sports entering grades 9-12 should plan to attend. The meeting will take place on at 7:00 PM in the GHS Arena.

August 5-18

State "B" Amateur Tournament at Mitchell

August 9-11

State Junior Legion Tourney in Groton

- Aug. 5..... First allowable day for soccer practice
- Aug. 12 First allowable day for FB/Golf practice
- Aug. 15 First allowable day for C-C/VB practice
- Aug. 20 Faculty Inservice
- Aug. 20 Open House / Picnic (5-7:30)
- Aug. 21 Faculty Inservice
- Aug. 22 1st Day of School

We need our farmers.

We need them physically strong. We need them mentally strong.

Northeastern Mental Health Center is now offering counseling services for farmers and their families-**at no cost.**

With the current state of the industry, we understand that farm families can feel overwhelmed in times of stress, instability, and uncertainty.

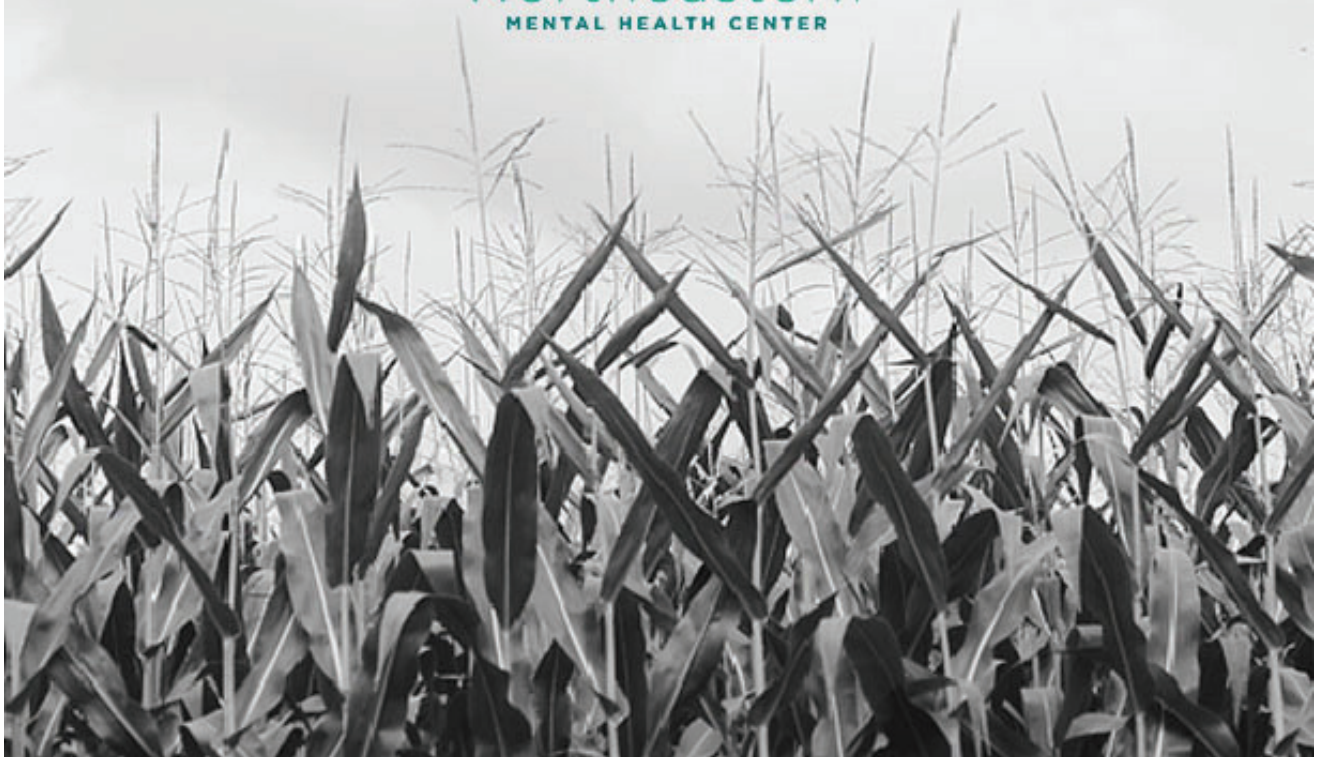
We're here to help.

Call 605-225-1010 for more information.

Northeastern Mental Health Center services the counties of Brown, Campbell, Day, Edmunds, Faulk, Marshall, McPherson, Potter, Spink and Walworth.



Northeastern
MENTAL HEALTH CENTER





Half-Staff Flag Notification

Honoring the Victims of the Tragedies in El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio, - Until August 8th, 2019

As a mark of solemn respect for the victims of the terrible acts of violence perpetrated in El Paso, Texas and Dayton, Ohio, the President has proclaimed that the flag of the United States shall be flown at half-staff until sunset, August 8th, 2019.

What do you say?

Before my junior year in high school, I returned from a Boy Scout canoeing trip to discover my sister had been killed in a car crash. I will never forget the sadness of the moment when I walked into the house that was filled with what seemed like half the caring and wonderful town of De Smet to find my mom and dad there grieving. It was near the end of that summer, but the beginning of a long period of mourning for my family and me.



By Richard P. Holm, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

There were lessons that came to me after my sister's death. I realized how important support from a community could be. Consolation came from our friends, neighbors, church community, as well as people we barely knew. It seemed more about their presence and not their words. I noticed there were people who had trouble themselves dealing with such loss, and they sort of disappeared.

Also, I realized that a funeral is not exactly a time of closure for a family, but really just the beginning of a time to accept reality and forge ahead with the difficult changes that life can and does deal out. It took me years to think about my sister and relish in her memory rather than cringe from the pain of the loss. In that sense, I know I will never have closure and that's good.

Some 14 years after her death, while I was on the faculty of a medical school in Georgia, I found myself having to advise medical students how to talk to patients or family about sad news. I reviewed the medical literature on the subject at the time and concluded that there is no right way to do it except to be 100 percent honest and to say whatever is needed with compassion.

Through the years those guidelines have sustained me while I have had the burden of sharing awful news.

Bottom line, it is being there, more than words that consoles. Never worry about what to say, just show up, be honest, and care.

Richard P. Holm, MD is author of "Life's Final Season, A Guide for Aging and Dying with Grace" available on Amazon. For free and easy access to the entire Prairie Doc® library, visit [HYPERLINK "http://www.prairiedoc.org"](http://www.prairiedoc.org) www.prairiedoc.org and follow Prairie Doc® on Facebook featuring On Call with the Prairie Doc® a medical Q&A show streaming on Facebook and broadcast on SDPTV most Thursdays at 7 p.m. central.

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From the Editors of E - The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: I was appalled to find out on a recent backpacking trip to Yosemite National Park that I could get three bars of service on my cell phone. What about getting away from it all?

-- James P., Seattle, WA

Cell service in national parks has become a flashpoint in recent years as cellular providers compete to blanket the U.S. with coverage—even in remote, traditionally off-grid areas. On one side of this most modern of environmental debates stand wilderness buffs, who liken letting cell towers into national parks as no different from letting other forms of industrial development into these most sacred of wild and natural places. On the other side are those who say cell coverage in otherwise off-grid areas will help attract a new generation of (screen-addicted) young people to our parks and wildlands while also making it easier for first responders to save the lives of those who get into trouble in the backcountry.

"Cell phone towers have sprouted up in national parks across the country because the National Park Service (NPS) lacks any coherent policy and instead lets telecommunications companies decide where and how many towers will be constructed," says Jeff Ruch of the non-profit Public Employees for Environmental Responsibility (PEER), which has been leading the charge against expanding cell service on public lands. "As a result, the incessant chirp of the cell phone can be heard in the wild backcountry as well as at iconic places like Old Faithful."

To date, only four out of 401 national park units (Golden Gate, Rock Creek Park, Lake Mead, and Yellowstone) have adopted a plan for cell towers or wireless communication within their boundaries. At Yellowstone, the first national park in the U.S. system and the second largest in the Lower 48, park managers have recommended a moratorium on the installation of new wireless infrastructure and reducing or relocating some cellular installations that are visible to park visitors. The CellularMaps.com website reports that NPS has restricted any new or relocated facilities to "provide no more cellular coverage than is already available and no service can be expanded into designated Wilderness areas."

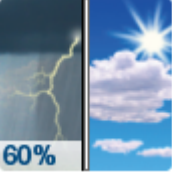




But elsewhere, NPS has been quietly working with cellular providers to greatly expand "connectivity" inside park boundaries—not just at visitor centers but along park roads and at trailheads. "This stealth scheme to wire our national park system has advanced without public involvement," reports Ruch. "It will mean more ugly cell towers marring park vistas and 'spill-over' coverage in wilderness and backcountry."

"Part of the point of wilderness is the ability to be disconnected and feel alone, but if somebody on the same trail can order a pizza, or sell stock, or chase Pokemon, that takes away from the visitor experience," he says. While some cellular providers have expressed interest in directing their signals away from backcountry areas, PEER and others consider it to be too little, too late—and would instead prefer binding legislation that forces parks and companies to work together to make sure at least the wildest and remotest areas are free of cell signals.

"Parks should remain unplugged from the modern world," says Ruch. "Experiencing the wonders of nature should not require a smartphone."

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Today	Tonight	Tuesday	Tuesday Night	Wednesday
				
60%		20%	40%	
T-storms Likely and Patchy Fog then Mostly Sunny	Mostly Clear	Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms	Chance T-storms	Mostly Sunny
High: 83 °F	Low: 61 °F	High: 87 °F	Low: 62 °F	High: 78 °F

MARGINAL TO SLIGHT RISK OF SEVERE THUNDERSTORMS

WHAT

Severe thunderstorms could produce damaging hail in excess of 1 inch in diameter and damaging winds of 60 mph or higher.

WHERE

Best chances south central and southeastern South Dakota, but severe weather is possible across the area.

WHEN

During the morning hours along and north of Interstate 90.

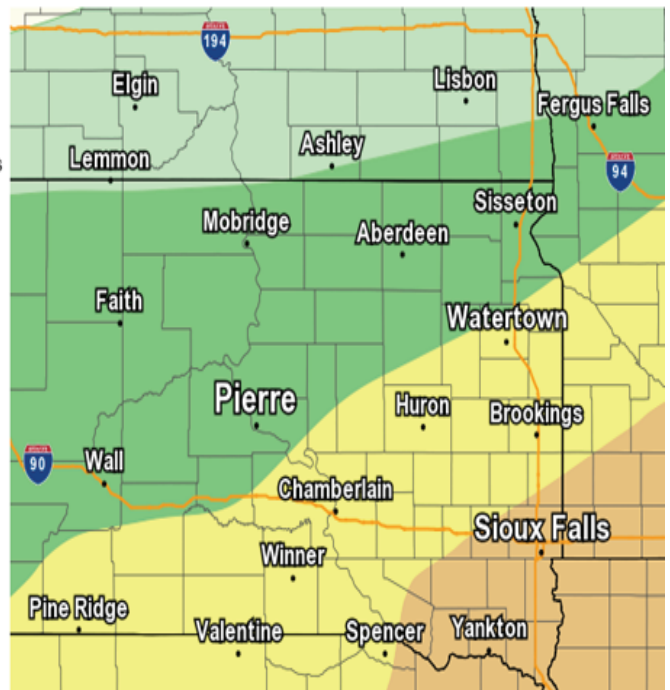
ACTION

Pay close attention to the weather and be prepared to seek shelter if necessary.



Today's (Monday) Severe Weather Outlook

- General Thunderstorms
- 1 - Marginal Risk
- 2 - Slight Risk
- 3 - Enhanced Risk
- 4 - Moderate Risk
- 5 - High Risk



Graphic Created August 5th, 2019 3:35 AM CDT



ISSUED: 3:40 AM - Monday, August 05, 2019

Published on: 08/04/2019 at 11:43PM

A frontal boundary will drop over the area today, and will be the focus for shower and thunderstorm development, mainly during the morning hours. Some of the storms may be strong to severe, with large hail and gusty winds being the main threats. Mostly dry conditions are expected this afternoon.

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Today in Weather History

August 5, 1987: Six tornadoes touched down in central South Dakota. Five of these tornadoes touched down in Lyman County, including three which did damage near Kennebec within 25 minutes of each other. One of the tornadoes destroyed three farms, downing outbuildings, power lines, granaries, and killing cattle.

August 5, 2000: A wet microburst with winds estimated at 120 mph caused substantial damage in and around Mitchell. Apartments and several mobile homes were destroyed, vehicles were overturned, and other damage occurred to buildings and vehicles. Widespread tree and power line damage also occurred. Ten people were injured, although the majority of the injuries were minor. The damage path was approximately a mile and a half long and a mile wide, extending over the southwest part of Mitchell.

1843 - A spectacular cloudburst near Philadelphia turned the small creeks and streams entering the Delaware River into raging torrents. As much as sixteen inches of rain fell in just three hours. Flooding destroyed thirty-two county bridges, and caused nineteen deaths. It is believed that several small tornadoes accompanied the torrential rains, one of which upset and sank more than thirty barges on the Schuylkill River. (David Ludlum)

1875: Several tornadoes moved across northern and central Illinois. One of the stronger tornadoes touched down in Warren and Knox County where it destroyed 25 homes and killed two people. Another in a series of tornadoes touched down near Knoxville and moved east into northern Peoria County. This estimated F4 tornado injured 40 people and was described by eyewitnesses as looking like a "monstrous haystack."

1961 - The temperature at Ice Harbor Dam, WA, soared to 118 degrees to equal the state record established at Wahluke on the 24th of July in 1928. The afternoon high of 111 degrees at Havre, MT, was an all-time record for that location. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Severe thunderstorms raked eastern South Dakota. The thunderstorms spawned half a dozen tornadoes, produced softball size hail at Bowdle, and produced wind gusts to 90 mph south of Watertown. Hot weather continued in eastern Texas. Afternoon highs of 100 degrees at Houston and 106 degrees at Waco equalled records for the date. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather from Indiana and Lower Michigan to Pennsylvania and New York State during the day. Thunderstorms in Michigan produced wind gusts to 80 mph at Ashley, Hastings and Lennon. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Thunderstorms produced severe weather in Oklahoma, and from Iowa to the Upper Ohio Valley, with 216 reports of large hail or damaging winds between early Saturday morning and early Sunday morning. Thunderstorms moving across Iowa around sunrise produced extremely high winds which caused ten million dollars damage to crops in Carroll and Greene Counties. Thunderstorm winds at Jefferson IA reached 102 mph. Afternoon thunderstorms produced tennis ball size hail at Bay Mills, WI. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 85 °F at 4:50 PM

Low Temp: 66 °F at 5:19 AM

Wind: 10 mph at 5:12 PM

Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 107° in 1941

Record Low: 41° in 1994

Average High: 84°F

Average Low: 59°F

Average Precip in Aug.: 0.31

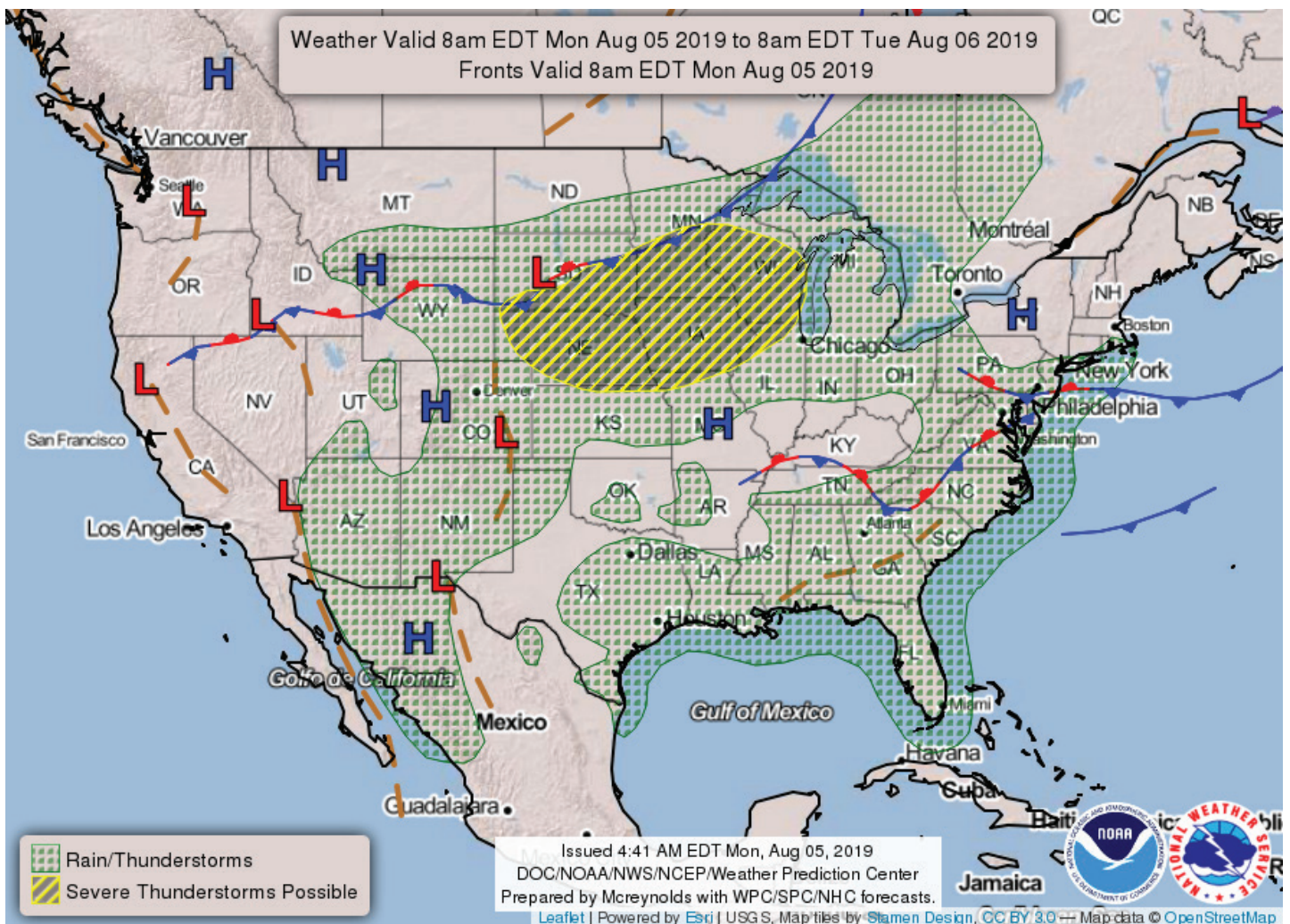
Precip to date in Aug.: 0.74

Average Precip to date: 14.17

Precip Year to Date: 17.33

Sunset Tonight: 8:56 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 6:23 a.m.



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WHAT TO DO TO AN ENEMY

Jesus said, love your enemies!

Solomon went a step further when he wrote: If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you. He put his words to work by showing the results of love.

What a predicament for those of us who want to get even and seek revenge. Resentments loom large in most of us even though we want to demonstrate the love and compassion of Christ. It is only natural to want to hurt those who hurt us and get even with those who have done us damage. While it may be natural and normal, it does not reflect the new nature of a Christian: Behold, all things are made new!

A better translation of enemy is the one who hates you. This removes it from any vagueness and forces us to look closely at our relationships with others. While not easy to do, it will have positive results because it follows the teachings of Jesus.

Returning love for hate and kindness for coldness is not the normal way we respond to those who would do us harm. But Solomon seems to suggest that when we return good for evil we are bringing shame on those who hate or hurt us.

Certainly this is what Paul would recommend that we who are Christians must do when he wrote: Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. It is God who is the one to mete out justice. Whatever we do may be too much, too little, or not enough, but never right!

Prayer: We plead for grace, Lord, to show Your grace to those who hate us or would harm us. May we share Your love, as You did, and in doing so witness grace. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Proverbs 25:21-22 If your enemy is hungry, give him food to eat; if he is thirsty give him water to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head, and the Lord will reward you.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 08/07/2019 Storybook Land Theatre Performace at Granary Rural Cultural Center
- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/19/2019 St. John's Lutheran Luncheon
- 09/20/2019 Presbygerian Luncheon
- 09/28/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 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

- 01/26/2020 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/02/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday in May)
- 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
Groton Hosting State B American Legion Baseball Tournament
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest

News from the Associated Press

This woman runs the last video rental store in South Dakota

By TREVOR J. MITCHELL Argus Leader

SIOUX FALL, S.D. (AP) — Nancy Hiller's dream had finally come true.

It was February 2007, and she'd taken out a loan to stock the shelves of Movie Mania, a video store tucked into a strip mall off of North Harrison Avenue in Pierre.

"I always wanted to work at a video store," she said. And after working at one for four years, her dream was realized with Movie Mania.

At the time there was competition — three other video stores were in town, and both Redbox and Netflix offered alternative video rental options, but Hiller had no idea what was coming.

Today, she's running the last remaining video store in South Dakota.

The same month Hiller opened Movie Mania, Netflix rolled out its first movie and TV streaming service with about 1,000 titles available. But at the time, the company seemed to doubt its potential.

Fast forward 12 years, and Movie Mania is the state's last video store standing.

"It's a tough business," Hiller said. "It really is."

At the start of 2019, there were still other stores in the state. But Video Plus in Dell Rapids closed in March. Mr. Movies in Rapid City announced that movie rentals had ceased earlier this month, and they'll close sometime in August after selling off their stock.

Even Aberdeen's Party Central — which had been Northview Video until 2007 when the store pivoted to selling party supplies, while also continuing to keep a small stock of movies available — closed in May when the owners retired.

Hiller said she's stayed afloat due to a number of factors — a considerable one being that she's never paid herself.

It's a family business — her husband Steven works with her, and her sister volunteered for a while as well. And Hiller herself also has a job with the state.

"If this was my sole job," she said, "we wouldn't still be here."

That doesn't mean they haven't tried to change with the times. They open at noon now instead of 10 a.m. Hardly anyone rents video games anymore, so unless a new Call of Duty or Grand Theft Auto comes out, Hiller doesn't buy it.

Most of all, they're selling anything and everything that people will buy: wallets, purses, hats, coffee from Rapid City.

"If we have a space to sell something, we have something in that space," Hiller told Argus Leader. "You try and bring what somebody else in town doesn't have."

It's the same attitude she brings to her competition with streaming services like Netflix, Hulu, Redbox and the rest.

At Movie Mania, she said, she gets to recommend movies to people. She gets to help them think of that movie from the 1980s they want to show their kids. She gets to watch those same kids excitedly choose their own movie that they want to rent.

"There's something about going up and picking up a case," she said, "and being able to read about it and not standing in front of a machine."

Hiller knows it's surprising that she subscribes to the service that's draining the life from the industry she dreamed of joining.

She held off for a while, she said, but two years ago she decided she should be paying more attention to the competition. So she got a Netflix subscription.

"I don't watch a lot of stuff on there now," she said. It's not a principled decision — she just doesn't like much of what's offered.

The Netflix of 12 years ago was much different than what it is today, but Hiller said she knew pretty

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early that streaming was going to be a big deal.

"It was too convenient," she said. "I know how people are."

With more and more streaming services asking people for money and offering their own unique content, there's a part of Hiller that thinks the future might not be all bad.

"I think eventually when people are tired of having to pay Disney, Netflix, ABC, CBS, they're going to come looking for that one-stop place," she said. "And I hope we're still here."

But there's another part of Hiller, the part that knows that maybe her dream just came true at the worst possible time.

"If I could do it all over again, I wouldn't open it up," she said. "I didn't know streaming would be so huge. People don't like to leave their house. You don't have to get out and interact with people, which is sad."

She's a member of a Facebook group where video store owners chat, and she's seen plenty of them announce their closure.

"People miss these businesses when they're gone, they talk about it on social media," she said. "Okay, well, where were you guys before this was happening?"

All of that, combined with the knowledge that Movie Mania missed the golden years of video stores by just a bit, is heartbreaking.

"It's devastating," Hiller said. "Who wants to have a dream and have it get crushed?"

But the store's still open, and new releases keep coming in. She's got less time now, but she still watches as many as she can.

As long as people walk into Movie Mania because it's time for their kid to watch *The Breakfast Club* or because there's something that just isn't streaming anywhere, Hiller wants to be there.

As she talks, "Shazam!" is playing in the background. Hiller thanks a customer as they walk out the door.

"I hope they don't completely go away," she said. "I'll try everything I can to stay open because I don't want to let the dream die."

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

The Black Hills Studios just opened in Spearfish

By **KAIJA SWISHER Black Hills Pioneer**

SPEARFISH, S.D. (AP) — People might do a double take when driving by the sign for The Black Hills Studios at 125 E. Grant St. in Spearfish — and yes, the name is a tribute to a well-known photographer and studio of old in the Black Hills.

Owner and photographer Russ Aman said that he and George Fassbender, of Black Hills Studios — and what would become the Fassbender Photographic Collection — were friends "back in the day" when Aman was attending college at Black Hills State. Aman tried to convince Fassbender to take him on as an intern, but as Aman describes it, Fassbender did him a favor by refusing, which led Aman to seek other ways into the industry.

He would eventually attend Elkins Institute in Dallas, Texas, to study photography, which opened doors for work in the profession — and after 30 years, Aman has had a variety of experience capturing images on film and digital for clients such as Dillard's, Dr. Pepper, Fossil, JCPenney, Motorola, PepsiCo, Zales Jewelry, and more.

Aman, originally from Spearfish, has family in the community, and about a decade ago, he and his wife bought property in Higgins Gulch, with the intention to move to the Black Hills.

"It was just time, and I'm from here. This was always home," he said of the recent move.

He also heard from friends in the area that once James Photography closed in town, there was a need for a photography studio, as a lot of business went to Rapid City versus remaining in the community.

"There's no reason for that," he said, adding, "In that 30 years (of experience), I've acquired a ton of skills, and (I'm) looking at what's here and what I can do to improve and pull the business that's going to Rapid City back."

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Aman hopes to help to continue to build the photography program at Black Hills State University, with the idea of offering internships and opportunities to students in the program. He would also like to partner with the university to have students learn by creating a new website for The Black Hills Studios that can be launched.

Aman remembers being a student interested in photography; he got his camera in about seventh-grade, and he remembers doing "some kind of edgy cool stuff with a Polaroid Swinger."

However, his interest turned to architecture, and after enlisting in the military for four years, Aman attended Black Hills State with the dream of becoming an architect. At a certain point, his sister asked him why he wasn't studying photography — and that question caused Aman to switch tracks, researching options for where he could go to study photography and eventually attending Elkins Institute in Dallas and finding a job with a communications company that did audio-visual shows for various corporations and major clients. This opportunity eventually led to freelancing and other staff jobs for Aman through the years.

"I've done some wonderful stuff," he told the Black Hills Pioneer, adding that most of the work has been commercial photography.

One of the first jobs he landed when he moved back to the area was as the official photographer for the 2019 Downtown Friday Nights, and Aman said his motto for this event is, "I'm living with eyes wide open," seeing things in the crowd no one else is noticing and capturing that in photos so that others can see it later.

"It's been a lot of fun," he said, adding that he's also photographed the Festival in the Park, D.C. Booth Historic National Fish Hatchery and Archives and other events. He prefers to work outdoors, and a sign at the window in the studio states, "Catch me here or by appointment," as Aman is generally out and about. The studio is a "place to hang" his gear and meet and greet, he said. Some of his work, as well as vintage cameras, are on display in the space.

The studio has been open for about three months, Aman said, adding that he was working on it for longer than that. The space is a former garage.

"It's me," Aman joked of the interior of the studio, describing it as "kind of old and rough."

He added that he's been pleased with the response of people reaching out to him, interested in The Black Hills Studios, and he said that his goal is to do what he can for the community to bring them a step up, whatever their photography needs.

Information from: Black Hills Pioneer, <http://www.bhpioneer.com>

Train hits washout in South Dakota; 2 crew members rescued

NEW UNDERWOOD, S.D. (AP) — Two crew members had to be rescued when a freight train derailed after hitting a washout in southwestern South Dakota.

Pennington County authorities say the eastbound Rapid City, Pierre & Eastern Railroad derailed early Friday when the train came across a washout caused by flash flooding in New Underwood.

The three locomotives and about 15 cars derailed. The lead locomotive ended up on its side and partially submerged in water.

Authorities say the two-person crew was rescued from the lead locomotive. The crew members' injuries appeared to be non-life-threatening, and they were taken by ambulance to Rapid City.

The 60-car train was carrying clay, cement and scrap metals. No first responders were hurt.

Custer cleans up after heavy rain, flood shut down SD city

CUSTER, S.D. (AP) — Residents of Custer are cleaning up after what an emergency services official calls a hundred-year flood that shut down the southwestern South Dakota city.

The National Weather Service says thunderstorms stalled over Custer on Friday afternoon and dumped more than 5 inches (13 centimeters) of rain in 2-3 hours. Rainwater swelled French Creek, causing severe flooding that prompted road closures and some evacuations in Custer.

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Custer County emergency services director Mike Carter says he closed the city of Custer until late Friday night, not letting anyone in or out. Carter estimates the town's population of nearly 2,000 swelled to more than 7,500 with the annual Sturgis motorcycle rally nearby.

About 700 residents lost electricity, but power is back. Carter says at least a dozen people had to be rescued from the water, but no one was hurt.

Health problems linger after beer sales end in Nebraska town

By GRANT SCHULTE Associated Press

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — Two years after Nebraska state regulators shuttered four beer stores for selling excessive amounts of alcohol near South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, public health officials are still trying to clean up the damage left by decades of alcohol abuse among tribe members.

The stores in Whiteclay, Nebraska, faced intense criticism for selling millions of cans of beer annually, primarily to members of the Oglala Sioux Tribe. Native American activists and others who wanted the stores closed blamed them for widespread alcoholism and cases of fetal alcohol syndrome on the officially dry reservation.

The problem has drawn the attention of state lawmakers and officials with the University of Nebraska Medical Center, but both acknowledge there's no easy fix. A delegation from the University of Nebraska Medical Center will travel this week to Gordon, the largest Nebraska town near Pine Ridge, and the reservation itself to teach local educators, health officials and social workers how to identify signs of alcohol-related disorders in children.

"My biggest concern is that when a kid goes undiagnosed and goes through school without appropriate support, they end up at a higher risk for alcohol consumption," said Dr. Omar Rahman, a University of Nebraska Medical Center professor who treats children from the Whiteclay area remotely using telehealth video conferencing software. "They're going to have more difficulty securing employment, socializing and making good decisions. My fear is it's simply going to feed the same cycle."

Cases of fetal alcohol syndrome and other alcohol-related disorders are well-documented on Pine Ridge and many of the border towns in Nebraska and South Dakota, although it's unclear how many cases originated with purchases from Whiteclay beer stores.

Whiteclay, a village with a population of nine that touches the reservation's southern border, sold the equivalent of about 3.5 million cans of beer annually before the stores lost their liquor licenses in 2017. The town's streets are cleaner now, most panhandlers have left and new businesses have taken root, but longtime residents and activists say alcohol is still making its way onto the reservation. It's not clear whether the amount has declined since the Whiteclay stores closed.

The alcohol problem is especially daunting in the region because it faces a severe shortage of specialists who treat alcohol-related disorders, said Dr. Catherine Jones-Hazledine, a clinical psychologist based in Rushville, Nebraska, who maintains eight clinics throughout western and north-central Nebraska.

Jones-Hazledine said symptoms of alcohol-related disorders are often confused with other conditions, such as attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, which makes it harder to treat kids who have developmental problems because of exposure to alcohol in utero. Both disorders make it harder for children to concentrate and leave them prone to compulsiveness, hyperactivity and poor decision-making.

"Schools bear the brunt of a lot of that," Jones-Hazledine said. "When kids have needs that go unaddressed, it affects how well they can learn. That's why it's important for schools to partner with providers out here."

State Sen. Tom Brewer, of Gordon, whose district includes Whiteclay, said he's working with the University of Nebraska to try to bring more doctors, psychologists and counselors to the region to help those affected by alcoholism. He said the shortage is part of a larger problem around the reservation, where he grew up, and in rural western Nebraska.

"I think this could be a blessing in that area where it's hard to get doctors," said Brewer, a member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe.

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Rahman, the director of genetic medicine at the university's Munroe-Meyer Institute, said he hopes to expand the use of telehealth clinics in the region so more children can see doctors in Omaha without having to drive more than six hours one way. The university already has telehealth clinics in Gordon and Scottsbluff.

Rahman said the idea came from earlier listening sessions with teachers from northwest Nebraska and the reservation, many of whom said they didn't know how to help children they suspected of having an alcohol-related disorder.

Some tribe members stressed the need for more alcohol and drug treatment facilities, but that isn't a feasible option for the university right now, said Lisa Spellman, a University of Nebraska Medical Center spokeswoman and member of South Dakota's Rosebud Sioux Tribe.

Spellman said the university was able to open a genetics clinic in Gordon to help diagnose children with alcohol-related disorders. She said a grant from the university's College of Public Health helped pay for the educational sessions in Nebraska and South Dakota, and university officials hope to keep working with residents in the area.

Spellman said the university was helping South Dakota tribe members because its mission is to assist all people, including those who live outside of Nebraska. She pointed to the University of Nebraska Medical Center's role in detecting and mitigating the effects of biological weapons and the creation of the National Ebola Training and Education Center, which has trained hundreds of military and health professionals.

"If our mission is to lead the world in transforming lives to create a healthy future for all individuals and communities, then that transcends borders beyond just the state of Nebraska," she said.

Follow Grant Schulte at <https://twitter.com/GrantSchulte>

Trump claims he wants stronger gun measures, doesn't say how

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump claimed Monday he wanted Washington to "come together" after two weekend mass shootings on legislation providing "strong background checks" for gun users, but he provided no details and previous gun control measures have languished in the Republican-controlled Senate.

Trump, who will make remarks to the nation later Monday, tweeted about the weekend shootings in Texas and Ohio that left 29 dead and dozens wounded. He said: "We can never forget them, and those many who came before them."

The Democrat-led House has passed a gun control bill that includes fixes to the nation's firearm background check system, but it has languished in the Senate.

Trump suggested that a background check bill could be paired with his long-sought effort to toughen the nation's immigration system. But he didn't say how.

Trump also faulted the media for "the anger and rage that has built up over many years."

"News coverage has got to start being fair, balanced and unbiased, or these terrible problems will only get worse!" Trump tweeted.

Over the weekend, Trump tried to assure Americans he was dealing with the problem and defended his administration in light of criticism following the latest in a string of mass shootings.

"We have done much more than most administrations," he said, without elaboration. "We have done actually a lot. But perhaps more has to be done."

Investigators focused on whether the El Paso attack was a hate crime after the emergence of a racist, anti-immigrant screed that was posted online shortly beforehand. Detectives sought to determine if it was written by the man who was arrested.

In recent weeks, the president has issued racist tweets about four women of color who serve in Congress, and in rallies has spoken of an "invasion" at the southern border. His reelection strategy has placed racial animus at the forefront in an effort that his aides say is designed to activate his base of conservative voters, an approach not seen by an American president in the modern era.

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Trump also has been widely criticized for offering a false equivalency when discussing racial violence, notably when he said there were "very fine people, on both sides," after a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, that resulted in the death of an anti-racism demonstrator.

29 killed in 2 US shootings, and it could have been worse

By The Associated Press

It took just 30 seconds in Ohio and zero bullets in Texas for officers to stop two mass shooters this weekend, but not before 29 people were killed and about 50 injured in less than 24 hours.

Officers gunned down the Ohio shooter at the doorstep of a bar-turned-hiding place in the middle of Dayton's nightclub district, and arrested the El Paso shooter as hundreds fled a crowded shopping center. Though the two attacks staggered a nation accustomed to gun violence, the bigger shock may have been that the death toll wasn't worse.

In the Texas border city of El Paso, a gunman opened fire Saturday morning in a shopping area packed with thousands of people during the busy back-to-school season. The attack killed 20 and wounded more than two dozen, many of them critically.

Hours later in Dayton, Ohio, a gunman wearing body armor and carrying extra magazines opened fire in a popular nightlife area, killing nine and injuring at least 26 people.

The attacks came less than a week after a 19-year-old gunman killed three people and injured 13 others at the popular Gilroy Garlic Festival in California before dying of a self-inflicted gunshot wound.

The El Paso shooting was being investigated as a possible hate crime as authorities worked to confirm whether a racist, anti-immigrant screed posted online shortly beforehand was written by the man arrested. The border city is home to 680,000 people, many of them Latino.

El Paso authorities offered few details about the assault, but Police Chief Greg Allen described the scene as "horrific" and said many of the 26 people who were hurt had life-threatening injuries.

In Dayton, the bloodshed was likely limited by the swift police response. Officers patrolling the area took just 30 seconds to stop the shooting, which unfolded around 1 a.m. on the streets of the downtown Oregon District, Mayor Nan Whaley said.

Video released by police shows 24-year-old Connor Betts being shot down by officers, just steps away from entering a bar filled with hiding patrons.

Had police not responded so quickly, "hundreds of people in the Oregon District could be dead today," Whaley said.

Betts' 22-year-old sister, Megan Betts, was among those killed in Dayton.

Authorities identified the El Paso suspect as 21-year-old Patrick Crusius from Allen, a Dallas suburb which is a nearly 10-hour drive from El Paso.

El Paso Mayor Dee Margo said he knew the shooter was not from his city.

"It's not what we're about," the mayor said at a news conference with Gov. Greg Abbott and the police chief.

President Donald Trump tweeted Monday that Washington "must come together" in the wake of the shootings "to get strong background checks" for gun users. But he provided no details on what sort of legislation he would support.

The Democrat-led House has passed a gun control bill that includes fixes to the nation's firearm background check system, but it has languished in the GOP-controlled Senate.

Trump suggested Monday that a background check bill could be paired with his long-sought effort to toughen the nation's immigration system. He didn't say how.

Democratic presidential candidate and former Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke, who is from El Paso and was at a candidate forum Saturday in Las Vegas, appeared shaken after receiving news of the shooting in his hometown.

He said he heard early reports that the shooter might have had a military-style weapon, saying we need to "keep that (expletive) on the battlefield. Do not bring it into our communities."

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The shootings were the 21st and 22nd mass killings of 2019 in the U.S., according to the AP/USA Today/Northeastern University mass murder database that tracks homicides where four or more people killed — not including the offender.

Including the two latest attacks, 125 people had been killed in the 2019 shootings.

Protests disrupt Hong Kong work day as leader vows to remain

By YANAN WANG and CHRISTOPHER BODEEN Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Protesters filled public parks and squares in several Hong Kong districts on Monday in a general strike staged on a weekday to draw more attention to their demands, including that the semi-autonomous Chinese territory's leader resign.

Police again deployed tear gas in the Wong Tai Sin district, the scene of clashes with protesters over the weekend.

At the legislative complex, other protesters spray-painted "Dog officials" and pasted yellow banners on the gates opposing an extradition bill that originally sparked more than two months of demonstrations. They painted "Revolution of our Times" on one side of the building's exterior.

Police responded with tear gas after protesters took over a major road outside the main government office, threw eggs and bricks at the building and punctured large water-filled barriers set up by police to keep them away.

The general strike led to more than 200 flight cancellations at the city's airport and protesters disrupted subway service during the morning commute. Nevertheless, Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam maintained that she has no plans to resign in the face of the turbulent pro-democracy movement.

Hong Kong is on "the verge of a very dangerous situation," Lam said. She said current protests were operating with "ulterior motives" that threaten Hong Kong's prosperity and security.

"I don't think at this point in time, resignation of myself or some of my colleagues would provide a better solution," Lam said at a news conference.

The strike is the latest development in a summer of fiery demonstrations that began in early June against proposed extradition legislation that would have allowed some criminal suspects to be sent to mainland China to stand trial. While the government has since suspended the bill, protesters have pressed on with broader calls for it to be scrapped entirely, along with democratic reforms including the dissolution of the current legislature and an investigation into alleged police brutality.

A former British colony, Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under the framework of "one country, two systems," which promised the city certain democratic freedoms not afforded to the mainland. But some Hong Kong residents feel that Beijing has been increasingly encroaching on their freedoms.

Protesters snarled the Monday morning rush hour by blocking train and platform doors, preventing subway and commuter rail trains from leaving their stations.

More than 200 flights out of Hong Kong have been canceled after a large number of airport employees called in sick in apparent participation in the general strike, Hong Kong media reported. Public broadcaster RTHK said Cathay Pacific and other domestic carriers such as Hong Kong Airlines were the most affected. Airport express train service was also suspended.

"Too much. Why do they have to create trouble for people not involved in their cause?" said 52-year-old John Chan, whose flight to Singapore was canceled. "Hong Kong is sinking. The government, police and protest people have to stop fighting and give us a break."

The citywide strike and demonstrations in seven Hong Kong districts followed a weekend of street clashes between protesters and riot police.

At a daily briefing, a police spokeswoman said 420 protesters have been arrested since June 9, the date of a massive march that drew more than 1 million people and ushered in the protest movement. Those held, who range in age from 14 to 76, face charges including rioting, unlawful assembly, possessing offensive weapons and assaulting officers and obstructing police operations, the spokeswoman, Yolanda Yu Hoi-kwan, told reporters.

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Yu said during the protests, police have expended 1,000 tear gas grenades and fired more than 300 non-lethal bullets. She said 139 officers had been injured in clashes, with two still hospitalized with fractures.

She said violence has been escalating, with protesters using gasoline bombs and fire, including sending a trolley full of burning trash hurtling toward officers.

"We love Hong Kong and hope to restore public order. If we continue to tolerate and turn a blind eye to lawless behavior, the consequences will be undesirable for our citizens," Yu said.

Senior Superintendent Kong Wing-cheung of the Police Public Relations Branch said the police are fully supported by the government and there will be no need to deploy China's military to help maintain order. He said Lam and other officials from her administration have stated the same on multiple occasions.

"I personally believe there won't be any chance to deploy the (People's Liberation Army)," Kong told reporters at a daily press briefing.

Speculation of PLA intervention was fueled in part by a slick publicity video it released last week showing troops firing tear gas and dealing with a mock street demonstration.

Meanwhile, Kong said he doesn't feel the police are being made scapegoats over the violence and were fulfilling their mandate to protect the community and maintain law and order.

The Communist Party-led central government in Beijing has condemned what they call violent and radical protesters who have vandalized the Chinese national flag on the sidelines of major rallies. China has accused unnamed "foreign forces" of inflaming the demonstrations out of a desire to contain the country's development.

On Chinese state broadcaster CCTV's daily noon news report, an anchor read aloud from a strongly worded editorial titled "The Chaos in Hong Kong Must Not Continue."

"We warn those maniacs and thugs who intend to continue to mess up Hong Kong by holding to a fantasy that you must pay a price for your savage revenge," the editorial said. "So please become aware of your errors, turn back from your incorrect path and set down the butcher's knives."

Claudia Mo, a pro-democracy lawmaker, said Beijing should consider engaging with protesters through Lam.

"We hope the learned people in Beijing would at least deliver some sincerity by suggesting via Carrie Lam, 'OK, you guys want democracy, perhaps we can talk,'" Mo said. "We can talk — just three words. And maybe that can help appease society."

Bodeen reported from Beijing. Associated Press journalist Royston Chan in Hong Kong contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. TWENTY-NINE KILLED IN 2 MASS SHOOTINGS OVER THE WEEKEND

A gunman opened fire Saturday morning in a shopping area packed with thousands of people during the busy back-to-school season. Hours later in Dayton, Ohio, a gunman opened fire in a popular nightlife area.

2. TRUMP'S AWKWARD TWEETS IN SHOOTING AFTERMATH

The president tweeted support for a celebrity fighter and attacked political foes in the first hours after the tragedies.

3. WHO IS ACCUSED OF FRAUD, THEFT IN HANDLING OF YEMEN AID

An AP investigation has found that more than a dozen U.N. aid workers deployed to deal with the war-time humanitarian crisis are accused of joining with combatants on all sides to enrich themselves from the billions of dollars in donated aid.

4. DESPITE WEEKS OF PROTESTS HONG KONG LEADER WILL NOT RESIGN

Carrie Lam says she doesn't think her resignation "would provide a better solution" even as a turbulent pro-democracy movement held a general strike Monday that led to more than 100 flight cancellations

and major traffic disruptions.

5. CHINA ALLOWS YUAN TO FALL TO LOWEST LEVEL SINCE 2008

Beijing might use devaluation as a weapon in a tariff war with Washington. The central bank blamed the exchange rate's decline on "trade protectionism."

6. KASHMIR'S SPECIAL STATUS REVOKED BY PRESIDENTIAL ORDER

The revoked law gives Jammu and Kashmir its own constitution and decision-making rights for all matters except for defense, communications and foreign affairs. The law also forbids Indians outside the state from permanently settling, buying land, holding local government jobs and securing education scholarships.

7. MOM CHANNELS GRIEF INTO ACTION AFTER JOURNALIST SON KILLED

Diane Foley has successfully pushed the U.S. government to overhaul the hostage rescue process, advocated legislation to punish kidnappers and pressed for additional attention for thousands of Americans detained unlawfully.

8. PUERTO RICO'S CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS CONTINUES

The island's Senate has filed a lawsuit seeking to oust Pedro Pierluisi who was recently sworn in as governor.

9. JAPANESE ELECTRONIC MAKERS TEST 'FLYING CAR'

The large drone-like machine with four propellers hovered steadily for about a minute. The government is behind flying cars, with the goal of having people zipping around in them by the 2030s.

10. INJURIES DON'T STOP YANKEES FROM WINNING

A makeshift Yankees lineup pounded David Price in a 7-4 victory Sunday night that sent the defending World Series champion Boston Red Sox to their eighth consecutive defeat.

Trump tweets, stays out of sight for hours after shootings

By **JONATHAN LEMIRE** Associated Press

BRIDGEWATER, N.J. (AP) — As the nation reeled from two mass shootings in less than a day, President Donald Trump spent the first hours after the tragedies out of sight at his New Jersey golf course, sending out tweets of support awkwardly mixed in with those promoting a celebrity fight and attacking his political foes.

Americans did not glimpse the Republican president in the immediate aftermath of a shooting in El Paso, Texas, that killed at least 20 people and, hours later, one in Dayton, Ohio, that claimed at least nine lives. Not until Trump and the first lady prepared to fly back to Washington in the late afternoon Sunday did he appear before cameras.

"Hate has no place in our country, and we're going to take care of it," Trump declared before boarding Air Force One.

While connecting "hate" and mental illness to the shootings, Trump made no direct mention of gun laws, a factor brought up by Democratic officials and those seeking their party's nomination to challenge Trump's reelection next year. He also ignored questions about the anti-immigration language in a manifesto written by the El Paso shooter that mirrors some of his own.

Trump tried to assure Americans he was dealing with the problem and defended his administration in light of criticism following the latest in a string of mass shootings.

"We have done much more than most administrations," he said, without elaboration. "We have done actually a lot. But perhaps more has to be done."

Never seemingly comfortable consoling a nation in grief, Trump will be carefully watched for his response to the attacks, again inviting comparison to his predecessors who have tried to heal the country in moments of national trauma.

Investigators focused on whether the El Paso attack was a hate crime after the emergence of a racist, anti-immigrant screed that was posted online shortly beforehand. Detectives sought to determine if it was written by the man who was arrested.

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In recent weeks, the president has issued racist tweets about four women of color who serve in Congress, and in rallies has spoken of an "invasion" at the southern border. His reelection strategy has placed racial animus at the forefront in an effort that his aides say is designed to activate his base of conservative voters, an approach not seen by an American president in the modern era.

Trump also has been widely criticized for offering a false equivalency when discussing racial violence, notably when he said there were "very fine people, on both sides," after a white supremacist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, that resulted in the death of an anti-racism demonstrator.

The shootings will likely complicate that strategy, and Democrats who are campaigning to deny Trump a second term were quick to lay blame at the president's feet.

"You reap what you sow, and he is sowing seeds of hate in this country. This harvest of hate violence we're seeing right now lies at his feet," Sen. Cory Booker of New Jersey said on NBC's "Meet the Press." "He is responsible."

White House aides said the president has been receiving updates about both shootings.

"The FBI, local and state law enforcement are working together in El Paso and in Dayton, Ohio," Trump tweeted Sunday morning. "God bless the people of El Paso Texas. God bless the people of Dayton, Ohio."

His first tweet after the El Paso shooting on Saturday hit similar notes, with Trump calling it "terrible" and promising the full support of the federal government. But just 14 minutes later, he tweeted again, a discordant post wishing UFC fighter Colby Covington, a Trump supporter, good luck in his fight that evening. That was soon followed up with a pair of retweets of African American supporters offering testimonials to Trump's policies helping black voters, though the president polls very poorly with black people.

Trump's two eldest sons attended the UFC fight, while social media photos show that Trump stopped by a wedding at his Bedminster club on Saturday night.

The motive for the Dayton shooting, which happened in a popular nightlife district, was not immediately known. But Democrats pointed to the El Paso attack and blamed Trump for his incendiary rhetoric about immigrants that they say fosters an atmosphere of hate and violence.

Federal officials said they were treating the El Paso attack as a domestic terrorism case.

Trump's language about immigrants, and his hardline policies, loomed over the El Paso shooting.

He has described groups of immigrants as "infestations," declared in his campaign kickoff that many of those coming from Mexico were "rapists," deemed a caravan of Hispanic migrants as invaders and wondered why the United States accepted so many immigrants from "shithole countries" like Haiti, El Salvador and African nations. Critics also point to his campaign proposal to ban all Muslims from entering the United States, his suggestion that President Barack Obama was not born in the United States and his administration's efforts to curtail asylum and separate immigrant children from their parents at the border.

The president also has repeatedly been denounced for being slow to criticize acts of violence carried out by white nationalists, or deem them acts of domestic terrorism, most notably when he declared there were good people on "both sides" of the deadly clash in Charlottesville in 2017. The number of hate groups has surged to record highs under Trump's presidency, according to the Southern Poverty Law Center.

"He is encouraging this. He doesn't just tolerate it; he encourages it. Folks are responding to this. It doesn't just offend us, it encourages the kind of violence that we're seeing, including in my home town of El Paso yesterday," former Rep. Beto O'Rourke, a 2020 Democratic contender, said on CNN's "State of the Union." "He is an open, avowed racist and is encouraging more racism in this country. And this is incredibly dangerous for the United States of America right now."

Other Democratic candidates also slammed Trump's lack of response.

"We must come together to reject this dangerous and growing culture of bigotry espoused by Trump and his allies," tweeted Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont. "Instead of wasting money putting children in cages, we must seriously address the scourge of violent bigotry and domestic terrorism."

And Pete Buttigieg said Trump is "condoning and encouraging white nationalism."

"It is very clear that this kind of hate is being legitimized from on high," Buttigieg, the mayor of South Bend, Indiana, said in an interview on CNN.

Trump ordered flags to be lowered in remembrance of both shootings.

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Acting White House chief of staff Mick Mulvaney defended the president's response, saying Trump was "a combination of saddened by this and he's angry about it." Mulvaney told ABC's "This Week" that Trump's first call was "to the attorney general to find out what we could do to prevent this type of thing from happening."

"These are sick people," he said. "And we need to figure out what we can do to make sure this doesn't happen again."

Mulvaney focused on the challenges of mental illness and largely dodged the notion of supporting widespread gun control measures, though he pointed out the administration banned bump stocks, which help turn semi-automatic weapons into even more lethal automatic ones. Trump, who has enjoyed deep support from the National Rifle Association gun lobbying group, has stayed away from most gun control measures, including after being personally lobbied by survivors of last year's school shooting in Parkland, Florida.

The top Democrat in the Senate, Chuck Schumer, urged Majority Leader Mitch McConnell to call an emergency session to put a House-passed bill on universal background checks up for debate and a vote "immediately."

White House officials said there were no immediate plans for Trump to address the nation. Trump said Sunday he would be giving a statement on the situation Monday morning.

Other presidents have used the aftermath of a national tragedy to reassure citizens, including when George W. Bush visited a mosque less than a week after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks to stand up for Muslims in the United States and when Obama spoke emotionally after mass shootings at the Sandy Hook school in Newtown, Connecticut, and a Charleston, South Carolina, church.

Trump has struggled to convey such empathy and support, and drew widespread criticism when he tossed paper towels like basketballs to hurricane victims in Puerto Rico. He has also, at times, seemed to welcome violence toward immigrants. At a May rally in Panama City Beach, Florida, Trump bemoaned legal protections for migrants and asked rhetorically, "How do you stop these people?"

"Shoot them!" cried one audience member.

Trump chuckled and said, "Only in the Panhandle you can get away with that statement."

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UN investigates staffers in Yemen for graft in aid efforts

By **MAGGIE MICHAEL** Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — The United Nations investigators assembled in the departure hall of Sanaa's airport were preparing to leave with precious evidence: laptops and external drives collected from the staff of the World Health Organization.

These computers, they believed, contained proof of corruption and fraud within the U.N. agency's office in Yemen.

But before they could board their flight out, armed militiamen from the Houthi rebels ruling northern Yemen marched into the hall and confiscated the computers, according to six former and current aid officials.

The stunned investigators were left unharmed, but flew out without the telltale devices.

The Houthis had been tipped off by a WHO staffer with connections to the rebel movement who feared her theft of aid funding would be uncovered, according to the six former and current officials who spoke on condition of anonymity because the seizure of the computers had not previously been made public.

The October 2018 scene at the Sanaa airport is another episode in the continuing struggle over corruption that has diverted donated food, medicine, fuel and money from desperate Yemenis amid their country's five-year civil war.

More than a dozen U.N. aid workers deployed to deal with the wartime humanitarian crisis have been accused of joining with combatants on all sides to enrich themselves from the billions of dollars in donated aid flowing into the country, according to individuals with knowledge of internal U.N. investigations and confidential documents reviewed by The Associated Press.

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The AP obtained U.N. investigative documents, and interviewed eight aid workers and former government officials.

The upshot: WHO internal auditors are investigating allegations that unqualified people were placed in high-paying jobs, millions of dollars were deposited in staffers' personal bank accounts, dozens of suspicious contracts were approved without the proper paperwork, and tons of donated medicine and fuel went missing.

A second probe by another U.N. agency, UNICEF, focuses on a staffer who allowed a Houthi rebel leader to travel in agency vehicles, shielding him from potential airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition. The individuals who spoke to AP about the investigations did so on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals.

Yemeni activists said the actions by the U.N. agencies are welcome but fall short of the kind of investigation needed to track the millions of dollars in supplies and money from aid programs that have gone missing or been diverted to the coffers of local officials on both sides of the conflict since the start of the civil war.

Over the past three months, the activists have been pushing for aid transparency in an online campaign called "Where Is The Money?" They demand that U.N. and international agencies provide financial reports on how the hundreds of millions of dollars pouring into Yemen since 2015 have been spent. Last year, the agency said international donors pledged \$2 billion for humanitarian efforts in Yemen.

The U.N. has responded with an online campaign of its own called "Check Our Results," showing programs implemented in Yemen. The campaign does not provide detailed financial reports on how aid money is spent.

"We see big numbers, billions of dollars reaching Yemen, and we don't know where they go," Feda Yahia, a "Where is the Money?" activist, said in a video for the campaign.

The WHO probe of its Yemen office began in November with allegations of financial mismanagement against Nevio Zagaria, an Italian doctor, who was chief of the agency's Sanaa office from 2016 until September 2018, according to three individuals with direct knowledge of the investigation.

The only public announcement of the probe came in a sentence buried in the 37 pages of the internal auditor's 2018 annual report of activities worldwide. The report did not mention Zagaria by name.

The report, released May 1, found that financial and administrative controls in the Yemen office were "unsatisfactory" — its lowest rating — and noted hiring irregularities, no-competition contracts and lack of monitoring over procurement.

WHO spokesman Tarik Jasarevic confirmed to the AP that the investigation is underway. He said Zagaria retired in September 2018, but he would not confirm or deny that Zagaria specifically was under investigation.

"The Office of Internal Oversight Services is currently investigating all concerns raised," he said. "We must respect the confidentiality of this process and are unable to go into details on specific concerns."

Zagaria did not respond to emailed questions from the AP.

Zagaria, a 20-year WHO employee, arrived in Yemen in December 2016, after a four-year stint in the Philippines. He had earned widespread acclaim for his handling of the agency's response to Typhoon Haiyan in November 2013.

Because of his work during the typhoon, Zagaria seemed the perfect person to lead the agency's humanitarian efforts in Yemen, a massive operation, providing support for more than 1,700 hospitals and health centers around the country.

But from the beginning, six current and former workers said, the WHO's Yemen office under Zagaria was riddled with corruption and nepotism.

Zagaria brought in junior staffers who worked with him in the Philippines and promoted them to high-salary posts that they were not qualified for, three individuals said.

Two of them — a Filipino university student and a former intern — were given senior posts, but their only role was to take care of Zagaria's dog, two of the officials said.

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"Incompetent staff with heavy salaries" undermined the quality of work and monitoring of projects and created "many loopholes for corruption," a former aid official said.

Zagaria also allegedly approved suspicious contracts signed by staffers with no competitive bidding or documentation for the spending, according to internal documents reviewed by the AP.

The documents show that local firms contracted to provide services at WHO's Aden office were later found to have hired WHO staffers' friends and family and overcharged for services. The owner of one firm was seen handing cash to one staffer, the documents show — an apparent kickback.

Four people aware of the activities in the office said a WHO staffer named Tamima al-Ghuly was the one who notified the Houthis that the investigators were leaving with the laptops. They said she had been fabricating payrolls, adding ghost employees and collecting their salaries or taking cash to hire people. Among those she put on the payroll was her husband, a member of a leading Houthi family, they said.

Al-Ghuly has since been suspended, but remains a WHO employee, according to an individual with direct knowledge of the incident. She did not respond to AP's attempts to reach her.

Under Zagaria, aid funds meant to be spent during emergencies were also used with little accountability or monitoring, according to internal documents.

Under WHO rules, aid money can be transferred directly into the accounts of staffers, a measure meant to speed up the purchasing of goods and services in a crisis. The WHO says the arrangement is needed to keep operations going in remote areas because Yemen's banking sector is not fully functioning.

Because they are supposed to be restricted to emergencies, there is no requirement that spending of these direct transfers be itemized. Zagaria approved direct transfers of cash worth a total of \$1 million for certain staffers, according to internal documents. But in many cases it was unclear how they spent the money.

Omar Zein, a deputy head of the agency's Aden branch who worked under Zagaria, received several hundred thousand dollars in aid money to his personal account, according to interviews with officials and internal documents. But Zein could not explain what happened to more than half of the money, internal documents show.

Four individuals with direct knowledge of the aid operations in southern Yemen said that even as Zein held his WHO position, he also served as an official adviser to the health minister in the Aden-based government and ran his own private nonprofit that had a \$1.3 million contract with the U.N. to run nutritional programs in the southern city of Mukalla. These arrangements created conflicts of interest, the individuals said.

UNICEF later refused to renew the contract with Zein's nonprofit after discovering the organization was fabricating reports and had no actual presence on the ground in the city of Mukalla, two individuals with knowledge of the programs said.

When contacted by the AP, Zein declined comment and said he had left his post at the health ministry.

Asked if he were under investigation for corruption, he said, "The one who leaked this to you can provide you an answer."

WHO isn't the only U.N. agency looking into allegations of wrongdoing by its staffers in Yemen.

According to three people with knowledge of the probe, UNICEF is investigating Khurram Javed, a Pakistani national who is suspected of letting a senior Houthi official use an agency vehicle.

That effectively gave the Houthi official protection from airstrikes by the Saudi-led coalition fighting the Houthis, since UNICEF clears its vehicles' movements with the coalition to ensure their safety. Officials say they fear the agency's vehicles could be targeted by airstrikes if coalition forces believe they are being used to shield Houthi rebels.

Javed was well known for his close ties to Houthi security agencies; he boasted that he used his connection to prevent UNICEF auditors from entering the country, a former co-worker and an aid official said. The Houthi rebels even put up a large billboard of him on a Sanaa street, thanking him for his services.

Javed could not be reached for comment. UNICEF officials confirmed that as part of an ongoing probe,

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an investigative team had traveled to Yemen to look into the allegations. They said Javed has been transferred to another office but did not disclose the location.

According to several people who spoke to the AP, close ties between U.N. staffers and local officials on both sides of the conflict are common.

A confidential report by a U.N. panel of experts on Yemen, obtained by the AP, said Houthi authorities constantly pressure aid agencies, forcing them to hire loyalists, intimidating them with threats to revoke visas and aiming to control their movements and project implementation.

Officials said it's unclear how many staffers may be aiding combatants. The officials said several incidents in recent years indicate the U.N. staffers may have been involved in the theft of aid supplies.

Internal U.N. reports from 2016 and 2017 obtained by the AP show several incidents where trucks carrying medical supplies were hijacked by Houthi rebels in the battleground province of Taiz. The supplies were later given to Houthi fighters on the front lines fighting the Saudi-led coalition or sold in pharmacies in territory controlled by the rebel group.

An official who help draft the reports said it was "obvious there were some individuals who were working with Houthis behind the scene because there was coordination on the movement of trucks."

Another official said the U.N.'s inability or unwillingness to address the alleged corruption in its aid programs harms the agency's efforts to help Yemenis affected by the war.

"This is scandalous to any agency and ruins the impartiality of U.N.," the aid official said.

Classmates: Ohio shooter kept a 'hit list' and a 'rape list'

By MICHAEL BIESECKER and JULIE CARR SMYTH Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio (AP) — High school classmates of the gunman who killed nine people early Sunday in Dayton, Ohio, say he was suspended for compiling a "hit list" of those he wanted to kill and a "rape list" of girls he wanted to sexually assault.

The accounts by two former classmates emerged after police said there was nothing in the background of 24-year-old Connor Betts that would have prevented him from purchasing the .223-caliber rifle with extended ammunition magazines that he used to open fire outside a crowded bar. Police on patrol in the entertainment district fatally shot him less than a minute later.

Both former classmates told The Associated Press that Betts was suspended during their junior year at suburban Bellbrook High School after a hit list was found scrawled in a school bathroom. That followed an earlier suspension after Betts came to school with a list of female students he wanted to sexually assault, according to the two classmates, a man and a woman who are both now 24 and spoke on condition of anonymity out of concern they might face harassment.

"There was a kill list and a rape list, and my name was on the rape list," said the female classmate.

A former cheerleader, the woman said she didn't really know Betts and was surprised when a police officer called her cellphone during her freshman year to tell her that her name was included on a list of potential targets.

"The officer said he wouldn't be at school for a while," she said. "But after some time passed he was back, walking the halls. They didn't give us any warning that he was returning to school."

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools officials declined to comment on those accounts, only confirming that Betts attended schools in the district.

The discovery of the hit list early in 2012 sparked a police investigation, and roughly one-third of Bellbrook students skipped school out of fear, according to an article in the Dayton Daily News.

It's not clear what became of that investigation. Chief Michael Brown in Sugarcreek Township, which has jurisdiction over the Bellbrook school, did not return calls Sunday about whether his agency investigated the hit list.

Though Betts, who was 17 at the time, was not named publicly by authorities at the time as the author of the list, the former classmates said it was common knowledge within the school he was the one suspended over the incident.

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Drew Gainey was among those who went on social media Sunday to say red flags were raised about Betts' behavior years ago.

"There was an incident in high school with this shooter that should have prevented him from ever getting his hands on a weapon. This was a tragedy that was 100% avoidable," he wrote on in a Twitter post on Sunday.

Gainey did not respond to messages from AP seeking further comment, but the name on his account matches that of a former Bellbrook student who was on the track team with Betts.

Former Bellbrook Principal Chris Baker said he "would not dispute that information" when the Daily News asked him Sunday about the hit list suspension. He declined to comment further to the newspaper and the AP was unable to reach him.

Betts had no apparent criminal record as an adult, though if he had been charged as a juvenile that would typically be sealed under state law.

"There's nothing in this individual's record that would have precluded him from getting these weapons," Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl said Sunday.

Not everyone who went to school with Betts had bad things to say. Brad Howard told reporters in Bellbrook on Sunday that he was friends with Betts from preschool through their high school graduation.

"Connor Betts that I knew was a nice kid. The Connor Betts that I talked to, I always got along with well," Howard said.

Mike Kern, a customer at the gas station where Betts used to work in Bellbrook, said he hasn't seen Betts in about a year.

"He was the nicest kid you could imagine," always friendly, Kern said. "I never heard him talk about violence, say a racist word, or anything like that."

He said they sometimes played trivia at a bar near the gas station, and Betts often knew the answers on questions about current events and pop culture.

"He was real smart," Kern said. "He knew all the answers."

Biesecker reported from Washington. AP reporters Reese Dunklin in Dallas, John Seewer in Bellbrook and Michael Kunzelman in Silver Spring, Maryland, contributed to this report.

Security cut off for 'cesspool of hate' 8chan forum

NEW YORK (AP) — An online message board accused of hosting extremist content was temporarily inaccessible Monday after its cybersecurity provider cut off support for a "cesspool of hate" following mass shootings in Texas and Ohio.

8chan returned an error message after midnight California time, when Cloudflare Inc. said its support would end. There was no immediate explanation, but lack of security support would leave the site open to online attacks that might block access.

Police are investigating commentary posted on 8chan that is believed to have been written by the suspect in a shooting Saturday that killed 20 people in El Paso, Texas.

8chan's operators said on Twitter that there might be "some downtime" for 24 to 48 hours while they looked for a solution.

The suspect in El Paso "appears to have been inspired" by discussions on 8chan, said Cloudflare CEO Matthew Prince in a blog post on his company's site. He said a suspect in an earlier shooting at a synagogue in Poway, California, also posted a "hate-filled 'open letter'" on 8chan.

"8chan has repeatedly proven itself to be a cesspool of hate," wrote Prince. "They have proven themselves to be lawless and that lawlessness has caused multiple tragic deaths."

Shooting victims include a mom who died protecting her baby

By MORGAN LEE and AMY GUTHRIE Associated Press

In the border town of El Paso, Texas, a shooter opened fire and left 20 people dead and more than two dozen injured. Hours later in Dayton, Ohio, a shooter killed 9 people and injured at least 27 others.

Here are some of their stories:

JORDAN ANCHONDO: 'GAVE HER LIFE' FOR HER BABY

Jordan Anchondo was among those killed in El Paso, Anchondo's sister said, and she apparently died while protecting her 2-month-old son from the hail of bullets.

Leta Jamrowski of El Paso spoke to The Associated Press as she paced a waiting room at the University Medical Center of El Paso, where her 2-month-old nephew was being treated for broken bones — the result of his mother's fall.

"From the baby's injuries, they said that more than likely my sister was trying to shield him," she said. "So when she got shot she was holding him and she fell on him, so that's why he broke some of his bones. So he pretty much lived because she gave her life."

Jordan, a mother of three, and Andre Anchondo had dropped off her 5-year old daughter at cheerleading practice before going to shop for school supplies on Saturday at a Walmart in El Paso. They never returned.

ANDRE ANCHONDO: HAD TURNED HIS LIFE AROUND

Andre Anchondo — the husband of Jordan Anchondo, who was also killed in El Paso — had recently turned his life around after struggles with drug dependence and run-ins with the law, a friend recalled.

On Sunday night, John Jamrowski, the grandfather of Jordan Anchondo, said in a text message that his family has been notified of the death of Andre Anchondo.

The death of Jordan Anchondo was confirmed in the hours after the attack, but the family agonized as investigators waited to confirm more than a dozen other deaths.

Koteiba "Koti" Azzam, a friend of Andre Anchondo, had fond memories of him.

"I love the guy," Azzam said in a phone interview from San Marcos, Texas, where he attends Texas State University. "He had the character and the charisma."

Azzam said Andre Anchondo had started a business in El Paso, building things from granite and stone, and made it successful through hard work. He also was on the verge of completing a home for his family.

"It makes you question your faith almost," said Azzam, who is Muslim. "But God didn't have a part in it. The hands of man altered my friend's life in a drastic way."

NICHOLAS CUMER: HAD HELPED CANCER PATIENTS

A graduate student at a university in Pennsylvania who was interning with a facility in Dayton for people battling cancer was among those killed in the Ohio city early Sunday.

Nicholas Cumer was a graduate student in the master of cancer care program at Saint Francis University.

"Nicholas was dedicated to caring for others," university President Malachi Van Tassell said in a statement. The university, in Loretto, Pennsylvania, is the oldest Franciscan institution of higher learning in the United States.

The family released the following statement through a relative: "We are heartbroken by the loss of our Nicholas in this senseless act on August 4. As our family grieves, we ask for privacy at this time. Thank you."

Cumer had been in Dayton as part of his internship program with the Maple Tree Cancer Alliance, which strives to improve the quality of life for individuals battling cancer through exercise, nutrition, and faith.

Maple Tree Cancer Alliance offered Cumer a full-time position just days before he was killed, the organization said on its website. It described Cumer as hard-working, dedicated and one week away from completing his internship.

"He was well liked and respected by everyone on our team, and we all will miss him very much," the organization said.

Van Tassell said a Mass in Cumer's memory will be arranged on campus this week.

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LOIS OGLESBY: A NURSING STUDENT WHO WANTED TO CARE FOR CHILDREN

Lois Oglesby, 27, was in nursing school and looked forward to a career that would make the most of her love for children, her cousin said. She was also the mother of a newborn and had an older daughter.

Derasha Merrett told the Dayton Daily News that she was up feeding her own newborn when a friend called her at 3 a.m. Sunday to tell her, through sobs, that Oglesby had died in the Dayton shooting.

"She was a wonderful mother, a wonderful person," Merrett said. "I have cried so much, I can't cry anymore."

Merrett said she and her cousin grew up in the same church, were on the same drill team and that Oglesby worked at her children's day care center.

"We all grew up in this little town, Merrett said. "We're all family."

JESSICA COCA GARCIA and MEMO GARCIA: FUNDRAISING FOR KIDS' SPORTS TEAM

Jessica Coca Garcia and Memo Garcia were at the Walmart in El Paso to raise funds for a youth sports team one of their children played on when a gunman opened fire, wounding them, a relative said.

Norma Coca told Wichita, Kansas-television station KWCH that her daughter and son-in-law were near the front doors of the Walmart when they were shot.

Coca, who lives in Salina, Kansas, said her daughter, Jessica Coca Garcia, was shot three times in the leg. She said her son-in-law, Memo Garcia, was shot twice in the leg and once in the back. She said her daughter was in stable condition and her son-in-law was in critical condition.

Jessica Coca Garcia's father, Don Coca, said they have family in the El Paso area who were able to be with the couple. Don Coca says: "She was just crying ... I told her that our prayers are there and we're on our way."

The couple's 5-year-old son and 11-year-old daughter were also at the Walmart and were not shot.

MARIO DE ALBA: A WOUNDED FATHER

Mario de Alba, 45, had come to El Paso with his family from Mexico to go shopping.

Described by his sister Cristina de Alba as an "excellent father" and as a "decent, hardworking person," he was in serious condition Sunday after being shot in the back, the bullet exiting via his diaphragm.

His wife, Olivia Mariscal, and 10-year-old daughter Erika both appear to be recovering after also being wounded, de Alba said from the El Paso hospital where her brother is being treated.

The family lives in Chihuahua, Mexico -- a four-hour drive south of El Paso -- and was buying school supplies in the Texas city. El Paso is a popular shopping destination for people who live in northern Mexico.

Mario de Alba's Facebook page shows him as a devoted father to Erika.

In one picture, taken in a living room, Erika cups her hand in the shape of a heart in front of an entertainment center. On the shelves behind her are the words FAMILY and PEACE in bold letters.

MEXICAN GOVERNMENT IDENTIFIES FIVE CITIZENS KILLED IN EL PASO

Mexico's Foreign Ministry identified five citizens who were killed in the shooting Saturday in a shopping complex in El Paso. The ministry did not provide ages for them. They are:

- Sara Esther Regalado of Ciudad Juarez.
- Adolfo Cerros Hernández of Aguascalientes.
- Jorge Calvillo García of Torreón.
- Elsa Mendoza de la Mora of Yepomera.
- Gloria Irma Márquez of Juárez.

Lee reported from El Paso. Guthrie reported from Mexico City. AP reporters Jamie Stengle in Dallas, Andrew Selsky in Salem, Oregon, Lisa Cornwell in Cincinnati, Ohio, and Becky Bohrer in Juneau, Alaska, contributed to this report.

Hate ruled out, but motive still a mystery in Dayton attack

By JOHN SEEWER, DAN SEWELL and JOHN MINCHILLO Associated Press

DAYTON, Ohio (AP) — As authorities in Ohio try to pin down a motive for the weekend's second U.S. mass shooting and dig into the slain shooter's life, what they find might also help answer another big question looming over the tragedy: What, if anything, could have stopped it?

Police say the gunman was wearing a mask and body armor when he shot and killed his younger sister and eight others after the pair had arrived together with a friend earlier Saturday evening at a popular entertainment district packed with people.

It all happened within 30 seconds, before police officers stationed nearby shot and killed 24-year-old Connor Betts, who was armed with a .223-caliber rifle with magazines capable of holding at least 100 rounds of ammunition, said Dayton Police Chief Richard Biehl.

What's not known is whether Betts targeted any of the victims, including his 22-year-old sister, Megan, the youngest of the dead.

While the gunman was white and six of the nine killed were black, police said the quickness of the rampage made any discrimination in the shooting seem unlikely.

Any attempt to suggest a motive so early in the investigation would be irresponsible, the police chief said.

Surveillance video shared by police showed officers shot Betts at the doorstep of further destruction, stopping him from entering a bar where some people took cover when the chaos broke out around 1 a.m. Sunday in Dayton's historic Oregon District.

Had he gotten inside the bar, the result would have been "catastrophic," Biehl said.

Anthony Reynolds, 31, said the first gunshot "was kind of an echo because of the buildings. Then it was rapid, rapid. People were just falling."

Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine visited the scene Sunday and said policymakers must now consider: "Is there anything we can do in the future to make sure something like this does not happen?"

But hours later hundreds of people, mostly young adults, stood shoulder-to-shoulder Sunday night at a vigil and vented their frustration at the Republican governor, interrupting him with chants of "Make a change!" and "Do something!" as he talked about the victims.

"People are angry, and they're upset. They should be," said Jennifer Alfrey, 24, of Middletown, who added that she didn't agree with interrupting the vigil but understood why so many did.

Mayor Nan Whaley, a Democrat, said there would be time later for dealing with policy issues and implored the crowd to honor the victims.

Whaley noted at a news conference that the city was still recovering from tornadoes that swept through western Ohio in late May, destroying or damaging hundreds of homes and businesses.

"What really goes through my mind is one seems completely preventable," she said. "When is enough enough?"

Ohio's two U.S. senators visited the scene of the mass shooting. Democratic Sen. Sherrod Brown said responding with thoughts and prayers is not enough and stronger gun safety laws are needed. Republican Sen. Rob Portman said the discussion must include not just policy changes, but issues such as mental health support.

Police have said there was nothing in Betts' background that would have prevented him from buying the rifle used in the shooting. They said they also found a shotgun in his car.

Authorities identified the other dead as Monica Brickhouse, 39; Nicholas Cumer, 25; Derrick Fudge, 57; Thomas McNichols, 25; Lois Oglesby, 27; Saeed Saleh, 38; Logan Turner, 30; and Beatrice N. Warren-Curtis, 36.

At least 15 of the 27 more people known to have been treated for injuries had been released, according to city officials. Some suffered multiple gunshot wounds and others were injured as they fled, hospital officials said.

Conflicting accounts of the shooter have emerged.

To some, Betts was known as a friendly guy who sometimes stopped for a beer or two at a bar southeast

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of Dayton in Bellbrook, a short drive from his home.

Bartender Andy Baker said Betts was at Romer's Bar & Grill last Monday and seemed fine. Fellow customer Mike Kern said he sometimes played trivia at Romer's with Betts, who was good for answers about current events and pop culture and was "the kind of kid you'd want as a son."

"I never heard him talk about violence, say a racist word, or anything like that," Kern said.

But high school classmates said he was suspended for compiling a "hit list" of those he wanted to kill and a "rape list" of girls he wanted to sexually assault.

Both former classmates told The Associated Press that Betts was suspended during their junior year at suburban Bellbrook High School after a hit list was found scrawled in a school bathroom. That followed an earlier suspension after Betts came to school with a list of female students he wanted to sexually assault, according to the two classmates, a man and a woman who are both now 24 and spoke on condition of anonymity out of concern they might face harassment.

A former cheerleader, the woman said she didn't really know Betts and was surprised when a police officer called her cellphone during her freshman year to tell her that her name was included on a list of potential targets.

"The officer said he wouldn't be at school for a while," she said. "But after some time passed he was back, walking the halls. They didn't give us any warning that he was returning to school."

Bellbrook-Sugarcreek Schools officials declined to comment on those accounts, only confirming that Betts attended schools in the district. Bellbrook Police Chief Doug Doherty said he and his officers had no previous contact with Betts and weren't aware of any history of violence, including during high school.

Betts had no apparent criminal record as an adult. If he had been charged as a juvenile, that would typically be sealed under state law.

President Donald Trump was briefed on the shooting and praised law enforcement's speedy response in a tweet Sunday. The FBI is assisting with the investigation.

The Ohio shooting came hours after a young man opened fire in a crowded El Paso, Texas, shopping area, leaving 20 dead and more than two dozen injured. Just days before, on July 28, a 19-year-old shot and killed three people, including two children, at the Gilroy Garlic Festival in Northern California.

Sunday's shooting in Dayton is the 22nd mass killing of 2019 in the U.S., according to the AP/USA Today/Northeastern University mass murder database that tracks homicides where four or more people were killed — not including the offender. The 20 mass killings in the U.S. in 2019 that preceded this weekend claimed 96 lives.

Associated Press writers Julie Carr Smyth in Dayton, Michael Balsamo in Orlando, Florida, and Kantele Franko in Columbus contributed to this report.

US, South Korea prepare military drills despite North's ire

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — South Korea and the United States are preparing to hold their annual joint military exercises despite warnings from North Korea that the drills could derail fragile nuclear diplomacy, Seoul's military said Monday.

Choi Hyun-soo, spokeswoman of Seoul's Defense Ministry, said the exercises will be focused on verifying Seoul's capabilities for its planned retaking of wartime operational control of its troops from Washington. She did not confirm or deny reports that the drills, which are expected to be computer simulated and not involve actual combat troops and equipment, began on Monday.

North Korea recently has been ramping up its weapons tests, including two test firings of what it described as a new rocket artillery system last week, while expressing frustration over the continuance of U.S.-South Korea drills it sees as an invasion rehearsal and also the slow pace of nuclear negotiations with the United States.

North Korea had said it will wait to see if the August exercises actually take place to decide on the fate

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of its diplomacy with the United States and also whether to continue its unilateral suspension of nuclear and long-range missile tests, which leader Kim Jong Un announced last year amid a diplomatic outreach to Washington.

The allies have scaled down their major military exercises and also stopped regional dispatches of U.S. strategic assets such as long-range bombers and aircraft carriers since the first summit between Kim and President Donald Trump in Singapore in June last year to create space for diplomacy.

The North insists even the downsized drills violate agreements between Kim and Trump, who in Singapore vowed to improve bilateral ties and issued a vague statement on a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula without describing when and how it would occur.

Nuclear negotiations have been on a standstill since the collapse of the second Trump-Kim summit in Vietnam in February over disagreements in exchanging sanctions relief and disarmament.

The North's recent weapons tests, which also included a short-range ballistic missile test on July 25 it described as a "solemn warning" to South Korea over its planned military drills with the United States, have dampened the optimism that followed the third summit between Trump and Kim on June 30 at the inter-Korean border. The leaders agreed to resume working-level nuclear talks that stalled since February, but there have been no known meetings between the two sides since then.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump's boast on judges; Dem debate misfires

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In his typically boastful rally this past week, Donald Trump placed himself too high in the pantheon of presidents when it comes to getting his judicial picks on federal courts. He's been having a good run on that front but he's not where he said he is — ranking right under George Washington, no less.

Much of the week was filled with the cacophony of Democratic presidential candidates having their say on the debate stage. Their pronouncements did not always fit with the facts. They skewed reality on climate science, immigration policy, the auto industry and more.

A review:

JUDGES

TRUMP, on his record of filling federal judicial appointments: "There's only one person ... who percentage-wise has done better than me with judges." — Cincinnati rally Thursday.

THE FACTS: No, at least four have done better.

Trump is properly ceding first place to George Washington, who had a judiciary entirely made up of his choices simply because he was the first president. But he's not acknowledging that at least three modern presidents had a better record than Trump of getting their judicial choices on the courts. Russell Wheeler, a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution and former deputy director of the Federal Judicial Center, has been keeping track.

He found that Trump's confirmed judges make up 17% of total federal judgeships. At this point in their presidencies, John Kennedy had filled 30% of the federal judiciary, Bill Clinton had filled 20% and Nixon had filled 25%.

CLIMATE

BETO O'ROURKE, former U.S. representative from Texas, on global warming: "I listen to scientists on this and they're very clear: We don't have more than 10 years to get this right. And we won't meet that challenge with half-steps, half-measures or only half the country." — Democratic debate Tuesday.

PETE BUTTIGIEG, mayor of South Bend, Indiana: "Science tells us we have 12 years before we reach the horizon of our catastrophe when it comes to our climate." — Democratic debate Tuesday.

ANDREW YANG, entrepreneur: "This is going to be a tough truth, but we are too late. We are 10 years too late." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

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THE FACTS: These statements are out of step with science. Climate scientists don't agree on an approximate time frame, let alone an exact number of years, for how much time we have left to stave off the deadliest extremes of climate change. Nor do they think it's too late already.

A report by the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, drawn from the work of hundreds of scientists, uses 2030 as a prominent benchmark because signatories to the Paris climate change agreement have pledged emission cuts by then. But it's not a last-chance, hard deadline for action, as O'Rourke, Buttigieg and others have interpreted it.

"The hotter it gets, the worse it gets, but there is no cliff edge," James Skea, co-chairman of the report, told The Associated Press.

Climate scientists certainly see the necessity for broad and immediate action to address global warming, but they do not agree that 2030 is a "point of no return," as Buttigieg put it.

"This has been a persistent source of confusion," agreed Kristie L. Ebi, director of the Center for Health and the Global Environment at the University of Washington in Seattle. "The report never said we only have 12 years left."

IMMIGRATION

KAMALA HARRIS, senator from California: "We've got a person who has put babies in cages and separated children from their parents." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

MICHAEL BENNET, senator from Colorado, in a message directed at Trump: "Kids belong in classrooms not cages." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

TRUMP: "The cages for kids were built by the Obama Administration in 2014. He had the policy of child separation. I ended it even as I realized that more families would then come to the Border!" — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: There's deception on both sides here.

Family separations as a matter of routine came about because of Trump's "zero tolerance" enforcement policy. President Barack Obama had no such policy and Trump's repeated attempts to pin one on him flies in the face of reality. Trump only ended — or suspended — what Trump had started, and that was after a judge ordered that the practice be sharply curtailed and as an international uproar grew.

Moreover, the American Civil Liberties Union now says in a legal challenge that more than 900 children were separated from their parents at the border in the year after the judge's order.

The Obama administration also separated migrant children from families when a child's safety appeared at risk with the adults or in other limited circumstances. But the ACLU says children have been removed after the judge's order for minor transgressions by the adults, like traffic offenses, or for unfounded suspicions of wrongdoing.

Trump, though, is correct in noting that the "cages" — chain-link enclosures inside border facilities where migrants have been temporarily housed, separated by sex and age — were built and used by the Obama administration. Democrats routinely ignore that fact when they assail Trump for what they call the cruelty of putting "babies in cages." The Trump administration has been using the same facilities as the Obama administration.

JOE BIDEN, former vice president, on Obama's approach to people who came to the U.S. illegally as children: "The president came along and he's the guy that came up with the idea, first time ever, of dealing with the Dreamers. He put that in the law." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

THE FACTS: He's wrong that Obama achieved a law protecting those young immigrants. He notably failed on that front. Instead he circumvented Congress and used his executive authority to extend temporary protection, letting them stay in the country if they met certain conditions. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program, as its name implies, merely defers deportations.

Trump, also with executive action, tried to end the program but the effort has been tied up in courts, so the protection continues for now.

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CORY BOOKER, senator from New Jersey, on decriminalizing illegal entry at the border: "Doing it through the civil courts means you won't need these awful detention centers that I've been to." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Not exactly. It's true that there could be reduced immigration detention at the border if there were no criminal charge for illegal entry. But border officers would still need to process people coming over the border and that could lead to temporary holding, such as the so-called cages that Democrats call inhumane.

Also, U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement uses detention to hold people awaiting deportation who have been accused or convicted of crimes more serious than illegal entry.

For example, in December 2018, ICE detained 47,486 people, according to an analysis at Syracuse University. Of those, 29,753 had no conviction, and those people probably would not be in detention if illegal entry were a civil issue. But 6,186 had serious crime convictions, 2,237 had other convictions and 9,310 had minor violations, and those people could still be held, according to the analysis.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

BILL DE BLASIO, mayor of New York City, on why he hasn't fired the police officer who used a chokehold on Eric Garner: "For the first time, we are not waiting on the federal Justice Department, which told the city of New York that we could not proceed because the Justice Department was pursuing their prosecution, and years went by and a lot of pain accrued." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

THE FACTS: This is false. The Justice Department did not stop the city from moving forward on the matter. The New York Police Department decided to delay disciplinary proceedings for Officer Daniel Pantaleo on its own accord.

While local officials sometimes defer their investigation as federal prosecutors conduct criminal probes, there was no requirement for the police department to wait for the federal civil rights investigation in weighing a decision about whether to fire Pantaleo. Police Commissioner James O'Neill, who reports to de Blasio, could have fired him at any time.

The Justice Department announced last month that it would not bring any charges in connection with Garner's death. After an internal departmental trial, an administrative judge on Friday recommended that Pantaleo be fired. The officer was suspended pending a decision on whether O'Neill will oust him.

JULIAN CASTRO, former Obama administration housing secretary: "We need to ensure we have a national use of force standard and that we end qualified immunity for police officers so that we can hold them accountable for using excessive force." — Democratic debate Wednesday.

THE FACTS: Castro is correct that qualified immunity, a legal protection shielding public servants from lawsuits for actions they take in the course of their jobs, is a barrier toward holding police officers accountable in court for acts of excessive force.

But officers can nonetheless be criminally prosecuted by state and federal authorities for excessive force.

And qualified immunity is hardly the only hurdle for accountability: sometimes it's the tall burden of proof that stands in the way. The Justice Department brings criminal charges against police officers in cases when it can prove that the officer intentionally violated someone's civil rights by using more force than the law allows. Department officials said they could not make such a case in the investigation Castro and other Democrats were discussing — the 2014 chokehold death in New York of Eric Garner.

ECONOMY and WAGES

TRUMP: "The facts speak far louder than words! The Democrats always play the Race Card, when in fact they have done so little for our Nation's great African American people. Now, lowest unemployment in U.S. history, and only getting better." — tweet on July 28.

THE FACTS: Trump is seeking credit he doesn't deserve for black job growth. He's also wrong to assert that Democrats haven't done anything to improve the economic situation for African Americans.

It's true that black unemployment did reach a record low during the Trump administration: 5.9 percent

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in May 2018. It currently stands at 6 percent.

But many economists view the continued economic growth since the middle of 2009, when Obama was in office, as the primary explanation for hiring. More important, there are multiple signs that the racial wealth gap is now worsening and the administration appears to have done little, if anything, to specifically address this challenge.

African Americans also had higher income prior to the Trump administration. A black household earned median income of \$40,258 in 2017, the latest data available. That's below a 2000 peak of \$42,348, according to the Census Bureau.

The most dramatic drop in black unemployment came under Obama, when it fell from a recession high of 16.8 percent in March 2010 to 7.8 percent in January 2017.

BERNIE SANDERS, Vermont senator: "49 percent of all new income is going to the top 1 percent." — Democratic debate Tuesday.

THE FACTS: That is surely exaggerated. The figure comes from a short paper by Emmanuel Saez, an economist at the University of California, Berkeley, and leading researcher on inequality, and doesn't include the value of fringe benefits, such as health insurance, or the effects of taxes and government benefit programs such as Social Security.

But Saez and another Berkeley economist, Gabriel Zucman, have recently compiled a broader data set that does include those items and finds the top 1% has captured roughly 25% of the income growth since the recession ended. That's certainly a lot lower but still a substantial share. Income inequality has sharply increased in the past four decades, but since the recession, data from the Congressional Budget Office shows that it has actually narrowed slightly.

TIM RYAN, U.S. representative from Ohio: "The economic system that used to create 30, 40, 50 dollar-an-hour jobs that you could have a good solid middle-class living now forces us to have two or three jobs just to get by." — Democratic debate Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Most Americans, by far, only work one job, and the numbers who juggle more than one have declined over a quarter century.

In the mid-1990s, the percentage of workers holding multiple jobs peaked at 6.5%. The rate dropped significantly, even during the Great Recession, and has been hovering for a nearly a decade at about 5% or a little lower. In the latest monthly figures, from June, 5.2% of workers were holding more than one job.

Hispanic and Asian workers are consistently less likely than white and black workers to be holding multiple jobs. Women are more likely to be doing so than men.

HARRIS: "Autoworkers we expect, perhaps, hundreds of thousands will be out of jobs by the end of the year." — Wednesday debate.

THE FACTS: This dire prediction is faulty. The auto industry is not facing the imminent risk of such a collapse.

That might have happened — as a worst-case scenario — if Trump had followed through on threats to enact new tariffs and policies that would have hurt the auto industry. But he didn't.

Harris has been citing the Center for Automotive Research's 2018 study, which examined hypothetical job losses across all U.S. industries touched by the auto business — not just the nation's nearly 1 million autoworkers — if Trump introduced certain tariffs and policies.

The study gave a wide range of possible job losses, from 82,000 to 750,000. The findings were later revised in February to a worst-case scenario of 367,000 across all industries by the end of this year. Those hypothetical job losses would be spread across car and parts makers, dealers, restaurants, retail stores and any business that benefits from the auto industry.

The impact on the auto industry was further minimized when the Trump administration lifted tariffs on steels and aluminum products coming from Canada and Mexico.

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After a record sales year of 17.55 million in 2016, demand has fallen to an expected 16.8 million new vehicle sales this year. But the industry is still posting strong numbers and is not heading off a cliff.

HEALTH CARE

HARRIS: "Right now in America, we have seniors who every day — millions of seniors — are going into the Medicare system." — Wednesday debate.

THE FACTS: It's more like 10,000 people a day who turn 65 and become eligible for Medicare, which offers coverage for hospitalization, doctor visits, prescription drugs and other services.

Medicare covers more than 60 million people, including disabled people of any age.

BIDEN: "We should put some of these insurance executives who totally oppose my plan in jail for the 9 billion opioids they sell out there." — Wednesday debate.

THE FACTS: Biden must have meant drug company executives, since insurance companies pay for medications — they don't sell them.

HARRIS: "Even though we spend more, we have failed to insure nearly 30 million Americans, and the problem has gotten worse under Donald Trump. Seven million people have lost their health insurance under his presidency." — Medium article published on July 29 introducing her "Medicare for All" plan.

THE FACTS: Harris is selectively marshaling her evidence, citing a survey that has found a significant increase in the number of uninsured adults under Trump while ignoring others that show coverage basically holding steady.

Under Trump, the U.S. has not advanced in reducing the number of uninsured, but major studies differ on whether there's been significant backsliding, as Harris asserts.

Harris' numbers come from the Gallup National Health and Well-Being Index, which found the uninsured rate among adults has gone up. Gallup reported that nearly 14% of adults were uninsured in the last three months of 2018. That translates to about 7 million more uninsured adults since 2016, the last full year of Obama's tenure. Gallup measured adults only.

However, there's been no major slippage in an ongoing survey from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

CDC estimated that 30.4 million Americans of all ages were uninsured last year, or 9.4% of the population. That compares with 28.6 million uninsured, or 9% of the population, in 2016. CDC says those changes reflected in the National Health Interview Survey are not statistically significant because such surveys are not precise enough to measure differences that small.

An estimate by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office finds an increase of 1.4 million uninsured people under age 65 from 2016 to 2018.

A private study tracks with the government's findings. The Commonwealth Fund's Biennial Health Insurance Survey found no statistically significant change in the uninsured rate among adults ages 19 to 64 from 2016 to 2018, at about 12%.

The picture may get clearer by the time Americans elect their next president. The previous Republican-led Congress repealed "Obamacare" fines on people who remain uninsured. That change took effect this year, and experts believe it will prompt some people to drop coverage. The uninsured rate may well go up, but Harris will have to wait for a definitive ruling.

Associated Press writers Colleen Long, Christopher Rugaber, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Michael Balsamo, Eric Tucker and Ellen Knickmeyer in Washington and Amanda Seitz in Chicago contributed to this report.

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US Northwest towns 'woefully unprepared' as fire risk grows

By TOM JAMES Associated Press

ISSAQUAH, Wash. (AP) — Nestled in the foothills of Washington's Cascade Mountains, the bustling Seattle suburb of Issaquah seems an unlikely candidate for anxiety over wildfires.

The region, famous for its rainfall, has long escaped major burns even as global warming has driven an increase in the size and number of wildfires elsewhere in the American West.

But according to experts, previously too-wet-to-burn parts of the Pacific Northwest face an increasing risk of significant wildfires due to changes in its climate driven by the same phenomenon: Global warming is bringing higher temperatures, lower humidity and longer stretches of drought.

And the region is uniquely exposed to the threat, with property owners who are often less prepared for fire than those in drier places and more homes tucked along forests than any other western state.

In Issaquah and towns like it across the region, that takes a shape familiar from recent destructive California wildfires: heavy vegetation that spills into backyards, often pressing against houses in neighborhoods built along mountains, with strong seasonal winds and few roads leading out.

"The only thing that's keeping it from going off like a nuclear bomb is the weather," said Chris Dicus, a professor at California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo and head of the Association for Fire Ecology, a national group that studies wildfire and includes experts from the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Geological Survey.

With historically short summers, the swath of densely forested coastal territory stretching from British Columbia into northwestern Oregon has long been cloaked in a protective veil of moisture, making even medium-sized fires relatively rare. So-called "megafires" — enveloping hundreds of thousands of acres and even generating their own weather — have occurred only at century-plus intervals.

But global warming is changing the region's seasons. A national climate assessment prepared by 13 federal agencies and released in 2018 said the Pacific Northwest had warmed nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit since 1900 and that trend would continue into the century, leading to warmer winters and less mountain snowpack.

Experts say these long-term changes create a special risk in Pacific Northwest forests, where past wet weather has created ample fuel for fires: Even a modest increase in contributing factors, like days without rain, could make them much more prone to burning.

"It's a couple of degrees difference. It's a couple of weeks' difference," said Michael Medler, a fire scientist and chair of the environmental studies department at Western Washington University. "Those are the kinds of changes that amount to taking a forest and pushing it over the edge."

Exactly when any one part of the region will reach that point is hard to predict, and researchers stressed that unknowns exist in modeling fire in woods that have burned so infrequently. But all pointed to changes already beginning to take place.

This year's fire danger, for instance, reached above-normal levels in the region a full three months earlier than at any time in more than 10 years, driven partly by an abnormally dry winter.

And fire counts are up: As of late June, western Oregon forests have seen double the average number of fire starts from the previous decade — 48 compared with 20. Western Washington saw an even larger increase, with 194 starts compared with an average of 74.

Even the region around Astoria, Oregon, which frequently gets 100-plus rainy days per year, making it one of the wettest parts of the state, has seen a dozen small fires in 2018 and 2019, according to data from the Oregon Department of Forestry. That compares with an average of just two per year over the previous decade.

Last year, 40% of Washington's wildfires were on its wetter western side, according to Janet Pearce, a spokeswoman for that state's natural resources agency.

"That was alarming and a first for us," she said in an email.

The risk is amplified by development patterns throughout the Pacific Northwest, where experts say the long gaps between major fires have created a perception of the forest as being too wet to burn.

In part due to that perception, the region boasts some of the West's most concentrated forest-edge

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development.

A 2013 survey of development within 550 yards (500 meters) of forestlands found that just six counties along the foothills of Washington's Cascade mountains host more homes in such zones than all of California.

Together, western Washington and the northwest corner of Oregon contained roughly 1,400 square miles (3,626 square kilometers) of forest-edge development — nearly as much as California, Colorado and Montana combined, according to the report by Headwaters Economics, a nonprofit land management research group.

Ray Rasker, who heads the group, cautioned the report was narrower than others, which count development up to 1.5 miles (2.4 kilometers) from any type of wildland. And the results don't necessarily translate to the Northwest being at higher overall risk, Rasker said, because other types of wild areas are more prone to burning than mature forests.

But while officials in California and other states have begun reforming forest-edge building and landscaping rules, such codes are still rare in the Northwest, and virtually none apply to houses already built, said Tim Ingalsbee, who heads Firefighters United for Safety Ethics and Ecology, an Oregon-based nonprofit that works to update building codes.

"The western slopes of the Cascades and the Northwest are just woefully unprepared," Ingalsbee said.

When wildfires penetrate neighborhoods, they become much harder to fight.

Fires that did that last year in California destroyed homes and killed residents in cities including Redding, where the Carr fire destroyed over 1,000 homes and forced the evacuation of 38,000, and Paradise, where the Camp fire killed more than 80 people and burned 14,000 homes.

Medler, of Western Washington University, pointed to sprawl radiating from cities in the Northwest's coastal corridor — such as Seattle — toward the Cascade mountains, which define the region's eastern edge and stretch from Canada into Oregon.

"The ones that keep me awake at night are places like Issaquah," said Medler.

The similarities between Paradise before the 2018 Camp fire and present-day Issaquah — a bustling suburban city of 39,000 less than half an hour from Seattle's downtown — are noticeable.

Both are tucked into foothills. Both feature neighborhoods surrounded by dense forests, some with only a single road leading in or out. And while not as frequent as the seasonal winds that fanned the Camp Fire, the Cascades are also prone to similar strong winds.

The California fires were "absolutely" a wake-up call, said Rich Burke, deputy fire chief with the Eastside Fire Department, which oversees fire protection in Issaquah and the surrounding area.

Wildfire-oriented setbacks and less-flammable materials still aren't written into building codes on the city's edges. But Burke said the department now fields frequent calls from homeowners concerned about wildfire protections, hosts preparedness trainings and has four wildland fire engines of its own.

Still, a neighborhood less than a mile from the city's center reveals what Medler describes as a classic Northwest scene: branches of towering conifers brushing against dozens of wood-sided homes.

Jason Ritchie owns a home just north of Issaquah, in neighboring Sammamish, and said a 2015 fire in the woods beside his property drove home the risks.

"It grew so fast," Ritchie said. "Had the wind been blowing from the north to the south, it would have engulfed the neighborhood very, very quickly."

The neighborhood features many houses built steps from the woods' edge but only two main routes out, a risk that wasn't at the front of Ritchie's mind when he bought his home.

"If one of those roads gets blocked, we are in a heap of trouble," he said.

Questions remain about wildfire risks in previously wet forests, in part because they have burned so infrequently in the past, said Crystal Raymond, a fire ecologist with the University of Washington's Climate Impact Group.

A lack of data makes it difficult to predict exactly how many additional days of summer or drought the region's forests will tolerate before the risks increase, said Raymond and others.

But experts broadly agreed: Global warming is changing the wet climate of the Pacific Northwest, in

ways that will make its forests more likely to burn.

"On the west side, there's a perception that fire doesn't happen here — maybe up on the mountains, but not here," Ingalsbee said. "That was then. This is now."

Follow reporter Tom James on Twitter at @TomJames206

Life in public-shooting-era America: 'You can't just not go'

By TED ANTHONY AP National Writer

Ohio: A bar district where friends gathered for drinks on a warm Saturday night. Texas: A Walmart stocked with supplies for back-to-school shopping on an August morning. California: A family-focused festival that celebrates garlic, the local cash crop.

Two consecutive summer weekends. Less than seven days. More than 30 fellow human beings gone in moments, in public places exactly like those where huge swaths of the American population go without a second thought.

Or perhaps not. Perhaps no longer. Have we crossed into an era of second, third, even fourth thoughts?

"I don't like to go out, especially without my husband. It's really scary being out by myself," preschool teacher Courtney Grier, 21, said Sunday outside a grocery store in Virginia Beach, Virginia, where a gunman killed 12 in a city building in late May.

But, Grier says, "You still have to go to the grocery store to get dinner. You can't just not go."

That might be an apt slogan for America, circa 2019: You can't just not go.

Civic life, particularly the public portion of it, has been a foundation of American society since the beginnings. That may have ebbed in today's nose-in-your-device world, but events like festivals, going out for the evening and in particular shopping remain enduring communal activities. Now those three venues have given us lethal and very public shootings in the space of less than a week.

Add other daily-life institutions that have been visited by mass shootings — houses of worship, movie theaters, malls, a newsroom and, of course, schools — and the question becomes more pressing: Are these loud, sudden events starting to fundamentally change America in quiet, incremental ways?

The sites where bullets flew and people fell this past week are not simply places where random people gather publicly and informally. More importantly, if you're an American, they're places like the ones where people like YOU gather publicly and informally — particularly in the summer, when so many are not as hunkered down by weather and obligation.

These aren't only mass shootings (Gilroy, in fact, with three dead other than the shooter, technically isn't a "mass shooting" by some of today's metrics). They are also mass public events that make us deal with something that other places have faced for yearslong stretches: assessing daily life's danger while moving through it with loved ones.

The chances of an American being caught up in a public mass shooting remain incredibly rare. Nevertheless, the sometimes-toxic cocktail of the events themselves, social media echo chambers and the distorting factors of the 24-hour news cycle can be impactful.

El Paso's 20, Dayton's nine and Gilroy's three have caused online outpourings around many questions, some more political than others. But variations of these two keep cropping up: Are regular places safe anymore? Should we assume that they are?

There are, loosely, two types of reactions that sometimes overlap. One is to back off some, to take more precautions. One is to be defiant. That's the approach that retired Marine Richard Ruiz, a Gilroy native, says he's seen in Gilroy in the week since the garlic festival shooting.

"The thing that has changed in Gilroy is our focus," said Ruiz, 42. "No one is showing signs of being worried or fearful in public. We're emboldened. We want to go out more."

In Squirrel Hill, the Pittsburgh neighborhood where a shooter killed 11 people at Tree of Life Synagogue last fall, a commitment to doing exactly that has helped ensure that civic life remains vibrant. There is little visible change except for the "Stronger than Hate" signs in some shop windows that encourage two

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things — a return to normal life and a commitment to never forgetting.

In Dayton, Nikita Papillon, 23, described the site of the killings that happened across the street from her Saturday night as the kind of location “where you don’t have to worry about someone shooting up the place.”

But does “that kind of place” exist anymore? And if not, how does that impact American life in ways that defy measurements and metrics?

From Britain, which grappled with a spate of Irish Republican Army attacks from the 1970s through the 1990s, to Afghanistan and Iraq, where public explosions and attacks have been commonplace during the past two decades, the world’s citizens have grappled in many ways with balancing regular life and increased vigilance.

In Israel, during the second uprising against the government’s long-running military rule over Palestinians, Palestinian militants carried out a series of suicide bombings and shootings in Israel, targeting cafes, malls and public buses. Between 2000 and 2005, many Israeli Jews stopped riding public buses and avoided crowded public spaces. Others fought to maintain normal routines.

Avraham Sela, a professor of international relations at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, says many Israelis became scared to visit public places, though he says that, in the end, Israelis “never allowed our lives to be dictated by those fears.”

The United States is hardly at that point. But the conversations that now take place — Should we go? Should we take the kids? What’s that noise? — reflect a society that, no matter people’s political beliefs, is starting to process what’s taking place in its midst.

This year marked two decades since two student gunmen killed 12 schoolmates and a teacher at Columbine High School outside Denver, a watershed moment in mass shootings. Sam Haviland, who was a junior at Columbine in 1999, knows other survivors who are fearful in public places or avoid them completely. After years of post-traumatic stress, she chose a different path.

“I decided that I didn’t want to live in fear and that I can’t control it, and so I’ve just come to terms with the fact that I may not be safe in public,” said Haviland, now director of counseling for Denver Public Schools. “The number of shootings since then has just reaffirmed for me that, you know, it’s a real possibility that shootings — that I might even survive another shooting.”

Back in Virginia Beach, a couple sitting together at an outdoor shopping center offered differing views of how to navigate the changed landscape around them.

“If it’s going to happen, it’s going to happen,” said Jerry Overstreet, 27, who served in the U.S. Army in Afghanistan and now operates heavy machinery at a coal terminal.

But Jasmine Luckey, 25, a social worker, is now “super alert,” she says: When she goes to any major public events, she knows where the exits are and often leaves early.

“It just puts me on edge, and I don’t want to be on edge,” she said. “I want to be able to raise children in a place where they can freely leave my side for a little bit and not worry about them getting shot.”

Ted Anthony, director of digital innovation for The Associated Press, writes about American culture. Follow him on Twitter at @anthonyted. Contributing to this report were AP journalists Ben Finley in Virginia Beach, Daisy Nguyen in San Francisco, Dan Elliott in Denver, Ilan Ben Zion in Jerusalem and Danica Kirka in London.

Report: Iran seizes tanker carrying ‘smuggled fuel’ in Gulf

By MEHDI FATTAHI and AYA BATRAWY Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iranian forces seized a ship in the Persian Gulf suspected of carrying smuggled fuel, state media reported Sunday, marking the Revolutionary Guard’s third seizure of a vessel in recent weeks and the latest show of strength by the paramilitary force amid a spike in regional tensions.

State TV and the semi-official Fars news agency reported that seven crew members were detained when the ship was seized late Wednesday carrying 700,000 liters (185,000 gallons) of “smuggled fuel”

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from Iran. The local reports did not provide further details on the vessel or the nationality of the crew.

The news agency reported the ship was seized near Farsi Island, where a Revolutionary Guard naval base is located. The island sits in the Persian Gulf between Saudi Arabia and Iran, north of the Strait of Hormuz.

Guard commander Gen. Ramazan Zirahi was quoted by Iran's state TV saying the ship was seized in Iranian territorial waters and had been transporting diesel fuel. State TV and other local media also ran footage of the ship, but did not show any flag or identifying marker for the vessel.

"This foreign vessel had received the fuel from other ships and was transferring it to Persian Gulf Arab states," Zirahi said in comments carried by Fars new agency.

It was not immediately clear why a ship carrying Iranian fuel would transfer its cargo to energy exporting Gulf states, but smuggling has been a source of concern in Iran. Iranian media reported last month that some 8 million liters of government-subsidized Iranian fuel are smuggled daily to other countries where prices are much higher.

The new claims would make this the third vessel seized by the Guard in the past two weeks, and the second accused of smuggling fuel.

The U.S. Fifth Fleet, based in Bahrain, said it did not have information to confirm the reports. Maritime tracking experts also said they did not have any immediate information about the incident or details on the vessel.

Maritime intelligence firm Dryad Global said that, if confirmed, this is likely to be "another relatively low key interception designed to signal to the West that Iran maintains the capability and intent to exercise its influence" in the Persian Gulf.

Tensions in the Persian Gulf have escalated recently, with the United States boosting its military presence in the region and six oil tankers targeted in the Gulf of Oman in unclaimed acts of sabotage that the U.S. blames on Iran. Iran has denied any involvement in those attacks.

In June, Iran shot down an American surveillance drone in the Strait of Hormuz. President Donald Trump came close to retaliating, but called off an airstrike at the last moment. Washington has since claimed that a U.S. warship downed an Iranian drone in the strait. Iran denies losing any aircraft in the area.

Maritime security in the region was further jolted in mid-July, when Iranian Revolutionary Guard naval forces confirmed they'd seized a United Arab Emirates-based oil tanker, the Panamanian-flagged MT Riah, for allegedly smuggling some 1 million liters (264,000 gallons) of fuel from Iranian smugglers to foreign customers.

Also in July, the Guard seized a British-flagged vessel near the Persian Gulf in the Strait of Hormuz, in what some Iranian officials suggested was retaliation for the seizure of an Iranian oil tanker in a British Royal Navy operation off Gibraltar, near Spain.

The U.K. says the Iranian oil tanker was suspected of violating European Union sanctions on oil shipments to Syria. Iran denies the ship was bound for Syria but has not disclosed its destination. Officials in Spain initially said the tanker was seized upon request from the United States.

The current tensions stem from Trump's decision last year to withdraw the U.S. from Iran's 2015 nuclear accord with world powers and impose sweeping sanctions on the country that have crippled its economy. In response, Iran began openly breaching limits set by the nuclear agreement to pressure European signatories to provide economic relief to help offset the sanctions.

Maritime security around the Persian Gulf is of international importance. The Strait of Hormuz sits at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, a shipping channel for one-fifth of all global crude exports. Petroleum products from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Bahrain are exported through the strait to countries around the world. Iran also uses the strait for its exports.

Some 67,533 ships sailed through strait last year, according to data from maritime publication Lloyd's List sourcing research by Russell Group.

Ranjith Raja, a senior analyst at data firm Refinitiv, said this latest seized ship by Iran could be a barge or supply vessel rather than a commercial merchant tanker based on the amount of fuel it was allegedly transporting. Due to the numerous supply vessels operating in the area, it was not possible to pinpoint

which ship had been seized, he said.

Batraway reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Trial for priests accused of abusing deaf Argentine students

By ALMUDENA CALATRAVA and NATACHA PISARENKO Associated Press

MENDOZA, Argentina (AP) — Ezequiel Villalonga signs frantically with his hands to express the power he feels after years of suffering now that the priests whom he and other former students at an Argentine institute for the deaf accuse of abuse are finally going to trial.

Villalonga, 18, is one of about 20 ex-students of the Antonio Próvolo Institute for Deaf and Hearing Impaired Children in Mendoza province who say they were sexually abused, including cases of rape, between 2004 and 2016. Their alleged abusers go on trial starting Monday in a case that Pope Francis, an Argentine, has not commented on publicly despite its closeness to his papacy.

The complaints at the institute came to light at the end of 2016 and created a scandal that deepened when it emerged that one of the accused, the Rev. Nicola Corradi, had been reported for similar allegations at the Antonio Próvolo institute in Verona, Italy, and that the pope had been notified that Corradi was running a similar center in Argentina.

"Those of us from the Próvolo in Mendoza said: 'no more fear. We have the power,'" Villalonga told The Associated Press with the help of an interpreter, explaining how others decided to come forward after an initial "brave" person did so.

The AP doesn't name alleged sexual assault victims unless they make their identities public, which Villalonga did in an interview in the headquarters of the human rights group Xumek, which is the plaintiff in the trial.

Alejandro Gullé, chief prosecutor in Mendoza, called the trial "unprecedented, one of the most important in this province, one whose importance will transcend this country."

On trial for aggravated sexual abuse of minors, sexual touching and corrupting minors will be: Corradi, an Italian who is 83 and under house arrest; the Rev. Horacio Corbacho, a 59-year-old priest; and Armando Gómez, 63. The latter two are Argentines and in prison in Mendoza. Corbacho has pleaded not guilty and the other two defendants have not entered pleas.

They are charged with 28 alleged crimes against 10 deaf minors and face prison sentences of up to 20 years. It is the first in a series of trials in which other former members of the now-closed school will be judged. Others implicated include two nuns who allegedly participated or knew about the abuses, as well as former directors and employees who are accused of knowing about the abuse but taking no action.

Prosecutors say that not only were children sexually touched and abused, but were sometimes forced to watch pornography or perform sex acts among themselves.

Jorge Bordón, an institute employee, was sentenced to 10 years in prison in 2018 in the case for rape, sexual touching and corrupting minors by forcing children to perform sex acts on each other. But the former students at the Mendoza school believe they can achieve the first prison sentences for priests and clergy at the Roman Catholic institute, which has other branches. They are also demanding Francis strip the alleged abusers of their status as priests in the canonical process.

"Francis was very quiet about the abusive priests, but now the sentence is coming," said Villalonga. "I know that the pope is afraid because the deaf have been brave."

The Vatican has not commented publicly on the trial. The Holy See would be loath to be seen as interfering in a criminal trial, and typically defers all comment, as well as the outcome of its own investigations, until after all investigations by civil law enforcement are completed.

In 2017, it sent two Argentine priests to investigate what happened in Mendoza. Dante Simon, a judicial vicar, told the AP that the acts denounced are "horrible" and "more than plausible." He said the pontiff expressed his sadness and told him that "he was very worried about this situation and it would be a labor."

In a report submitted to the Vatican in June of that year, Simon requested the application of the maxi-

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mum penalty to Corradi and Corbacho, that they be made to "resign directly by the Holy Father." The report must be reviewed by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

The case hits close to home for the Vatican, which is accused of having disregarded the warnings of the alleged Italian victims of Corradi, when just months earlier the pope had promulgated new rules to combat abuse in the church.

Corradi was singled out for similar abuses committed since the 1950s at the Provolo institute in Verona, Italy. His name appeared in a letter addressed to the pope in 2014 in which the Italian accusers mentioned several allegedly abusive priests who continued to exercise the ministry and said that Corradi and three other priests were in Argentina.

"Two and a half years have passed (since the Mendoza case was uncovered) and Francisco has not uttered a single word to the survivors of the Próvolo in Mendoza," Paola González, whose 16-year-old daughter was an alleged victim at the institute.

According to the investigation, the alleged abusers especially targeted children who spent the night in the institute's shelters, some of whom came from surrounding provinces.

Prosecutor Gustavo Stroppiana said one victim claimed to have been "tied with chains" while abused.

"We found prophylactics and birth control pills" in raids carried on the Próvolo institute in Mendoza, he said.

The crimes allegedly took place in the dormitories of the two priests and of the children, in a loft and in a small chapel called the House of God where the children took first communion.

The children, with limited financial resources, didn't dare report the abuse because they were threatened with expulsion or the imprisonment of their parents, prosecutors said. Their communication skills were limited because they were not taught sign language at the school.

Authorities in Buenos Aires province recently ordered the arrest of Corradi for alleged abuses in the Próvolo Institute in La Plata, a city about 45 miles (70 kilometers) from the capital, Buenos Aires. It is believed the Italian priest went to that center in the 1980s after he was transferred from Verona before heading to Mendoza in the 1990s.

The accusers' relatives say the transfers of Corradi would follow the church practice at the time of moving accused priests around the world to different parishes and locations.

Many Argentines are wondering why Francis did not remove Corradi from the Mendoza institute after being warned about the allegations against him in Verona.

Corradi's name appeared publicly in 2009 when 67 deaf people said they had been abused in the Verona institute by 24 priests, lay workers and religious brothers. They said he had been moved to Argentina. The Italian priest's name appeared again in a letter addressed to the pope in 2014 that pointed out the potential danger he represented to minors.

The Verona diocese sanctioned four of the 24 defendants, but not Corradi. There was no criminal case because of the elapsed time.

Faced with criticism by the families of the Argentine victims, the Archbishopric of Mendoza said it didn't know the background of the Italian priest when he arrived in the province and that the priest didn't depend on the local church but on a religious congregation based in Italy. It expressed its "solidarity and closeness" with the accusers and considered that "the corresponding responsibilities and sanctions" should be established.

Anne Barret Doyle, co-director of BishopAccountability.org, told the AP that she does not expect a response from the Vatican and the pope.

"Pope Francis will continue to pretend that he has no responsibility for the atrocities in Mendoza. If he does respond, it will be a pro forma statement about his commitment to ending child sex abuse in the Church."

She added that when the crimes at the Verona school made world headlines in 2009 and 2010, "the pope was president of the Argentine bishops' conference. He could have ordered an investigation of the Mendoza and La Plata schools then."

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"And certainly, as pope, he could have acted years ago. He was notified by the Verona victims of Corradi's presence in Argentina."

Villalonga said he hopes a conviction will restore his calm.

"The pope has ignored us, taken us the deaf for fools," he said.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Monday, Aug. 5, the 217th day of 2019. There are 148 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On August 5, 1962, actress Marilyn Monroe, 36, was found dead in her Los Angeles home; her death was ruled a probable suicide from "acute barbiturate poisoning."

On this date:

In 1864, during the Civil War, Union Adm. David G. Farragut led his fleet to victory in the Battle of Mobile Bay, Alabama.

In 1933, President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the National Labor Board, which was later replaced with the National Labor Relations Board.

In 1936, Jesse Owens of the United States won the 200-meter dash at the Berlin Olympics, collecting the third of his four gold medals.

In 1953, Operation Big Switch began as remaining prisoners taken during the Korean War were exchanged at Panmunjom.

In 1961, the amusement park Six Flags Over Texas had its official grand opening day in Arlington.

In 1962, South African anti-apartheid activist Nelson Mandela was arrested on charges of leaving the country without a passport and inciting workers to strike; it was the beginning of 27 years of imprisonment.

In 1964, U.S. Navy pilot Everett Alvarez Jr. became the first American flier to be shot down and captured by North Vietnam; he was held prisoner until February 1973.

In 1967, the U.S. space probe Mariner 7 flew by Mars, sending back photographs and scientific data.

In 1974, the White House released transcripts of subpoenaed tape recordings showing that President Richard Nixon and his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman, had discussed a plan in June 1972 to use the CIA to thwart the FBI's Watergate investigation; revelation of the tape sparked Nixon's resignation.

In 1981, the federal government began firing air traffic controllers who had gone out on strike.

In 1991, Democratic congressional leaders formally launched an investigation into whether the 1980 Reagan-Bush campaign had secretly conspired with Iran to delay release of American hostages until after the presidential election, thereby preventing an "October surprise" that supposedly would have benefited President Jimmy Carter. (A task force later concluded there was "no credible evidence" of such a deal.)

In 2002, the coral-encrusted gun turret of the Civil War ironclad USS Monitor was raised from the floor of the Atlantic, nearly 140 years after the historic warship sank during a storm.

Ten years ago: Journalists Laura Ling and Euna Lee arrived in Burbank, California, for a tearful reunion with their families after a flight from North Korea, where they'd been held for 4 1/2 months until former President Bill Clinton helped secure their release. Mahmoud Ahmadinejad (ah-muh-DEE'-neh-zahhd) was sworn in for a second term as Iran's president.

Five years ago: U.S. Maj. Gen. Harold Greene was shot to death near Kabul in one of the bloodiest insider attacks in the long Afghanistan war; the gunman, dressed as an Afghan soldier, turned on allied troops, wounding about 15, including a German general and two Afghan generals. American aid worker Nancy Writebol, infected with Ebola while in Liberia, arrived in Atlanta, joining Dr. Kent Brantly, a fellow patient being given an experimental treatment. (Both recovered.) The San Antonio Spurs hired WNBA star Becky Hammon as an assistant coach, making her the first woman to join an NBA coaching staff.

One year ago: President Donald Trump tweeted that a 2016 meeting at Trump Tower involving his son and a lawyer with Kremlin connections had been aimed at collecting information about his opponent, an

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apparent change from an earlier assertion that the meeting "primarily" dealt with adoption of Russian children. Authorities in Venezuela detained six people suspected of using drones packed with explosives in a failed bid to assassinate President Nicolas Maduro. Actress Charlotte Rae, best known as the housemother on the long-running sitcom "The Facts of Life," died at her Los Angeles home at the age of 92.

Today's Birthdays: Actor John Saxon is 83. College Football Hall of Famer and former NFL player Roman Gabriel is 79. Country songwriter Bobby Braddock is 79. Actress Loni Anderson is 74. Actress Erika Slezak is 73. Rock singer Rick Derringer is 72. Actress Holly Palance is 69. Pop singer Samantha Sang is 68. Rock musician Eddie Ojeda (Twisted Sister) is 64. Actress-singer Maureen McCormick is 63. Rock musician Pat Smear is 60. Author David Baldacci is 59. Actress Tawney Kitaen is 58. Actress Janet McTeer is 58. Country musician Mark O'Connor is 58. Basketball Hall of Famer Patrick Ewing is 57. Actor Mark Strong is 56. Director-screenwriter James Gunn is 53. Actor Jonathan Silverman is 53. Country singer Terri Clark is 51. Actress Stephanie Szostak is 48. Retired MLB All-Star John Olerud is 51. Rock musician Eicca Toppinen (EYE'-kah TAH'-pihn-nehn) (Apocalyptica) is 44. Country musician Will Sellers (Old Dominion) is 41. Actor Jesse Williams is 39. Actor Brendon Ryan Barrett is 33. Actress Meegan Warner (TV: "TURN: Washington's Spies") is 28. Actress/singer Olivia Holt is 22. Actor Albert Tsai is 15. Actor Devin Trey Campbell is 11.

Thought for Today: "We are all snobs of the Infinite, parvenus of the Eternal." — James Gibbons Huneker, American author and critic (1860-1921).