

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 1 of 75

[2- Webster stuns Groton with last minute touch-down](#)

[6- Getting ready for Pumpkin Fest](#)

[7- Homecoming Royalty Candidates](#)

[8- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column](#)

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

[10- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)

[11- Gospel Solutions to Social Issues](#)

[12- Weather Pages](#)

[15- Daily Devotional](#)

[16- 2019 Groton Events](#)

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

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**

8 - Sunday

Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
James Valley Threshing Show, Andover
St. John's: Bible Study, 8 a.m.; Worship, 9 a.m.;
Sunday school, 10 a.m.
Emmanuel: Worship/Rally Sunday/Communion, 9
a.m.; Sunday school, 10 a.m.
SEAS Catholic: service, 9 a.m.
C&MA: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; Worship, 10:45
a.m.
UMC: Fellowship, 10 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
Presbyterian: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11
a.m.



**Doggie Day at the
Groton Pool scheduled for
today has been canceled**

**Aberdeen Paper
Due to mechanical issues with
the inserter, the Aberdeen
American News missed the
mail delivery today. The papers
for in-town delivery arrived in
Groton at 7 a.m.**

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 2 of 75

Webster stuns Groton with last minute touchdown

"Two words sum up the game against Webster," said Coach Shaun Wanner. "Penalties and Mistakes."

Webster Area scored with less than a minute to go in the game to edge past Groton Area, 12-7.

The game was played in Webster, and was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Abeln Seed Company, Aberdeen Chrysler Center, Allied Climate Professionals, Bahr Spray Foam, BaseKamp Lodge, DeHoet Trucking, Groton Auto Works, Hanlon Brothers, John Sieh Agency, Milbrandt Enterprises. Mike-N-Jo's Body-N-Glass, Olson Development and Professional Management Services; touchdown sponsor is Patios Plus. The video of the game has been archived at 397news.com where GDI subscribers will have access.

Groton Area received the opening kickoff and Andrew Marzahn returned the ball to the Tiger 39 yard line. The first drive was plagued with two false start penalties. The Tigers had two first downs and would have had a third if the penalty did not negate that



Thomas Cranford tackles Webster Area's Coby Reetz. Also pictured is Grady O'Neill.

(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Andrew Marzahn returns the opening kickoff. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

down. The Tigers ended up punting on fourth and 15. That drive went for nearly six and one-half minutes.

Webster Area had the ball for the rest of the first quarter. The Bearcats were fourth down with two inches to go on the Tiger 30-yard line. Payton Johnson had a sack and the Groton Area took over on the Tigers 37-yard line. On second and 10, an incomplete pass resulted in roughing the passer penalty on Webster and the Tigers got a first down. Groton Area got a first down and it was first and goal from the 10 yard line. On fourth and third, Kaden Kurtz scored. Jackson Cogley kicked the PAT and it was 7-0 with 4:12 left in the first half. The Tigers had five first downs on that drive that went 63 yards and took over seven minutes off the clock.

Webster Area's next drive was cut short when Darien Shabazz caused and recovered a fumble with 1:44 left in the half. The Tigers had a nice play as Doeden passed off the ball to Kurtz who passed off to Shabazz and back to Kurtz who threw to Doeden on a 27-yard touchdown. Oh, but it was no good as a holding penalty by Groton recalled the touchdown. So it was first and 20 but things went south for the Tigers as it was second and 35 and the half ended

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 3 of 75



Jameson Stange gets ready to snap the ball for the Tigers. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

ball at its own 31 yard line with 4:15 left in the game. On third and nine, an incomplete pass resulted in an automatic first down as Webster was called with pass interference. The Tigers had the ball on its own 48 yard line with 3:45 to go. A big play by Webster put Groton at second and 16, third and 13 and fourth and 12. Groton punted.

Webster returned the ball to its own 41 yard line with two minutes left in the game. The Bearcats got a couple of quick first downs and with 62 seconds to go in the game, Reetz scored on a 22-yard pass from Braden Holland. The PAT catch was no good and it was Webster on top, 12-7.

Groton quickly marched up the field. Starting on its own 38 yard line, a first down put the Tigers at the Webster 36. Another first down put the ball at the Webster 25 yard line with 33 seconds to go. On second and 10 at the 20, the Tigers threw for a touchdown pass that was intercepted by Webster at the one-yard line. Webster had just one play and that ended the game with Webster Area winning, 12-7.

"We knew it was going to be a battle," Wanner said. "Games like this early in the season make us realize what can happen when we don't execute. We didn't give up and I was proud of how hard they fought back."

The Tigers will be hosting Sisseton on Friday. "Sisseton is a vastly improved team from last year," Wanner said. "They only graduated two seniors and have a new coaching staff."

- Paul Kosel

third and 30. "We could have really carried the momentum at half time," Wanner said. "It would have been 14-0. We only have a few opportunities and we have to take advantage of them."

It was 7-0 at half time

Webster almost put points on the board as the Bearcats returned the kickoff for a touchdown, but a Bearcat penalty recalled the touchdown. After getting one first-down, the Bearcats were forced to punt on fourth and 11. Groton took over on its own 25 yard line. Groton got a first down thanks to a Webster penalty and Doeden got a first down at the Webster 35. Groton gave up the ball on downs and Webster took over at its own 24 yard line with 4:38 left in the third quarter.

Webster's drive took nearly eight minutes off the clock and culminated with a touchdown with 8:41 left in the game. The Bearcats fumbled the two-point conversion attempt and Doeden recovered it and the score was 7-6, Groton Area. Webster Area had five first downs.

Groton failed to get a first down and ended up punting on fourth and one. Webster Area also failed to get a first down and had to punt. Groton had the

ball at its own 31 yard line with 4:15 left in the game. On third and nine, an incomplete pass resulted in an automatic first down as Webster was called with pass interference. The Tigers had the ball on its own 48 yard line with 3:45 to go. A big play by Webster put Groton at second and 16, third and 13 and fourth and 12. Groton punted.

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Kayde Stange grabs Webster Area's Coby Reetz on the tackle. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 4 of 75

GROTON AREA

WEBSTER AREA

First Downs

12

12

Rushing

35-119

33-63

Jonathan Doeden

20-69

Coby Reetz

11-50

Kaden Kurtz

14-56, 1 TD

Sterling Rausch

9-33

Darien Shabazz

1-(-6)

Jacob Pereboom

1-(-8)

Braden Holland

12-(-12), 1 TD

Cale Mathern

10-(-21)

Passing

Kaden Kurtz

2-7-19-1 Int.

Braden Holland

10-11-139, 1 TD

Receivers

Darien Shabazz

1-9

Sterling Rausch

6-48

Brodyn DeHoet

1-10

Coby Reetz

2-42

Jaydon Keller

1-28

Matthew Block

1-21

Fumbles

Had 1 lost 0

Had 4 lost 2

Penalties

7-40

9-100

Defense

Austin Jones

12 tackles

Carter Fawcett

10 tackles

Kaden Kurtz

11 tackles

Sterling Rausch

11 tackles

Payton Johnson

9 tackles, 1 sack

Alex Morris

8 tackles, 3 sacks

Darien Shabazz 2 sacks, 1 fumble recovery

Brodyn DeHoet

1 sack

Jonathan Doeden

1 fumble recovery

Record

2-1

3-0

Next Game

Friday hosts Sisseton

Friday hosts Redfield

Scoring

Second Quarter

4:12 Groton - Kaden Kurtz, 3 yard run. (PAT kick good by Jackson Cogley)

Fourth Quarter

8:41: Webster - Braden Holland 2 yard run (PAT fumbled)

1:02: Webster - Coby Reetz 22 yard pass from Braden Holland. (PAT catch no good)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 5 of 75



Peyton Johnson punts the ball. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Kaden Kurtz and Jonathan Doeden wait for the snap. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Jackson Cogley kicks the ball on the kickoff.
(Photo by Paul Kosel)



Jonathan Doeden run up the middle and is tackled by Jared Schlotte. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 6 of 75



Darien Shabazz makes a tackle. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Jonathan Doeden runs up the field and gets a first down. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



April Abeln is sorting out the Pumpkin Fest T-shirts that are for sale at City Hall. The Pumpkin Fest is set for October 12th.



Brent Wienk from the South Dakota National Guard talks with April Abeln about the upcoming Pumpkin Fest. Wienk said the local National Guard unit will help in some way and is coordinating the effort.



Homecoming Royalty Candidates

Back Row left to right: Austin Jones, Peyton Johnson, Anthony Schinkel, Brodyn DeHoet, and Jonathan Doeden.

Front Row left to right: Indigo Rogers, Eliza Wanner, Payton Colestock, Tadyn Glover, and Nicole Marzahn. (Courtesy Photo)

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 8 of 75



Confirming Fair-minded Judges and Protecting the Independent Judiciary

Last month, I had the privilege of attending the investiture of Judge Jonathan Kobes, a newly-appointed U.S. Circuit Judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit. Kobes, who previously worked as my general counsel, resides in Sioux Falls with his family. Judge Kobes has spent his career demonstrating his commitment to justice and the fair application of law. He is precisely the type of judge we have been committed to confirming in the Senate the past several years. I was proud to support his nomination when it came before the Senate.

Since President Trump took office, we have made a commitment to confirming his well-qualified judicial nominees to the federal bench. We have confirmed a record 144 federal judges, all of whom will serve lifetime appointments. Confirming a president's judicial nominees is one of the most important jobs we do in the U.S. Senate, since the court decisions they make will have a lasting impact on the future of our country.

It is important that the men and women who serve on the federal bench interpret the law as it is written, not based on their personal and political ideologies. In drafting the U.S. Constitution, our founding fathers clarified that a separation of powers exists between the executive, judicial and legislative branches of government. Only the legislative branch—Congress—can make laws. The judicial branch is in charge of interpreting the laws passed by Congress. An independent, non-political judiciary is a critical part of our democracy.

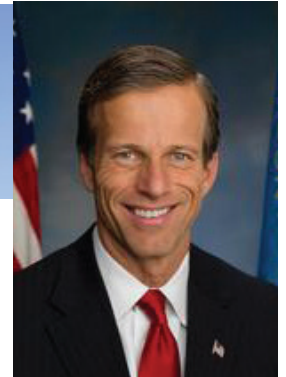
In August, some of our Democrat colleagues threatened to "pack the Supreme Court," meaning they would seek to restructure the court and change the number of Justices if the court issues decisions that are not to their liking. This threat stems from the Supreme Court's decision to review *New York State Rifle & Pistol Association v. New York*. New York City restricted the transportation of firearms to and from authorized shooting ranges outside the five boroughs of the city. This rule was challenged in a lower court on the basis that it violates the Second Amendment, the commerce clause and the right to travel.

A number of Senate Democrats urged the Supreme Court to dismiss the case or risk political retribution. Five of them wrote in an amicus brief to the Supreme Court, "Perhaps the Court can heal itself before the public demands it be 'restructured to reduce the influence of politics.'" I joined all of my Republican Senate colleagues to send a letter to the Supreme Court condemning Democrats' threats and assuring the Justices they are safe from any such threats as long as we remain in the Senate.

The judiciary is independent and must remain free from political whims if it is to do its job as stated in the Constitution. The highest court in the land should not be threatened by Members of Congress who disagree with its decisions. It is okay to disagree with the courts on certain decisions—I certainly have. However, it is inappropriate to threaten to restructure the Supreme Court if their decisions don't match up with your politics.

As we head back to Washington after our in-state work period, the Senate will keep confirming the president's nominees to the federal courts. We'll also keep working to make sure the judicial system remains independent. All Americans are entitled to due process of law, which means we need a judiciary that is fair and impartial. The Senate and the president are working to make certain there is balance to the judiciary now and for the next generation.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Taking the Senate Commerce Committee on the Road

The only thing better than hosting a Senate Commerce Committee hearing on the importance of rural broadband is hosting one right here in South Dakota. Rural Americans, like many people throughout our state, understand the unique opportunities that broadband connectivity can provide, which is why I took the committee on the road for a field trip of sorts before Congress reconvenes this fall, hosting a hearing at Southeast Technical Institute on "Transforming Rural America: A New Era of Innovation."

Having a variety of perspectives on this issue is important, and I want to thank Brendan Carr, a commissioner on the Federal Communications Commission, and Nebraska U.S. Sen. Deb Fischer for coming to South Dakota to join me and representatives from Dakota State University, South Dakota State University, Avera eCARE, SDN Communications, and VIKOR Teleconstruction. Their collective insight helped paint a clear picture of the hurdles we still need to overcome in order to bridge the digital divide in South Dakota and around the country.

Rural broadband connectivity is critical for many reasons, not the least of which, obviously, is that it helps connect people and communities to the world around them. The fact that it is 2019, and the technology exists to put a remotely operated vehicle on the surface of Mars, yet people in some parts of the United States can't even connect to the internet is astounding, and that's an understatement.

It's for that reason that I've made closing the digital divide in rural America one of my top priorities. Through much-needed investments, modernized broadband mapping, and commitments from elected leaders and federal, state, and local agencies, accomplishing this goal is well within reach.

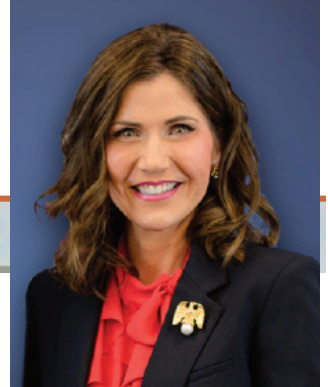
A fully connected United States means businesses can tap into markets that have been unreachable, and it means new educational opportunities for students and teachers alike. Imagine being able to have the world at your fingertips and what that can do to better position our students for careers now and in the future.

For folks in the agriculture community, this technological advancement means having additional state-of-the-art tools at their disposal to increase crop yields, eliminate overlap in operations, and reduce inputs like seed, fertilizer, pesticides, water, and fuel. And for telehealth services, connectivity potentially means reduced costs and fewer barriers to care.

As I said during the hearing, all of these applications are the result of having a reliable broadband network, and as we look ahead to next-generation fixed broadband and wireless services, it is critical we have the workforce and proper infrastructure in place to bring communities further into the 21st century.



SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR **KRISTI NOEM**



Preventing Suicide

People don't like talking about tough things – things that make us uncomfortable or sad. Things that make us feel small. Things that are heartbreaking.

Suicide is one of those things. Suicide means a family learning to live without a mom, dad, brother, or sister. A coworker who doesn't return to work on Monday. An empty chair at a graduation ceremony.

Suicide isn't something we like to talk about, but in too many South Dakota families, schools, and communities, suicide has become an all too familiar topic.

From 1999 to 2018, South Dakota's suicide rates rose by nearly 40 percent. Just last year, 168 South Dakotans died by suicide, making it the tenth leading cause of death in our state. It's especially common among young people.

Suicide is a complicated problem and is rarely caused by a single factor. In fact, a recent report from the Centers for Disease Control Prevention said that more than 50 percent of people who die by suicide are not known to have a mental health condition. Things like relationships, substance abuse, health, job trouble, money, or legal difficulties can all contribute to a heavy burden of stress or a lack of hope.

Despite knowing how far reaching suicide is, we too often lean heavily on narrow stereotypes to determine the type of people most likely to be impacted. It's important to remember that suicidal thoughts can afflict anyone, making it absolutely critical to watch out for the people in your life. Characteristics like increased alcohol and drug use; talking, writing, or thinking about death; withdrawal from family and friends; and impulsive or reckless behavior can all be warning signs to look out for.

The State is taking action to make a difference in this area, too. I've mobilized my Departments of Health, Social Services, Education, Agriculture, and Tribal Relations to develop a comprehensive plan to prevent suicide in South Dakota. September is Suicide Prevention Month and over the next few weeks we'll be reaching out to community members, faith leaders, and other organizations for their input as we build a plan that empowers communities to fight the issue head-on. We're committed to shining a light on this problem.

If someone you know is struggling, act now. If it's an emergency, dial 911 immediately. If not, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255) is open around the clock for help and the Avera Farmer Stress hotline (1-800-691-4336) is available, too. You can also contact any medical provider or a Community Mental Health Center or tribal mental health provider. Additional information, resources, and support are available on our website, sdsuicideprevention.org.

Don't wait to call. Don't wait to act. You don't have to go through this alone. There is hope.



*Adults and Students . . . come
learn what social issues are
involving our youth
in our community.*

Solutions **to** **Social Issues**

SPONSORED BY LOCAL CHURCHES

Youth Groups Welcome ~ Large Groups please RSVP 605/377-0709

Seminars are:

September 11 at United Methodist Church:

Drugs & Alcohol

October 9 at Groton Christian & Missionary Alliance Church:

Sex Trafficking and Date Violence

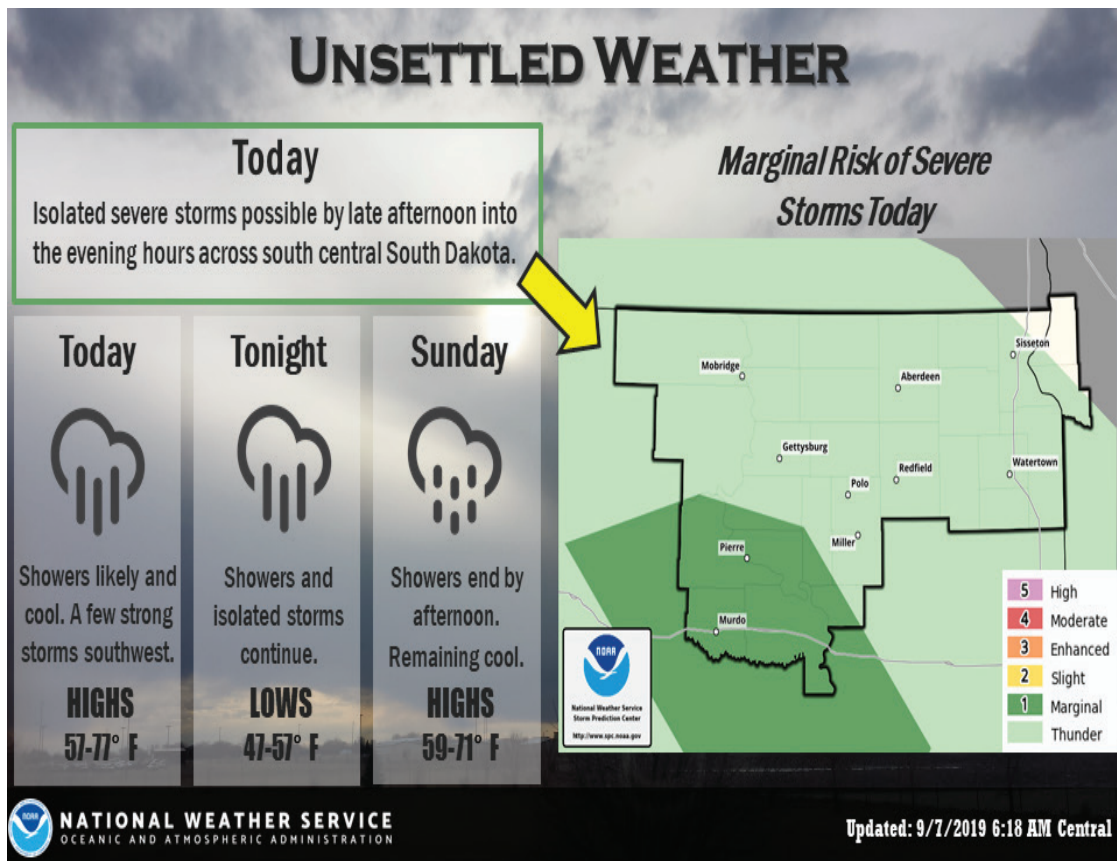
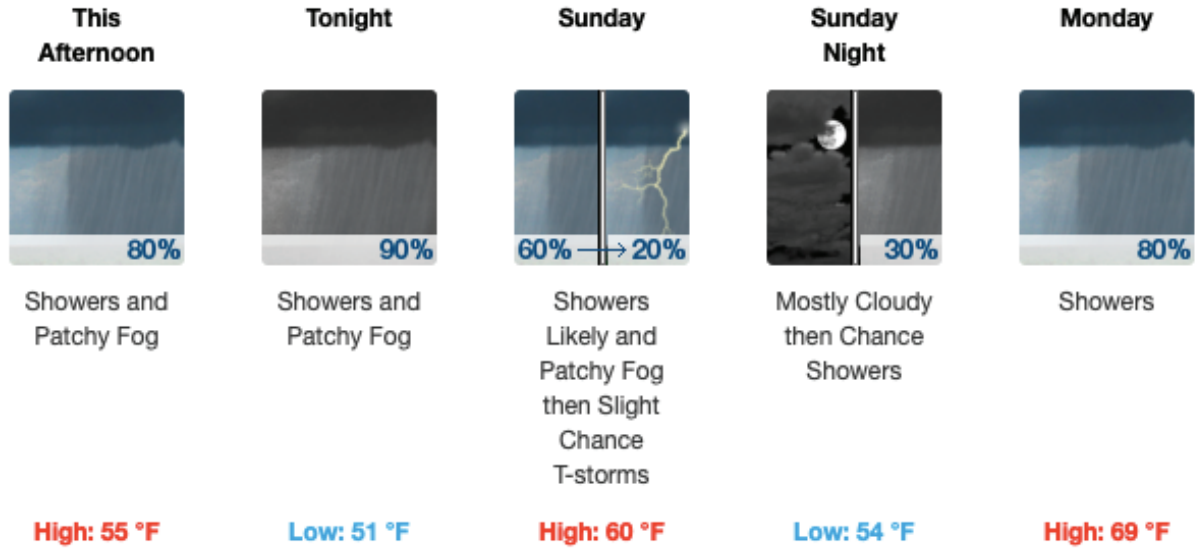
November 6 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church:

Suicide and Bullying

Light Meal at 5:45 p.m. ~ Seminar begins at 6:30 p.m.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 12 of 75



Published on: 09/07/2019 at 2:26AM

Low pressure moving through the region today into tomorrow will result in unsettled conditions across central and northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota. Cool temperatures will accompany the overcast skies and rain showers. Highs are likely to not warm much with the exception of south central South Dakota where some sunny breaks and low 70s will be possible. The rest of the area will see readings in the 60s, if not some upper 50s. Breezy easterly winds will make it feel closer to autumn than summer. Some slight improvements will be possible on Sunday as the rain comes to an end by afternoon, but temps will remain below normal.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 13 of 75

Today in Weather History

September 7, 1961: A tornado struck a farm near the McPherson-Brown county line, or about 10 miles east and 2 miles north of Leola, at around 825 pm CDT. All farm buildings were destroyed, including two chicken coops, granary, machine shop, and two trailer homes. The house was pushed about a foot off its foundation and had windows broken, plaster cracked, and part of the roof ripped. A farm truck and tractor were both blown about 500 feet and demolished. Rain up to 2.5 inches and hail accompanied the storm and caused minor damage.

1769: Considered one of the worst storms of the Eighteenth century, this hurricane passed over Williamsburg, Virginia.

1970: A lightning bolt struck a group of football players at Gibbs High School in St. Petersburg, FL. The lightning killed two people and injuring 22 others. All 38 players and four coaches were knocked off their feet.

1998: Two Derechos occurred on this day with one affecting most of Pennsylvania and New York City, the other impacting central New York.

1881 - The temperature soared to 101 degrees at New York City, 102 degrees at Boston MA, and 104 degrees at Washington D.C. (David Ludlum)

1888 - Much of the Middle and Northern Atlantic Coast Region experienced freezing temperatures. Killer frosts resulted in a million dollars damage to crops in Maine. (David Ludlum)

1909 - Topeka, KS, was drenched with 8.08 inches of rain in 24 hours to establish a record for that location. (6th- 7th) (The Weather Channel)

1970 - A lightning bolt struck a group of football players at Gibbs High School in Saint Petersburg FL, killing two persons and injuring 22 others. All the thirty-eight players and four coaches were knocked off their feet. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Showers and thunderstorms produced 4 to 8 inch rains in three to six hours in Virginia, with totals across the state for the Labor Day weekend ranging up to fourteen inches. The Staunton River crested at 34.44 feet at Altavista on the 8th, its highest level since 1940. Damage due to flooding was estimated at seven million dollars around Bedford, Henry, and Franklin. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Fifty cities across the eastern U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date. The low of 56 degrees at Mobile AL was their coolest reading of record for so early in the season. The mercury dipped to 31 degrees at Athens OH, and to 30 degrees at Thomas WV. (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Thunderstorms in the central U.S. produced four inches of rain at Texamah overnight, and up to six inches of rain in southwestern Iowa. Evening thunderstorms in eastern Colorado produced golf ball size hail at Clear Creek and at Nederland. Late evening thunderstorms in Iowa drenched Harlan with more than four inches of rain. (The National Weather Summary)

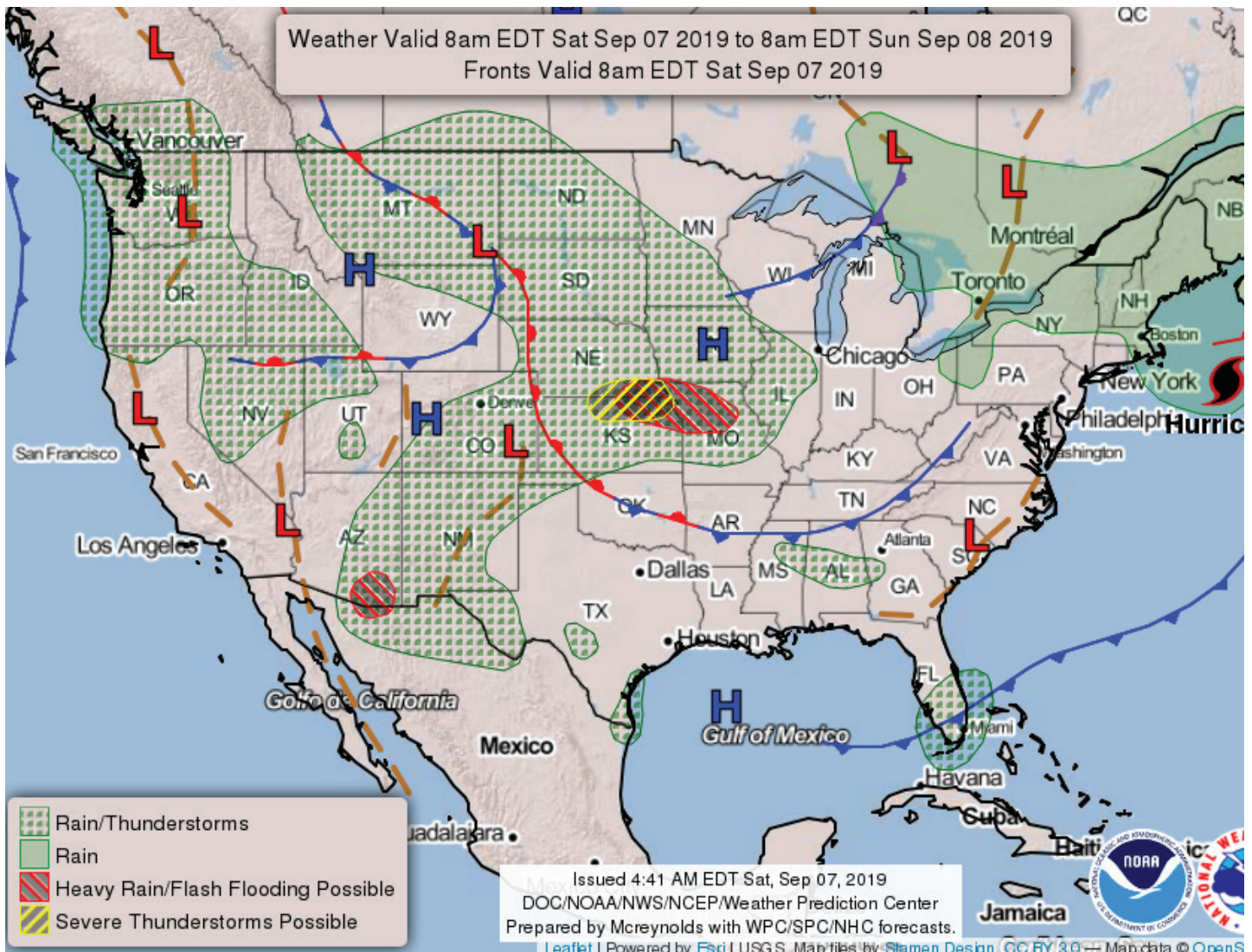
Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 14 of 75

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 80 °F at 2:20 PM
Low Temp: 52 °F at 6:15 AM
Wind: 12 mph at 3:38 PM
Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 101° in 1897
Record Low: 29° in 1895
Average High: 76°F
Average Low: 50°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 0.45
Precip to date in Sept.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 16.74
Precip Year to Date: 19.76
Sunset Tonight: 8:00 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:03 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 15 of 75



CONSCIOUS OF OUR CONSCIENCE

While managing the Washington Senators, Gil Hodges learned that four of his players had violated the team curfew. Calling the team together, he said, I know that four of you have violated the team curfew, and I know who you are. No, I don't want to make this an issue, but you know the penalty for doing that. So I am going to leave a box on my desk, and you guilty ones put your hundred dollars in the box, and we'll drop the matter. I want to see \$400 in that box in the morning! The next morning there were eight one-hundred dollar bills in the box.

Our conscience is one of God's greatest gifts. If we live according to His Word, it will enable us to distinguish right from wrong, good from bad, the sacred from the secular.

Paul said that he took pains to have a clear conscience toward both God and man. He lived his life in constant awareness of the fact that one day there would be a resurrection of the living and the dead followed by a judgment of both the just and the unjust. He refused to be found doing anything that would dishonor His Lord and Savior, and be judged unfit!

There are many statements in the writings of Paul where he talked about his final accounting before God. He lived his life continually reminding himself - and others - of one important fact: We will all stand before Him to be judged. We would do well to remember this.

Prayer: Father, may we live life in light of eternity, always realizing that You will judge all of us on that day. May we prepare now for that day when we will face You. In Jesus Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Acts 24:16 So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 16 of 75

2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12/2019 St. John's Lutheran Luncheon
- 09/20/2019 Presbyterian 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, 10 a.m. Sharp (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, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 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, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/14/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)

News from the Associated Press

Man accused in girlfriend's death reaches plea deal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A Sturgis man accused of hiring others to kidnap and kill his girlfriend has reached a plea deal with prosecutors.

The Rapid City Journal reports 30-year-old Jonathan Klinetobe pleaded guilty Friday to aiding and abetting first-degree manslaughter in the 2015 stabbing death of 22-year-old Jessica Rehfeld. Her body was found in a remote grave near Rockerville a year later.

In exchange for the guilty plea, prosecutors dropped charges of first-degree murder, conspiracy to commit murder, aggravated first-degree kidnapping and conspiracy to commit kidnapping.

If Klinetobe had been found guilty of the murder charge, he would have faced a mandatory sentence of life in prison without parole. He now faces a maximum of life in prison without parole.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

Oglala Sioux Tribe passes law aimed at hate crimes

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — The Oglala Sioux Tribe has passed legislation aimed at hate crimes on the Pine Ridge reservation.

The Rapid City Journal reports the law passed by the tribal council Wednesday makes hate crimes punishable with up to one year in jail, which is the maximum allowed under tribal law.

The law defines a hate crime as one where the defendant intentionally targets a victim or property because of the actual or perceived race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability of any person.

The law comes two months after the tribe legalized same-sex marriage on the reservation.

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

Friday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Central def. Spearfish, 25-13, 25-11, 25-16

Iroquois/Doland def. Flandreau Indian, 25-11, 25-13, 25-6

Winner def. Valentine, Neb., 25-20, 25-15, 25-18

Gillette, Wyo. Tournament

Pool Play

Pool B

Rapid City Stevens def. Scottsbluff, Neb., 25-20, 25-18

Rapid City Stevens def. Sheridan, Wyo., 25-13, 25-14

Rapid City Stevens def. Glenrock, Wyo., 25-19, 25-10

Pool E

Cheyenne East, Wyo. def. Rapid City Central, 25-15, 25-15

Rapid City Central def. Wheatland, Wyo., 25-10, 25-18

Rapid City Central def. Big Horn, Wyo., 25-11, 25-16

Pool F

Billings West, Mont. def. St. Thomas More, 27-25, 25-15

Newcastle, Wyo. def. St. Thomas More, 25-14, 25-10

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 18 of 75

St. Thomas More def. Laramie, Wyo., 25-12, 25-22
Southwest Minnesota Challenge
St. Michael-Albertville, Minn. def. Sioux Falls Roosevelt, 25-9, 25-11
Consolation Quarterfinal
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Burnsville, Minn., 25-18, 21-25, 15-6

PREP FOOTBALL

Alcester-Hudson 44, Centerville 0
Arlington/Lake Preston 20, Elkton-Lake Benton 6
Baltic 52, Deubrook 0
Belle Fourche 28, Douglas 12
Bon Homme 37, Wolsey-Wessington 36
Bridgewater-Emery 41, Sioux Valley 8
Britton-Hecla 52, Clark/Willow Lake 6
Brookings 29, Lennox 6
Burke 48, Sunshine Bible Academy 18
Canistota 58, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 6
Chamberlain 55, Miller/Highmore-Harrold 12
Chester 19, Irene-Wakonda 6
Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 60, Crazy Horse 0
Colman-Egan 50, Castlewood 0
Crow Creek 54, Little Wound 0
Custer 44, Spearfish 13
Dakota Hills 23, Florence/Henry 6
Dakota Valley 46, Yankton 34
Dell Rapids 42, Flandreau 0
Dell Rapids St. Mary 28, DeSmet 0
Deuel 41, Ipswich/Edmunds Central 6
Dupree 44, Bison 0
Elk Point-Jefferson 33, Sisseton 6
Garretson 21, Beresford 13
Gregory 64, Tripp-Delmont/Armour/Andes Central/Dakota Christian 14
Hamlin 41, Great Plains Lutheran 0
Harding County 52, Faith 8
Harrisburg 28, Sioux Falls Washington 15
Herreid/Selby Area 42, Waverly-South Shore 26
Hot Springs 54, Todd County 8
Huron 33, Milbank 20
Kadoka Area def. Edgemont, forfeit
Kimball/White Lake 46, Parkston 20
Langford 59, North Border 14
Langford 59, North Border, N.D. 14
Lemmon/McIntosh 48, Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. 0
Madison 34, Canton 21
McCook Central/Montrose 52, Stanley County 14
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 16, Wagner 0
Parker 42, Hanson 20
Philip 46, Rapid City Christian 6
Pierre 46, West Central 6
Platte-Geddes 35, Colome 8

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 19 of 75

Rapid City Stevens 40, Watertown 12
Redfield 36, Aberdeen Roncalli 7
Scotland 22, Avon 6
Sioux Falls Christian 26, Mitchell 23
Sioux Falls Roosevelt 35, Sioux Falls Lincoln 17
St. Francis Indian 58, Oelrichs 6
St. Thomas More 27, Sturgis Brown 8
Sully Buttes 58, Potter County 8
Tea Area 36, Vermillion 6
Tri-Valley 73, Pine Ridge 18
Viborg-Hurley 56, Menno/Marion 6
Warner 41, Faulkton 8
Webster 12, Groton Area 7
Winner 54, Woonsocket/Wessington Springs/Sanborn Central 0

Some high school football scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

Mural artist brightens look of Rapid City church

By **ARIELLE ZIONTS** Rapid City Journal

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — Wearing his typical uniform of paint-splattered clothing, Derek “Focus” Smith stood in front of a new, colorful mural full of Lakota imagery painted on a north side Rapid City church.

“Given the north side of Rapid is known as predominantly Native, I think it’s very fitting and empowering,” the 31-year-old said of the mural on the Woyatan Lutheran Church, located near the intersection of Haines Avenue and Anamosa Street.

“This was important to us because we are in the heart of north side and the Native community,” said Johnathan Old Horse, a pastor at the church that blends Christianity with Lakota spirituality and helps poor and incarcerated people. “This is just a way to show that everyone’s welcome here, everyone’s beliefs are important, and the things that our ancestors had, it’s still who we are.”

Smith doesn’t belong to the church but sang with its drum group outside the Pennington County Jail on Father’s Day. Church members asked if he’s a painter after he arrived in one of his many paint-covered outfits. He explained that he’s a longtime graffiti and mural artist, and they asked if he could paint a giant white wall for them, the Rapid City Journal reported.

Smith recently finished the mural after working on it for about a week and a half after his day job as the community engagement coordinator of the Rapid City Arts Council/Dahl Arts Center.

“You have to make a choice to walk away” from the painting and decide it’s done, or you will never finish it, Smith said.

The bottom of the mural has a large bald eagle and altar with a bison skull; images of the Black Hills, prairie and Bear Butte; and a red, yellow, black and white eight-pointed star. Clouds, including some shaped like bison, and a human figure holding a pipe overlook the orange-red sunset and scene below.

The human figure is supposed to represent the Christian God as well as the White Buffalo Calf Woman bringing the Chanunpa, or sacred pipe, to the Lakota people.

“I wanted to try to pay homage to both” cultures, Smith said.

He said the bison skull altar is placed in front of sweat lodges, where Lakota people undergo a spiritual experience that involves mental and physical concentration.

“In my mind, all of life is just like that ceremony. It’s creating yourself, it’s building yourself, and building those around you through your struggles and the things that you move through,” Smith said.

The mural has all colors of the rainbow, even the shadowing is painted in dark blues or purples instead of pure black.

Color “makes the world a better place,” Smith said.

Smith was born in Orem, Utah, and is from the Standing Rock and Navajo nations. When he was 14, he began making graffiti in Salt Lake City. He taught himself to paint and relied on mentors but has no formal training. He later moved to Pine Ridge Reservation and now lives in Rapid City with his daughters.

He's painted murals in Art Alley and inside the mall for I.Am.Legacy, and is now excited to have a massive mural off a major road in North Rapid.

Smith said he hopes the mural encourages Native people to connect with their culture and gives "the youth something to look at that would help them to get through a dark day."

"Walls with murals and painted imagery on them do a lot more for the soul to help somebody feel happy about something or give them a little brief moment of distraction other than just something they see every day, routine advertisements," he said. "Everybody can take away from it what they want."

Information from: Rapid City Journal, <http://www.rapidcityjournal.com>

South Dakota man takes up bull riding to honor late brother

By JACK WILLIAMS Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Eight seconds for Jacob Herrboldt mean everything.

That's how long the 26-year-old needs to hang on to the raging bull. It feels like an eternity.

He's not an experienced rider. He didn't plan on doing this solo, but he's not doing it for himself. He's doing it for Chad.

In May, the unexpected passing of Jacob's brother Chad Herrboldt left him grief stricken. Chad and Jacob had lived and worked together on their family's property in Tripp since 2014. His brother, who was by his side from dawn to dusk, was suddenly gone.

But Jacob's grieving turned into determination. Before Chad had passed, the two had made a plan to start riding bulls. Chad was already an accomplished horseman, winning handfuls of competitions in his lifetime, but Jacob was new to the rodeo scene.

"I think about him a lot," Jacob told the Argus Leader. "It's what we wanted to do. I thought I would just go right ahead and do it."

Jacob has been pushing himself to stay atop for eight seconds, the amount of time a rider must stay on a bull to receive a score.

Eight seconds for qualification. Eight seconds to hang on. Eight seconds for Chad.

Bull-riding bridged the brothers' age gap

Growing up, Jacob and Chad weren't as close as they were in the years before Chad's death. A 25-year age gap paired with Chad's time on the road kept the two brothers from connecting when Jacob was young. In his childhood and to this day, Jacob grew closer to his older sister, Fabre Sullivan.

"We're just amazingly close," Sullivan said. "We can talk about anything. Jake is a really good person, and I'm just really proud of him."

As all three siblings grew older, Sullivan moved out to Sioux Falls, while Jacob moved onto their parents farm in Tripp in 2011. Chad would move in three years later. The two lived in the house just behind their parents' home on property.

Along with living on the farm, the two brothers helped out with the family's business of cattle farming and harvesting. Jacob focused on a lot of the manual work while Chad did the veterinary work with the cattle.

Meanwhile, Chad became an award-winning and well-known horsemen in team penning, a rodeo sport in which people on horses herd cows into penning areas in a designated time. He was always someone who was very serious about riding and was ready to compete with anyone else, Jacob said.

"He was good. He was really good," Jacob said. "It was a lot of fun to see him compete. He was always really good about it."

One rodeo that really stood out to Jacob and Sullivan was the Scottie Stampede in Scotland, a small town about 20 minutes southeast of Tripp. Its rodeo was engraved in both their childhoods and was the competition where Chad had some of his strongest finishes.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 21 of 75

"Since we've been little we've gone to the Scottie Stampede," Sullivan said. "I have memories of watching my brother and being with my dad. It was just an exciting place to be."

"I think about him a lot. (Bull riding's) what we wanted to do. I thought I would just go right ahead and do it."

Jacob was also invested in Chad's rodeo ventures. The two would watch the film "8 Seconds" together, which was about a bull rider's journey to become a professional rider. Living together and all the talk of bull riding eventually sparked a plan between the two brothers.

"We had talked about going to rodeos, and he said he was going to get back into roping, and I said I'd probably start riding bulls again," Jacob said. "We we're just going to be travel partners."

However, Chad's personal struggles and hard-charging lifestyle began to distance himself from his family. Eventually, Chad moved off the Herrboldt property.

A few weeks later, a sheriff came to Jacob's door to inform him the Chad was found dead of a heart attack. At 51, his brother was gone.

"It was hard that he was gone," Jacob said, "but bull riding is something I wanted to do for him."

A lesson from Chad: Getting back up

It had been eight years since Jacob rode a bull, and even then he rode as a hobby, not as a serious competitor. He and a few of his friends would ride at jackpots around the area and just have fun. Jacob stopped bull riding when he moved back to Tripp to work on the family property.

Jacob's return to the sport created a sense of excitement among his family, but it also sparked fear that he was throwing himself into a dangerous sport in which he had little experience.

"I was scared to death that something was going to happen to him," Sullivan said. "We've been at almost every rodeo Jake has rode at and seeing some of those guy get scooped up and thrown in the air gets us so scared. We're trying to be excited, but I can't believe he's doing it."

Along with the support of his family, Jacob has also received coaching from his cousin, Seth York. York, who has been riding bulls since he was 9 years old, would have Jacob come over to his house and work on various drills with his bull and horses.

York said the first time Jacob came over he could tell his cousin knew what he was doing, but all the pieces weren't together.

"The old guys that ride say that it takes a good hundred bulls before you start to know what's going on," York said. "Bull riding is like a lot of sports. You have to work your way up to get better. Like T-ball to baseball."

Getting on the bull, Jacob also knew there was work that needed to be done. He had to get back the muscle memory from when he rode previously, and he had to focus. A clear mind and a strong focus are the key into having a successful ride.

"You got to keep up with the bull and make a ride for eight seconds," Jacob said. "It's not easy as people think. You got to put everything out of your mind and focus on one thing, and it's a big thing. You have to be ready to execute that plan, and it happens real fast."

In the five rodeos he's done so far, those eight seconds have remained elusive. His first ride in Irene — a town straight west of Beresford — saw him on and off the bull in four seconds, and the bull stepped on his leg.

"I had the fear of, what if he gets stepped on and he get paralyzed? Or what if his head gets stepped on?" Sullivan said. "But he got up. I told him he did great, and he went on to the next."

Each time Jacob is thrown off, he gets back up. It's a lesson in persistence and determination he learned from Chad.

"I've learned from him to not give up," Jacob said. "You get knocked down, and you get back up again."

Rides keep the memories alive

It's been a rough year for the Herrboldts. In addition to continuing to mourn Chad's death, the family lost a handful of calves in a winter blizzard, losing thousands of dollars. Harvesting hasn't been easy, either, as record rainfall has stunted the growing process.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 22 of 75

But Jacob's bull riding has been a bright spot. Going to rodeos and watching him ride has made the tough year and the grieving process easier, Sullivan said.

"We're all excited, and we have something to look forward to when he rides," Sullivan said. "For (Jacob), it's a big way for him to grieve because it was unexpected. ... Going to a rodeo where Chad was all of his life has made this a little bit easier."

In the stable, Jacob's head is clear. No thoughts or emotions run through his mind. In a manner of seconds, the ride starts and ends. But the crowds, the animals, the atmosphere bring him back to all of those times watching his brother thrive on the back of a horse at rodeos.

"I feel really close to him at all these arenas and rodeos I'm at," Jacob said. "That's where he was. That's who he was, and that's all he loved to do."

In the stands, his family knows Chad is there making sure Jacob is safe. Sullivan said even her children know their late uncle is watching over him.

"I had my stepson with me the first night we went to watch, and he said, 'I hope Chad is watching him,' and it made me tear up," Sullivan said.

And with Chad watching over him, Jacob keeps aiming for that eight-second qualifying ride, most recently at the Rock County 4-H Fair in Luverne, Minnesota, but there is one rodeo in particular that Jacob is pushing himself to hit that mark. On Aug. 10, Jacob will ride at the Scottie Stampede, the same rodeo where he grew up watching his brother ride.

Every ride has been special to Jacob, but Scotland is a family tradition. It's where Chad left his legacy and where Jacob plans on continuing it.

"This is how I want to remember him," Jacob said. "Even if I don't cover a bull or win a buckle, it doesn't matter. It just means a lot to me to get on the back of a bull for him."

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

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

04-11-13-19-31, Mega Ball: 10, Megaplier: 4

(four, eleven, thirteen, nineteen, thirty-one; Mega Ball: ten; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$139 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Mount Vernon man dies in 1-vehicle crash in Davison County

MOUNT VERNON, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say a 59-year-old man died in one vehicle crash northeast of Mount Vernon, in Davison County.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says Michael Johnson, of Mount Vernon, failed to negotiate a curve and left the roadway, vaulted off a driveway and rolled. The crash happened at 5:20 a.m. Tuesday.

Johnson, who was not wearing a seatbelt, was thrown from the vehicle. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The crash remains under investigation.

No. 4 Oklahoma seeks defensive consistency vs. S. Dakota

By CLIFF BRUNT AP Sports Writer

NORMAN, Okla. (AP) — There were signs early in Oklahoma's opener against Houston that the Sooners defense might finally be ready to make an impact.

Turns out there is plenty of work ahead.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 23 of 75

Oklahoma hired Alex Grinch as its defensive coordinator in the offseason, hoping the unit would generate at least some support for the dynamic offense. In Sunday's opener, the defense forced two three-and-outs to start the game and used relentless pressure to help limit the Cougars to 10 points in the first half. The Sooners then gave up 21 points in the second half of a 49-31 win.

"It says something about you as a competitor, and obviously, it's our responsibility as coaches to make sure that we have elite competitors out there," Grinch said. "So again, it falls back on us. I didn't think we finished particularly well."

The fourth-ranked Sooners (1-0) seek a more complete performance Saturday against South Dakota (0-1).

"There's a lot that's got to grow because we expect to play like we did during the first quarter and a half," Oklahoma coach Lincoln Riley said. "We expect to play like that the whole time. And we can."

Strides were made against Houston. There was a more aggressive attitude and tackling was better. A pass defense that was dead last in the nation last season gave up just 167 yards in the air against Houston.

Oklahoma was especially impressive up front, with dominant performances by defensive linemen Neville Gallimore and Ronnie Perkins.

"Those guys were phenomenal," Oklahoma linebacker Kenneth Murray said. "Nev (Gallimore) was living in the backfield, constantly creating disruption. When you've got a d-line that's getting after it up front, it makes everything easier. Really proud of the way those guys played."

RAT POISON?

South Dakota has played an FBS program each year since 2010. The Coyotes beat Minnesota in 2010 and Bowling Green in 2017. South Dakota led Kansas State 24-12 heading into the fourth quarter last year before losing 27-24. Oklahoma quarterback Jalen Hurts said Oklahoma will be focused.

"We're going to treat every game that same," he said. "We'll let y'all talk about the rat poison of it. We're going to focus on what we need to focus on and try to get better each week and fix our mistakes from last week."

BEAMER BUTTED

Oklahoma assistant coach Shane Beamer took a head butt from fullback Jeremiah Hall last week and ended up with stitches.

"There were so many people hitting my head, and me and Beamer normally meet up after every drive," Hall said. "For like five minutes, Beamer went missing. He came back with a gash on his head. I was like, what happened, coach? He said, 'you.'"

Hall heard all about the head butt after the game.

"My family back home keeps saying, 'Why did you head butt your coach?'" he said. "My momma was like, 'You better be careful next time.'"

HURTS PASSING GAME

Hurts posted 508 total yards and six touchdowns in his first game since transferring from Alabama. He passed for 332 yards and three touchdowns and ran for 176 yards and three more scores. He completed 20 of 23 passes, but he failed to connect on some deep throws. That is one of several things he wants to fix.

"I think we just need to be more crisp and sharpen up some things and be better in our execution," he said. "We went out there and kind of left some money on the table at times. We can't afford that. We need to take advantage of every opportunity."

WIDE AWAKE

Oklahoma receiver Charleston Rambo said last month that the media was "sleeping on me." Not anymore. He had three catches for 105 yards, highlighted by a 56-yard touchdown reception. With Oklahoma trying to fine-tune its deep passing game, the Sooners could test South Dakota's secondary with Rambo's elite speed.

CARRY DISTRIBUTION

Kennedy Brooks led the Sooners win rushing as a freshman last season and was a preseason All-Big 12 first-team running back, but he only had four carries for 46 yards in the opener. Trey Sermon had 11 carries for 91 yards and Rhamondre Stevenson had six carries for 41 yards and a touchdown. It will be

worth watching to see if Brooks' touches go up, or if Stevenson becomes a regular part of the rotation.

More AP college football: <https://apnews.com/tag/Collegefootball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Sheriff's certification revoked over sexual harassment

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota law enforcement oversight board has once again revoked the certification of a longtime sheriff accused of sexual harassment in the workplace.

The state Law Enforcement Officers Standards And Training Commission met Thursday to reconsider action against Marshall County Sheriff Dale Elsen after a judge told commissioners to consider alternative sanctions.

Aberdeen American News reports that in December Elsen, appearing before commissioners, admitted to seven instances of sexual harassment at work. That's when the commission first revoked his certification for conduct "unbecoming of a law enforcement officer." Elsen appealed to the state's Fifth Judicial Circuit and a judge sent the case back to commissioners to reconsider alternatives, such as a suspension or probation.

The harassment includes displaying sexually explicit items at work and making crass comments about employees' personal lives.

Elsen, as well as two deputies with the sheriff's office and a former county commissioner, testified Thursday that they thought lesser sanctions would be more appropriate given Elsen's election record, as well as a petition signed by over 200 supporters.

Assistant Attorney General Brent Kempema asked Elsen whether public support should direct the commission's decision.

"I think public support shows that they support me and how I do my job. ... It should show you folks (the commission) where I am in the community," Elsen responded.

After hours of testimony and executive session discussion, the commission came to the same unanimous conclusion and revoked Elsen's license. Commissioners said a suspension would ultimately place too much of a burden on lower level officers who would have to shoulder Elsen's responsibilities while he was away.

Elsen declined to comment following the hearing. He has served as Marshall County sheriff since 1983 and was re-elected in November.

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

Charges possible in fatal Watertown crash

WATERTOWN, S.D. (AP) — Authorities say charges are possible in a two-vehicle crash that killed a driver in Watertown.

Police say 59-year-old Roberta Anderson, of Marvin, died Thursday night when her SUV was struck by another SUV on Highway 12. The driver of the striking SUV and a passenger were taken to the hospital with injuries that are not life threatening.

KSFY-TV reports charges are pending against the 33-year-old man driving the SUV that struck the victim's vehicle.

Information from: KSFY-TV, <http://www.ksfy.com>

Native American bones to be returned to a tribe

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — Human bones excavated from a 4,000-year-old burial site in western Wyoming will be returned to a Native American tribe to be determined.

The National Park Service this week said the fragmentary human remains of an 8- to 9-year-old child and an adult will be returned to a tribe in Wyoming, South Dakota, Montana or Idaho following consultations.

The bones were removed from a site near the U.S. Forest Service's Dead Indian Campground in the Shoshone National Forest in 1969 during an archaeological excavation.

They're now being returned to a tribe under the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. The National Park Service says the bones have been identified as Native American but cannot be reasonably traced to any present-day tribe.

The agency says the burial site is the aboriginal land of the Crow Tribe of Montana.

Search for man, possibly armed, triggers lockdowns

PARKSTON, S.D. (AP) — Police in Parkston say they're arrested a man who triggered lockdowns at both the local school and hospital.

The Parkston Police Department posted on Facebook about 1:30 a.m. Friday that they were looking for a man who was believed to be armed and that residents should lock their doors.

Authorities have not said why they were looking for the man. Authorities say Avera St. Benedict Health Center and the Parkston School District were locked down about 6:30 a.m. About 7 a.m. police announced they had found the suspect and the lockdowns were lifted.

Second bank sues School Bus in Sioux Falls

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A second bank is suing a Sioux Falls school bus company for defaulting on loans.

Reliabank Dakota says School Bus, Inc. and its owner Steven Hey owe more than \$1 million. Collateral includes at least seven school buses.

The Argus Leader reports the lawsuit by Reliabank comes weeks after Frontier Bank sued, claiming School Bus owed more than \$500,000.

Sioux Falls School District officials say they are aware of the financial issues facing School Bus, but believe transportation for its students will not be affected.

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

Stranded North Carolinians take stock of Dorian's damage

By BEN FINLEY Associated Press

NAGS HEAD, N.C. (AP) — Skies cleared and floodwaters receded Saturday from North Carolina's Outer Banks, leaving behind a muddy trail of destruction wrought by Hurricane Dorian, which turned north and began lashing parts of eastern Canada.

Dorian's worst damage in the U.S. appeared to be on Ocracoke Island, which even in good weather is accessible only by boat or air and is popular with tourists for its undeveloped beaches. Longtime residents who hunkered down to wait out the storm described strong but manageable winds followed by a wall of water that flooded the first floors of many homes and forced some to await rescue from their attics.

"We're used to cleaning up dead limbs and trash that's floating around," said Ocracoke Island resident and business owner Philip Howard. "But now it's everything: picnic tables, doors, lumber that's been floating around."

Howard said by phone Saturday that flooding at his properties on the North Carolina island is 13 inches higher than the levels wrought by a storm in 1944, which he said had long been considered the worst. He raised his home higher than the 1944 flood level and still got water inside.

"It's overwhelming," said Howard, who owns the Village Craftsmen, a store that sells handcrafted pottery, glass and kitchen items. He said much of the merchandise on the lower shelves is ruined. Pieces of pottery were floating around inside.

Inside his house, the floorboards were buckling and curling up after being warped by the water, he said.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 26 of 75

Gov. Roy Cooper said about 800 people had remained on the island to wait out Dorian and it appeared to be the hardest hit. The storm made landfall Friday morning over the Outer Banks as a far weaker storm than the monster that devastated the Bahamas. Yet despite having been downgraded to a Category 1 storm, it still sent seawater surging into homes on Ocracoke, many for the first time in memory.

More than 1,100 Bahamians arrived in Palm Beach, Florida, after being evacuated by cruise ship from their hurricane-battered islands.

The Grand Celebration cruise ship returned to its home port after setting sail Thursday for Freeport, Grand Bahama, to deliver more than 112 tons of supplies and ferry dozens of health workers and emergency crews.

As it approached Canada, Dorian was again picking up strength. The National Hurricane Center in Miami said the maximum sustained winds had increased to 100 mph (155 kph) from 85 mph (140 kph), raising it to a Category 2 storm.

Forecasters said the center of Dorian was expected to move across central or eastern Nova Scotia late Saturday afternoon or early evening, pass near or over Prince Edward Island late Saturday, and then move to Newfoundland and Labrador on Sunday. Outer bands of Dorian already were producing strong winds and heavy rain in southern New Brunswick and mainland Nova Scotia. Meteorologists expected the storm to weaken to a Category 1 hurricane by the time it makes landfall.

Canadian officials prepared for the possibility of flooding, washouts and storm surges, and Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale said the military was mobilizing to assist Nova Scotia.

Officials in Halifax, the Nova Scotian capital and home to 400,000 people, urged downtown businesses to close by 5 p.m.

"We do not want the citizens of Halifax roaming downtown as the water is coming in," said Erica Fleck, Halifax's assistant chief of community risk reduction.

Hurricanes in Canada are somewhat rare in part because once the storms reach colder Canadian waters, they lose their main source of energy. Hubbard said the last hurricanes to make landfall in Canada were Hurricane Igor and Hurricane Earl in September, 2010.

While tropical-storm force winds buffeted southeastern Massachusetts and could sweep into Maine later Saturday, hurricane-force winds are unlikely to pose any threat to land in the U.S.

In North Carolina, the governor said officials were aware of no serious injuries on the Outer Banks from the storm. People in need of temporary housing were being taken to a shelter on the mainland, said Cooper, who added that points farther north along the Outer Banks also received damage from Dorian. About 200 people were in shelters and 57,000 without power as of mid-day Saturday, according to the governor's office. Emergency officials transported fuel trucks, generators, food and water to Ocracoke.

"We just thought it was gonna be a normal blow," Steve Harris, a semi-retired contractor, said Friday. "But the damage is going to be severe this time. This is flooding of biblical proportions."

Harris lost his car to the storm and his air conditioner is damaged, but he said he's blessed that his condominium is on the third floor and he is insured. Of the 11 units in his complex, seven had water in them, he said.

The U.S. Coast Guard began landing local law enforcement officers on the island Friday by helicopter and airlifting out the sick, elderly and others in distress, Hyde County authorities said. Officers were doing door-to-door checks and offering water and food to residents, according to the sheriff's office.

Connie Leinbach, who publishes the Ocracoke Observer newspaper, said sheriff's deputies and other rescue personnel made at least two rescues from attics. She said the Coast Guard was called in to help a man who was having problems with his oxygen.

At least four deaths in the Southeast were blamed on Dorian. All were men in Florida or North Carolina who died in falls or by electrocution while trimming trees, putting up storm shutters or otherwise getting ready for the hurricane. North Carolina's governor on Saturday urged returning residents to be vigilant, as many of the injuries and deaths from previous storms happened during the cleanup process.

As Dorian closed in, more than a quarter-million residents and visitors were ordered to evacuate the Outer Banks, which stick out from the Eastern Seaboard like the sideview mirror on a car. But many just

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 27 of 75

ried down their boats, removed objects that could blow away from their yards, and hunkered down.

Dorian slammed the Bahamas at the start of the week with 185 mph (295 kph) winds, killing at least 43 people and obliterating countless homes. From there, it swept past Florida and Georgia, then sideswiped the Carolinas on Thursday, spinning off tornadoes that peeled away roofs and flipped recreational vehicles.

Still, the damage was far less than feared in many parts of the Carolinas, including historic Charleston, South Carolina, which is prone to flooding even from ordinary storms, and Wilmington, North Carolina, the state's biggest coastal city.

Ocracoke resident and restaurant owner Jason Wells said he lost three vehicles and a golf cart to floodwaters, and he has \$5,000 worth of food in a freezer on an island that still lacks power. He said by text message Saturday that he and family members were already bleaching and disinfecting their houses, but he feared weeks could pass before electricity returned to most houses because of wiring problems caused by floodwaters.

"We are a close knit community. We will power on," Wells wrote. "We will persevere. We are family. Time to get to work."

Contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Gary D. Robertson, Martha Waggoner and Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina; Tom Foreman Jr. in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; Rob Gillies in Toronto; and Seth Borenstein in Washington.

For more of AP's coverage of Hurricane Dorian, go to: <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

Pain of scuba diving deaths off California felt across globe

By JULIE WATSON Associated Press

Less than a year ago, Tia Salika was wearing an animal-print scuba suit and posing for a photograph in the depths of the iridescent blue ocean off South America with her parents and her best friend.

So it seemed only fitting that the high schooler would celebrate her 17th birthday with another adventure: A diving tour through California's rugged Channel Islands, a national park off Santa Barbara's coast.

That was how she and her parents lived their lives — as fearless world explorers like so many of the others who boarded the Conception vessel for the three-day excursion, friends said. Salika's birthday ended in tragedy when fire erupted on the commercial dive boat, trapping the 33 divers and a crew member sleeping below deck.

The pain would be felt across California, the United States and as far away as Japan, India and Singapore.

The Conception brought together an exceptional group of people, who left behind a trail of photos and social media postings that serve as a testament to their lives. They were scientists, teachers, nurses, entrepreneurs, engineers, artists, photographers and activists. One woman, a water district employee, was dubbed the "Water Princess" for her work in urging people to conserve water. Another was a sales director who devoted her time advocating for the protection of sharks.

They worked in everything from the movie industry in Hollywood to research at Stanford University. Many had graduated from top universities with advanced degrees. Several spoke multiple languages. Two grew up in Singapore, and two others were from India. One had a mother in Japan.

After reading some of the names of those identified so far, Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown said, "This list is representative of the diverse makeup of the passengers and crew who were aboard the Conception on that fateful day. They were from our local area and from throughout California, from across the United States and from around the world. Their tragic loss has devastated countless family members, loved ones, friends and colleagues."

Many had traveled, worked and volunteered in places around the globe from Antarctica to the Galapagos Islands. Their love of the Earth's underwater worlds transcended into a passion for all living things. It bonded them — a physics teacher with his 26-year-old daughter, a family of five also on a birthday trip for the father, neighbors from Santa Monica and of course, the Salikas.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 28 of 75

Tia Salika first put on a dive tank at the age of 6, said Tom Peyton, vice president of Kids Sea Camp, a scuba diving tour company. The Salika family felt like a part of Peyton's family because they traveled with the South Carolina outfitter for about a decade, including last November to Bonaire island, off Venezuela's coast, he said.

"This family was incredibly adventurous, very fearless," he said.

Tia Salika's father, Steve Salika, 55, who worked for 30 years for Apple, and her mother, Diana Adamic, 60, showed her the world, he said.

Adamic, who volunteered with Tia and her best friend, Berenice Felipe, had a "compassionate, inquisitive nature and personal experiences" that "drove her to seek innovative ways to make the community around her a better place," Jen Walker, a former humane educator at the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter, posted on the shelter's Facebook page.

Many aboard the Conception posted in blogs about being in awe of the planet's wonders and wanting to capture it in photos.

Professional photographer Andrew Fritz, 40, who was on the boat with his wife, an environmental scientist who had done research in Antarctica, wrote on his website that he was so enamored at seeing a Cheetah run at the San Diego Safari Park he had to put down his camera and watch with his own eyes.

Many talked about living to inspire others or to be inspired.

Lisa Fiedler, a 52-year-old hairdresser and photographer, said on her photography website that the moment she picked up the camera, she realized "I enjoyed creating and sharing images that reflect the way I absorb the grandeur of nature."

There were also dreamers and risk takers. Allie Kurtz, 26, quit her job in the movie industry to become a deck hand on the Conception. She was the only crew member of six to die because she was sleeping below deck where the divers were.

Marine biologist Kristy Finstad, 41, who led the tour, had just returned from spending several years sailing across the Pacific with her husband.

Like Tia Salika, she first put on a dive tank as a child. Finstad had done hundreds of dives in the Channel Islands, whose wind-swept beauty still captivated her.

Finstad credited her mother, who founded Worldwide Diving Adventures, with instilling in her an appreciation of the planet and the courage to explore it. Finstad studied damselfish and corals in the Tahitian Islands, dove for black pearls in the French Polynesian Tuamotus Islands and counted salmonids for the city of Santa Cruz, where she lived.

"Dragging your feet is no way to climb a mountain," Finstad wrote in her blog before setting off on her sailing trip in 2015, "holding your breath is no way to dive."

Iran uses advanced centrifuges, threatens higher enrichment

By **NASSER KARIMI** and **JON GAMBRELL** Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran on Saturday said it now uses arrays of advanced centrifuges prohibited by its 2015 nuclear deal and can enrich uranium "much more beyond" current levels to weapons-grade material, taking a third step away from the accord while warning Europe has little time to offer it new terms.

While insisting Iran doesn't seek a nuclear weapon, the comments by Behrouz Kamalvandi of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran threatened pushing uranium enrichment far beyond levels ever reached in the country. Prior to the atomic deal, Iran only reached up to 20%, which itself still is only a short technical step away from weapons-grade levels of 90%.

The move threatened to push tensions between Iran and the U.S. even higher more than a year after President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew America from the nuclear deal and imposed sanctions now crushing Iran's economy. Mysterious attacks on oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz, Iran shooting down a U.S. military surveillance drone and other incidents across the wider Middle East followed Trump's decision.

"So far, Iran has showed patience before the U.S. pressures and Europeans' indifference," said Qassem Babaei, a 33-year-old electrician in Tehran. "Now they should wait and see how Iran achieves its goals."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 29 of 75

Iran separately acknowledged Saturday it had seized another ship and detained 12 Filipino crewmembers, while satellite images suggested an Iranian oil tanker once held by Gibraltar was now off the coast of Syria despite Tehran promising its oil wouldn't go there.

Speaking to journalists while flanked by advanced centrifuges, Kamalvandi said Iran has begun using an array of 20 IR-6 centrifuges and another 20 of IR-4 centrifuges. An IR-6 can produce enriched uranium 10 times as fast as an IR-1, Iranian officials say, while an IR-4 produces five times as fast.

The nuclear deal limited Iran to using only 5,060 first-generation IR-1 centrifuges to enrich uranium by rapidly spinning uranium hexafluoride gas. By starting up these advanced centrifuges, Iran further cuts into the one year that experts estimate Tehran would need to have enough material for building a nuclear weapon if it chose to pursue one.

"Under current circumstances, the Islamic Republic of Iran is capable of increasing its enriched uranium stockpile as well as its enrichment levels and that is not just limited to 20 percent," Kamalvandi said. "We are capable inside the country to increase the enrichment much more beyond that."

Iran plans to have two cascades, one with 164 advanced IR-2M centrifuges and another with 164 IR-5 centrifuges, running in two months as well, Kamalvandi said. A cascade is a group of centrifuges working together to more quickly enrich uranium.

Iran has already increased its enrichment up to 4.5%, above the 3.67% allowed under the deal, as well as gone beyond its 300-kilogram limit for low-enriched uranium.

While Kamalvandi stressed that "the Islamic Republic is not after the bomb," he warned that Iran was running out of ways to stay in the accord.

"If Europeans want to make any decision, they should do it soon," he said. France had floated a proposed \$15 billion line of credit to allow Iran to sell its oil abroad despite U.S. sanctions. Another trade mechanism proposed by Europe called INSTEX also has faced difficulty.

Kamalvandi also said Iran would allow U.N. inspectors to continue to monitor sites in the country. A top official from the U.N.'s International Atomic Energy Agency was expected to meet with Iranian officials in Tehran on Sunday.

The IAEA said Saturday it was aware of Iran's announcement and "agency inspectors are on the ground in Iran and they will report any relevant activities to IAEA headquarters in Vienna." It did not elaborate.

In Paris, U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper said Iran's announcement wasn't a surprise.

"The Iranians are going to pursue what the Iranians have always intended to pursue," Esper said at a news conference with his French counterpart, Florence Parly.

For his part, Trump has said he remains open for direct talks with Iran. A surprise visit by Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif to the Group of Seven summit in France last month raised the possibility of direct talks between Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani, perhaps at this month's United Nations General Assembly in New York, though officials in Tehran later seemed to dismiss the idea.

Meanwhile Saturday, Iranian state TV said the tugboat and its 12 crewmembers were seized on suspicion of smuggling diesel fuel near the Strait of Hormuz. The report did not elaborate. In Manila, the Philippines' Department of Foreign Affairs said it was checking details of the reported seizure.

Also Saturday, satellite images showed a once-detained Iranian oil tanker pursued by the U.S. appears to be off the coast of Syria, where Tehran reportedly promised the vessel would not go when authorities in Gibraltar agreed to release it several weeks ago.

Images obtained by The Associated Press from Maxar Technologies appeared to show the Adrian Darya-1, formerly known as the Grace-1, some 2 nautical miles (3.7 kilometers) off Syria's coast.

Iranian and Syrian officials have not acknowledged the vessel's presence there. Authorities in Tehran earlier said the 2.1 million barrels of crude oil onboard had been sold to an unnamed buyer. That oil is worth about \$130 million on the global market, but it remains unclear who would buy the oil as they'd face the threat of U.S. sanctions.

The new images matched a black-and-white image earlier tweeted by John Bolton, the U.S. national security adviser.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 30 of 75

"Anyone who said the Adrian Darya-1 wasn't headed to #Syria is in denial," Bolton tweeted. "We can talk, but #Iran's not getting any sanctions relief until it stops lying and spreading terror!"

U.S. prosecutors in federal court allege the Adrian Darya's owner is Iran's Revolutionary Guard, which answers only to Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. On Wednesday, the U.S. imposed new sanctions on an oil shipping network it alleged had ties to the Guard and offered up to \$15 million for anyone with information that disrupts its paramilitary operations.

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Robert Burns in Paris, David Rising in Berlin and Jim Gomez in Manila, Philippines, contributed to this report.

SC, Kansas GOP scrap 2020 presidential preference votes

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Republican leaders in South Carolina and Kansas have voted to scrap their presidential nominating contests in 2020, while party officials in Nevada were deciding whether to follow suit as the GOP erects more hurdles for the long shots challenging President Donald Trump.

Canceling primaries, caucuses and other voting is not an unusual move for the party of the White House incumbent seeking a second term, and allows Trump to try to consolidate his support as Democrats work to winnow down their large field of candidates.

A spokesman for the South Carolina Republican Party, Joe Jackson, confirmed that the party voted Saturday against holding a presidential primary next year. The Kansas GOP tweeted on Friday that it will not organize a caucus "because President Trump is an elected incumbent from the Republican Party." Its state committee planned to approve rules Saturday for an "internal party process" for selecting convention delegates, according to Kelly Arnold, the party's former state chairman, and Helen Van Etten, a member of the Republican National Committee from Topeka.

Officials in Nevada scheduled meetings later Saturday to determine the fate of their contests. A decision in Arizona is expected later in the month.

Challengers have emerged to Trump, including Bill Weld, a former Massachusetts governor, and Joe Walsh, a former Illinois congressman. Others may join them.

Walsh told CNN after the South Carolina vote that his campaign would "fight South Carolina and any other state that considers doing this." He also noted that Trump complained during the 2016 election "about how the Democrats were rigging the system to get Hillary (Clinton) elected. Well, look what he's doing now. You talk about rigging a system."

Primary challenges to incumbents are rarely successful, and Trump's poll numbers among Republican voters have proved resilient. Nonetheless, Trump aides are looking to prevent a repeat of the convention discord that highlighted the electoral weaknesses of Presidents George H.W. Bush and Jimmy Carter in their failed reelection campaigns.

Since last year, Trump's campaign has worked to monitor and at times control the process by which delegates to next year's Republican National Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina, are selected. His campaign wants the convention to be a four-night "infomercial" for Trump by sidelining the president's detractors within the party.

The effort is an acknowledgment that Trump hasn't completely cemented his grip on the GOP and might not coast to the nomination without some opposition. To that end, the campaign has worked over the past year to scuttle any attempts at a Trump challenge by party dissidents, mindful that a serious primary opponent could weaken Trump heading into the general election.

In January, the Republican National Committee voted to express its "undivided support" for Trump and his "effective presidency."

In years past, both Republicans and Democrats have cut state nominating contests when an incumbent president from their party ran for a second term. In 1984, South Carolina GOP leaders opted to call off their primary as President Ronald Reagan sought a second term. In 2004, the GOP again canceled the

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 31 of 75

state's primary with leaders deciding instead to endorse President George W. Bush's reelection bid.

The South Carolina Democratic Party didn't hold presidential primaries in 1996 or in 2012, when Presidents Bill Clinton and Barack Obama were their incumbents.

The Nevada Republican Party was expected to hold a vote on possibly changing its rules to allow a bypass of its presidential nominating caucuses in 2020 and endorse Trump outright. The move would allow the state's central committee members to hold a vote and commit the state's GOP delegates to the president, shielding him from a primary challenge.

Associated Press writers Michelle Price in Las Vegas, Jonathan Cooper in Phoenix and John Hanna in Topeka, Kansas, contributed to this report.

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Pope denounces exploitation of Madagascar's unique resources

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ANTANARIVO, Madagascar (AP) — Pope Francis denounced the illegal logging and exploitation of Madagascar's unique natural resources on Saturday as he opened a visit to the Indian Ocean nation by urging the government to fight the corruption that is ravaging the island's ecosystem and keeping its people in "inhumane poverty."

Francis called on President Andry Rajoelina to provide Madagascar's people with jobs and alternative sources of income so they aren't forced to cut down trees to find fertile soil, poach the island's wildlife and engage in contraband and illegal exportation of its diverse flora, fauna and mineral resources.

"The deterioration of that biodiversity compromises the future of the country and of the earth, our common home," Francis warned Rajoelina and other government authorities as he began the second leg of his weeklong trip to southern Africa.

Madagascar is home to 5% of the world's plant and animal species, with around 95% of its reptiles and 89% of its plant life existing nowhere else on Earth, according to the World Wildlife Fund. Yet it is also one of the world's poorest countries, with 75% of its 25.5 million people living on less than \$2 a day.

Environmental groups and Transparency International have long highlighted the illegal logging of Madagascar's rosewood forests and other endangered tree species as evidence of the rampant corruption that has made multimillionaires out of a few "rosewood barons" who have plundered the island's northeastern forests.

"Your lovely island of Madagascar is rich in plant and animal biodiversity, yet this treasure is especially threatened by excessive deforestation, from which some profit," Francis said. He cited forest fires, poaching and the "unrestricted cutting down of valuable woodlands" as particular threats.

More so than any pope before him, Francis has made environmental concerns a pillar of his papacy, linking global warming to the persistent exploitation of the world's poor by the wealthy. He has also frequently called attention to the devastation wrought on the poor by corruption, often calling public officials to account on his foreign trips.

Transparency International, which ranks Madagascar among the most corrupt countries, has accused local public officials of complicity or negligence in the illegal logging, mining of gold and sapphires and the poaching of tortoises, turtles and exportation of lemurs.

In his speech Saturday, Francis urged Rajoelina, who came to power on a campaign to fight corruption, to make good on his pledges.

"I would encourage you to fight with strength and determination against all endemic forms of corruption and speculation that increase social disparity, and to confront the situations of great instability and exclusion that always create conditions of inhumane poverty," he said.

Francis, the world's first pope from the global south, acknowledged that some of the island's poor have no choice but to cut down forests to find soil or extract minerals in illegal ways that damage the environment.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 32 of 75

"So it is important to create jobs and activities that generate income, while protecting the environment and helping people to emerge from poverty," he said.

Rajoelina promised to look out for the interests of all, especially the poor.

"In this place on this day, I confirm my will and my engagement to repair and rebuild Madagascar," he said. "I will pay attention to the weakest and the lowest. I will pay attention to justice and to equality, love and hope."

Among the groups trying to protect Madagascar's environment is Catholic Relief Services, the humanitarian arm of the U.S. bishops conference. The group has had a presence on Madagascar for five decades, and has focused much of its work on helping the rural poor find alternatives to cutting down trees for firewood or using slash and burn techniques to clear new land for agriculture.

"We work a lot to try to prevent that and work with farmers to help them with new techniques to kind of re-energize the soil so that they could use it again," said James Hazen, CRS country representative.

Philip Boyle, British ambassador to Madagascar, estimated that 200,000 hectares (about 495,000 acres) of forest a year are lost in Madagascar and by some projections most of the damp, moist forest will be lost by 2040.

"Unless there are measures to prevent mass deforestation and mass reforestation then possibly the most unique habitat on earth will be lost," he said on the sidelines of the pope's speech.

Francis met later Saturday with nuns and the island nation's bishops before presiding over an evening vigil attended by an estimated 100,000 young people.

Dancers who performed for the 82-year-old pope mobbed him on stage after the vigil ended, evidence of his rock-star popularity in a country where some 35% of the population is Catholic.

"I'm very happy to get a chance to see the pope because I have only seen him on my phone," said Raspanambinina, 32, who attended the vigil with her three children. "This time is very important for me and family as it's the first time he has come here."

In his off-the-cuff remarks to a group of giggling nuns earlier in the day, the first Jesuit pope gave them advice about living in religious communities. He told them to speak up when there are problems and acknowledged that superiors can sometimes be the source of them.

"Not all prioresses are Nobel Prize winners for niceness," he quipped.

AP videojournalist Joe Mwhia contributed.

NOAA assailed for defending Trump's Hurricane Dorian claim

By **SETH BORENSTEIN** AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Former top officials of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration are assailing the agency for undermining its weather forecasters as it defends President Donald Trump's statement from days ago that Hurricane Dorian threatened Alabama.

They say NOAA's action risks the credibility of the nation's weather and science agency and may even risk lives.

The critics served both Republican and Democratic presidents. Among them are former NOAA leaders and a former disaster response chief.

"This rewriting history to satisfy an ego diminishes NOAA," Elbert "Joe" Friday, former Republican-appointed director of the National Weather Service, said on Facebook. He told The Associated Press on Saturday: "We don't want to get the point where science is determined by politics rather than science and facts. And I'm afraid this is an example where this is beginning to occur."

The previous evening, a NOAA statement from an anonymous spokesperson lent support to Trump's warning days earlier that Alabama faced danger from Dorian. Alabama had never been included in official hurricane advisories and his information was outdated.

The statement undermined a tweet by the weather service's office in Birmingham, Alabama, that had said Alabama would see no impact from Dorian.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 33 of 75

Former officials saw a political hand at work. The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment Saturday as to whether it had communication with NOAA before the agency released its statement Friday. NOAA officials also didn't respond to requests for comment.

"This falls into such uncharted territory," said W. Craig Fugate, who was Florida emergency management chief under Republican Gov. Jeb Bush and director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency under Democratic President Barack Obama. "You have science organizations putting out statements against their own offices. For the life of me I don't think I would have ever faced this under President Obama or Governor Bush."

Fugate said this damages the National Weather Service and it is hard to say how much it will hurt hurricane preparedness and response.

Jane Lubchenco, NOAA administrator during the Obama administration said: "It is truly sad to see political appointees undermining the superb, life-saving work of NOAA's talented and dedicated career servants. Scientific integrity at a science agency matters."

Retired Adm. David Titley, former NOAA operations chief and a former meteorology professor at Pennsylvania State University said NOAA's leadership is showing "moral cowardice" and said officials should have resigned instead of issuing the statement chastising the Birmingham office. Friday said he would have quit had he been in top officials' shoes.

Titley said Saturday it was dangerous because of the mistrust NOAA is now injecting in forecasts that can help people with life-or-death decisions on whether to evacuate.

"For people who look for excuses not to take action when their lives or property are threatened. ... I think this can potentially feed that," Titley said.

Former National Hurricane Center Director Bill Read on Friday also blasted NOAA on Facebook, saying he was speaking because government employees were too afraid for their jobs to speak.

Last Sunday, Trump tweeted: "In addition to Florida - South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, will most likely be hit (much) harder than anticipated. Looking like one of the largest hurricanes ever. Already category 5."

The weather service in Birmingham quickly followed up with a tweet, which one meteorologist there said was prompted by residents' concerns about what to do. It said: "Alabama will NOT see any impacts from #Dorian. We repeat, no impacts from Hurricane #Dorian will be felt across Alabama. The system will remain too far east."

NOAA spokesman Christopher Vaccaro verified that day that "The current forecast path of Dorian does not include Alabama."

The agency changed course in its latest statement, saying under no one's name that the Birmingham tweet from its forecasters "spoke in absolute terms that were inconsistent with probabilities from the best forecast products available at the time."

Contrary to Trump's tweet, it was never "most likely" that Alabama would be hit hard. The highest percentage that tropical force storm winds — not stronger hurricane-force winds — would hit somewhere in Alabama was 11%, according to hurricane center charts and briefly somewhere between 20% and 30% according to a graphic that was not a forecast.

Associated Press writer Jonathan Lemire contributed to this report.

Russia and Ukraine trade prisoners, each fly 35 to freedom

By JIM HEINTZ Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russia and Ukraine conducted a major prisoner exchange that freed 35 people detained in each country and flew them to the other, a deal that could help advance Russia-Ukraine relations and end five years of fighting in Ukraine's east.

The trade involved some of the highest-profile prisoners caught up in a bitter standoff between Ukraine and Russia.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 34 of 75

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy greeted the freed prisoners as they stepped down from the airplane that had brought them from Moscow to Kyiv's Boryspil airport. Relatives waiting on the tarmac surged forward to hug their loved ones.

Most of the ex-detainees appeared to be in good physical condition, although one struggled down the steps on crutches and another was held by the arms as he slowly navigated the steps.

Among those Russia returned was Ukrainian film director Oleg Sentsov, whose conviction for preparing terrorist attacks was strongly denounced abroad, and 24 Ukrainian sailors taken with a ship the Russian navy seized last year.

"Hell has ended; everyone is alive and that is the main thing," Vyacheslav Zinchenko, 30, one of the released sailors, said.

The prisoners released by Ukraine included Volodymyr Tsemakh, who commanded a separatist rebel air defense unit in the area of eastern Ukraine where a Malaysian airliner was shot down in 2014, killing all 298 people aboard.

Dozens of lawmakers urged Ukraine's president not to make Tsemakh one of their country's 35 traded prisoners.

Critics saw freeing Tsemakh as an act of submissiveness to Russia, but the exchange "allows Zelenskiy to fulfill one of his main pre-election promises," Ukrainian analyst Vadim Karasev told The Associated Press.

Zelenskiy, who was elected in a landslide in April, has promised new initiatives to resolve the war in eastern Ukraine between government troops and the separatist rebels.

The exchange of prisoners also raises hope in Russia for the reduction of European sanctions imposed because of its role in the conflict, Karasev said. Russia also is under sanctions for its annexation of Crimea in 2014, shortly before the separatist conflict in the east began, but that dispute is unlikely to be resolved.

At Moscow's Vnukovo airport, the released prisoners remained on the plane for about 15 minutes for unknown reasons. When they came off, many toting baggage, a bus drove them to a medical facility for examination.

Russia said it would release a full list of its citizens freed by Ukraine but had not done so by Saturday night.

The 24 sailors in the swap were seized after Russian ships fired on two Ukrainian vessels on Nov. 25 in the Kerch Strait, located between the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov next to Russia-annexed Crimea.

Another passenger on the plane from Moscow was Nikolai Karpyuk, who was imprisoned in 2016 after he was convicted of killing Russians in Chechnya in the 1990s.

"Russia was not able to break me even though they tried hard to do this," Karpyuk said in Kyiv.

Kirill Vyshinsky, head of Russian state news agency RIA-Novosti's Ukraine branch, also had a seat. Vyshinsky had been jailed since 2018 on treason charges.

He thanked Harlem Desir, the media freedom representative for the Organization for Security and Cooperation In Europe, for calling for his release.

The exchange comes amid renewed hope that a solution can be found to the fighting in Ukraine's east that has killed 13,000 people since 2014. A congratulatory tweet from U.S. President Donald Trump called the trade "good news."

"Russia and Ukraine just swapped large numbers of prisoners. Very good news, perhaps a first giant step to peace," Trump's tweet said. "Congratulations to both countries!"

However, reaching a peace agreement faces many obstacles, such as determining the final territorial status of rebel-held areas. Russia insists it has not supported the rebels and the fighting is Ukraine's internal affair.

A Russian Foreign Ministry statement welcoming the exchange touched on those difficulties, calling the war an "intra-Ukraine conflict."

"Obviously, the habit of blaming Russia for all the troubles of Ukraine should remain in the past," the ministry statement said.

The prospect of progress nevertheless appeared to rise last month with the announcement of a planned summit of the leaders of Russia, Ukraine, France and Germany - the four countries with representatives

in the long-dormant "Normandy format," a group seeking to end the conflict.

"We have made the first step. It was very complicated. Further, we will come closer to the return of our (war) prisoners," Zelenskiy said of the prisoner exchange.

In July, a tentative agreement for the release of 69 Ukrainian prisoners and 208 held in Ukraine was reached by the Trilateral Contact Group of Russia, Ukraine and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; negotiations on fulfilling it continue.

Konstantin Kosachev, head of the foreign relations committee in the Russian parliament's upper house, said the exchange represented a move "in the direction of crossing from confrontation to dialogue, and one can only thank those thanks to whose strength this became possible."

Yuras Karmanau in Minsk, Belarus, contributed to this story .

In New Hampshire, 2020 Dems urge voters to not play it safe

By HUNTER WOODALL and JULIE PACE Associated Press

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — A trio of Democratic presidential candidates urged voters in New Hampshire on Saturday to not play it safe in the 2020 election, leveling an implicit critique of front-runner Joe Biden.

Biden has centered his campaign on his years of experience in Washington and a perceived ability to steal the support of white, working-class voters away from President Donald Trump. Speaking at the New Hampshire Democrats' state convention, Biden's rivals told voters to aim for more.

"Beating Donald Trump is the floor, it's not the ceiling," said New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, as the crowd erupted in cheers.

Pete Buttigieg, the 37-year-old mayor of South Bend, Indiana, was more explicit.

"Every time we've tried to play it safe with established and Washington-tenured figures, every single time we've come up short," Buttigieg told reporters after his remarks.

Booker and Buttigieg never mentioned Biden by name, nor did Julian Castro, the former Obama administration housing secretary who made a similar appeal. But the target of their message was clear: the former vice president who has led primary polls throughout the year.

The candidates were among 19 Democratic White House hopefuls who descended on New Hampshire for the party gathering. The event is a key opportunity for candidates to woo political power brokers in the first-in-the nation primary state.

Democrats in New Hampshire have been slow to endorse so far this election system. That's due in part to the large number of candidates in the race as well as lingering tensions over the 2016 primary battle between Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Biden was the first candidate to speak and focused his remarks on Trump, saying the president has "unleashed the deepest, darkest forces in this nation." He added: "We cannot, and I will not, let this man be re-elected president of the United States of America."

Castro said that if Democrats want to ensure Trump is defeated "we can't do the same old thing."

"We're not going to win by just trying to be safe," Castro said.

The convention was also an opportunity for the candidates to flex their organizational strength in New Hampshire. Supporters of the major candidates gathered outside the arena in the early morning hours, waving signs and chanting campaign slogans.

Sen. Elizabeth Warren's crowd of supporters stretched deep and erupted in cheers as the senator arrived to greet them. Rival campaigns grumbled privately that Warren, who represents neighboring Massachusetts, was benefiting from home field advantage.

US mass shooters exploited gaps, errors in background checks

By LISA MARIE PANE Associated Press

Most mass shooters in the U.S. acquired the weapons they used legally because there was nothing in their backgrounds to disqualify them, according to James Alan Fox, a criminologist with Northeastern University who has studied mass shootings for decades.

But in several attacks in recent years gunmen acquired weapons as a result of mistakes, lack of follow-through or gaps in federal and state law.

Not all gun purchases are subject to a federal background check system. Even for those that are, federal law stipulates a limited number of reasons why a person would be prohibited from purchasing or possessing a firearm. Those include someone who has been convicted of a crime punishable by more than a year in prison, has a substance abuse addiction, has been involuntarily committed for a mental health issue, was dishonorably discharged from the military or convicted of domestic violence/subject of a restraining order.

In 2018, there were more than 26 million background checks conducted and fewer than 100,000 people failed. Of those, the vast majority were for a criminal conviction. Just over 6,000 were rejected for a mental health issue.

Here are some of the ways mass shooters acquired their weapons:

MISTAKE IN DATA: CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA, CHURCH

The gunman who killed nine worshippers in 2015 at Mother Emanuel AME Church acquired a handgun because of a combination of a mistake in the background database and lack of follow-through.

Dylann Roof had been arrested on drug charges just weeks earlier. Although that arrest should have prevented him from purchasing the pistol he used in the attack, the FBI examiner reviewing the sale never saw the arrest report because the wrong agency was listed in state criminal history records. After being told she had the wrong agency to review the arrest record and being directed to a different police department, she didn't follow through.

After a three-day waiting period, Roof went back to a West Columbia store and picked up the handgun.

FBI examiners process about 22,000 inquiries per day, a Justice Department attorney said during a court case brought by relatives of the church victims.

DATA NOT UPDATED: SUTHERLAND SPRINGS, TEXAS, CHURCH

The man who killed more than two dozen churchgoers in 2017 in Sutherland Springs, Texas, was able to purchase guns because his past criminal record was not submitted to the FBI database.

Devin Patrick Kelley purchased four guns from federally licensed dealers in Texas and Colorado. The military veteran passed the required background checks because the Air Force never informed the FBI about an assault on his wife and her child that led to a court-martial, a year of confinement and a bad conduct discharge.

The Air Force acknowledged that in addition to failing to submit the information in the FBI database for Kelley, it found several dozen other such reporting omissions. The Air Force has blamed gaps in "training and compliance measures" for the lapses and said it made changes to prevent failures in the future.

LACK OF ENFORCEMENT: AURORA, ILLINOIS, WORKPLACE

When Aurora, Illinois, shooter Gary Martin failed a background check and was told to turn over his weapon, he never did and police didn't confiscate it. Martin later killed five co-workers and wounded six other people at a suburban Chicago manufacturing plant.

An initial background check failed to detect Martin's criminal record. Months later, a second background check found his 1995 aggravated assault conviction in Mississippi involving the stabbing of an ex-girlfriend.

He was sent a letter stating his gun permit had been revoked and ordering him to turn over his firearm to police, however he never gave up the .40-caliber Smith & Wesson handgun.

There's no mechanism under federal law to seize firearms from people who are prohibited from possession or purchase. Most states allow police to seize a firearm when they encounter a prohibited person. Few states have a procedure to actively retrieve and remove firearms from prohibited people.

A 2018 report by the California attorney general, for example, said that more than 20,000 people in

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 37 of 75

that state have failed to surrender their firearms as required. California is one of a handful of states that seizes firearms from prohibited people. California, Connecticut, and Nevada require prohibited people to provide proof they've complied and relinquished their firearms.

PRIVATE PURCHASE: WEST TEXAS RAMPAGE

The gunman who went on a rampage last weekend along a 10-mile stretch around Midland and Odessa, Texas, killing seven people and injuring about two dozen, had failed a background check in 2014. Authorities believe Seth Aaron Ator evaded the background check system by purchasing the weapon he used through a private transaction. They searched a home in Lubbock that they believe is associated with the person who supplied the gun.

Under federal law, private sales of firearms — such as between friends, relatives or even strangers — are not required to undergo a federal background check. Some 21 states plus Washington, D.C., have laws that require background checks on some private sales, but Texas isn't one of them. Two other states — Maryland and Pennsylvania — require a background check for handguns but not long guns.

A study by Harvard University researchers published in 2017 found that 22 percent of current gun owners who acquired a firearm in the previous two years reported doing so without a background check.

While Americans are allowed to make their own firearms, they cannot do so commercially. It is illegal to make and sell guns as a business without being a licensed dealer or manufacturer. Some sales at gun shows also are not subject to a background check.

TOOK FROM RELATIVES: NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT; MARYSVILLE, WASHINGTON AND SANTA FE, TEXAS

The 20-year-old who killed 20 students and six adults at an elementary school in Newtown, Connecticut, took the firearms he used from his mother's collection. Adam Lanza killed her first in the home they shared before going to the Sandy Hook Elementary School, where he carried out his attack in 2012.

In 2014, 15-year-old Jaylen Fryberg killed four classmates and wounded one other in Marysville, Washington, before killing himself. He was armed with a .40-caliber Beretta Px4 Storm handgun that he stole from his father. Fryberg's father was later convicted of illegally obtaining the gun for failing to acknowledge on federal firearm forms that he was the subject of a tribal domestic-violence protective order. That order was never sent into the state or federal criminal databases.

Dimitrios Pagourtzis, a 17-year-old high school student in Santa Fe, Texas, is accused of killing eight students and two substitute teachers in 2018 with a shotgun and pistol he took from his father's closet.

LEGALLY ACQUIRED: LAS VEGAS; AURORA, COLORADO; ROSEBURG, OREGON, AND ORLANDO AND PARKLAND, FLORIDA

The man who carried out the deadliest mass shooting in modern U.S. history — the Las Vegas attack that left 58 people killed and more than 500 wounded in 2017 — legally acquired 33 of the 49 weapons between October 2016 and Sept. 28, 2017, according to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

The gunmen who carried out attacks at a high school in Parkland, Florida; the Pulse nightclub in Orlando, Florida; Umpqua Community College in Roseburg, Oregon and a movie theater in Aurora, Colorado, all passed background checks and purchased their firearms legally.

Raiders cut Antonio Brown before he ever plays for team

By JOSH DUBOW AP Pro Football Writer

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP) — The Oakland Raiders released disgruntled star receiver Antonio Brown on Saturday before he ever played a game for the team.

The Raiders made the move just hours after Brown requested his release in the latest turn in a dramatic first summer with the team.

Brown was upset about his latest team fine over an outburst at practice at general manager Mike Mayock. That fine allowed the Raiders to void more than \$29 million in guarantees over the next two years in Brown's contract.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 38 of 75

Oakland instead decided to cut ties entirely. The Raiders had been counting heavily Brown after trading a third and fifth-round pick to Pittsburgh for the game's most prolific receiver in March. They also gave him a new three-year contract worth \$50.1 million that now is void following the release.

"Now that Antonio is a free agent, we are focused on the future and I will immediately work on signing him to a new team," agent Drew Rosenhaus said. "Antonio is looking forward to a new beginning."

The final twist to this melodrama in Oakland comes a day after Brown returned to the team following a one-day banishment and apologized in a meeting and in a brief public statement. Coach Jon Gruden said the plan was for Brown to play in the opener Monday night against Denver, but that changed after Brown requested and was granted his release.

Brown posted on his Instagram account Saturday morning that he's not angry but wants the "freedom" to disprove his skeptics.

"I have worked my whole life to prove that the system is blind to see talent like mines (sic)," he wrote. "Now that everyone sees it, they want me to conform to that same system that has failed me all those years. I'm not mad at anyone. I'm just asking for the freedom to prove them all wrong. Release me @ raiders. #NOMore"

A person familiar with the situation said Brown had been fined by the team Friday for the confrontation with Mayock in practice two days earlier. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because the fine wasn't announced. That dustup came after Brown posted a letter Mayock had sent him detailing nearly \$54,000 in fines for missing a practice and walkthrough.

ESPN reported the new fine was for \$215,073 for conduct detrimental to the team. That allows the Raiders to release Brown before the season opener without having to pay him more than \$29 million in guarantees over the next two years, although Brown could still contest that in a grievance.

Brown later sent an email to ESPN saying: "no way I play after they took that and made my contract week to week."

Brown also posted a video on YouTube on Friday night that includes audio of a phone conversation with Gruden from an unspecified date. Gruden asks Brown whether he wants to be a Raider. Brown said he does and the question is if the Raiders want him. Gruden then urges Brown to stop all the theatrics and "just play football. How hard is that? You're a great football player. Just play football."

The video ends with Brown saying, "I'm more than just a football player, man. I'm a real person. It ain't about the football. I know I can do that. I show you guys that on the daily. This is my life. Ain't no more games."

The Raiders acquired Brown after he wore out his welcome in Pittsburgh. Oakland gave up only a third- and fifth-round pick for the four-time All-Pro receiver and gave him a hefty raise.

The Raiders have been counting heavily on Brown to spark an offense that lacked playmakers a year ago. Brown had 686 catches and 9,145 yards receiving the past six seasons in Pittsburgh, the best marks ever for a receiver in a six-year span.

But Brown was unable to practice at the start of training camp after getting frost bite on his feet during a cryotherapy accident in France.

Brown was activated July 28 and took part in one walkthrough and part of one practice before leaving the team to get treatment for his feet and to fight the NFL and the NFLPA over his helmet.

Brown lost two grievances with the league in his attempt to use an old helmet now banned for safety reasons. He skipped practice on Aug. 18, prompting Mayock to issue an ultimatum for Brown to be "all in or all out" and also to hand him a \$40,000 fine.

Brown returned to the team the following day but then missed a mandatory walkthrough before an exhibition game in Winnipeg on Aug. 22, leading to a second fine of \$13,950.

Brown had several issues in Pittsburgh as well, leading to the team's decision to trade him even though he topped 100 receptions and 1,200 yards receiving in each of the past six seasons.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and https://twitter.com/AP_NFL

Hong Kong thwarts airport protest, but battles continue

By EILEEN NG and KATIE TAM Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong police thwarted another disruption at the airport by pro-democracy activists but had to battle protesters at subway stations on Saturday, as the months-long unrest showed no signs of abating even after the government offered a concession days earlier.

Police mounted road checks and inspected passengers on trains and buses heading to the airport to weed out protesters. An Associated Press journalist at an area near the airport witnessed at least two bus passengers being handcuffed and taken away after police found face masks in their bags.

The express train service to the airport was limited, running to and from downtown Hong Kong but skipping all stations in between. Only people with plane tickets were allowed to enter the airport terminals, and those milling around an adjoining bus terminal were chased off.

Several hundred angry protesters, many in masks, converged at a subway station in the Tung Chung area adjacent to the airport. They chanted slogans and called police “murderers” amid widespread anger over alleged brutality against demonstrators during three months of protests in the city that have become increasingly violent.

Shops were shuttered and the station was shut down in the evening as the mood grew tense. Protesters spilled onto the street after riot police with batons confronted them, with several people detained.

Hong Kong’s airport, the world’s eighth busiest, has been a frequent target during a summer of protests sparked by an extradition bill that would have allowed criminal suspects to be sent to mainland China for trial. Many saw the bill as a glaring example of the Chinese territory’s eroding autonomy since the former British colony was returned to China in 1997.

Hong Kong leader Carrie Lam announced Wednesday that her government would withdraw the bill, but that failed to appease protesters who have expanded their goals to include other issues.

The airport rail link was suspended last weekend after protesters threw objects on the track, blocked roads near the airport and damaged a nearby subway station. Last month, the airport was shut down for two days after protesters occupied the terminals, leading to violent clashes.

Airport operations ran normally Saturday following the security operation, although some travelers complained they had to get to the airport early.

Susan Reigel, from Denver, Colorado, said she arrived at the airport eight hours ahead of her flight back to the U.S.

“I don’t really have a feeling regarding the protests,” said Reigel, who spent three days in Hong Kong after a trip to mainland China. “It’s just been a little bit of an inconvenience.”

Another traveler at the airport, Jens Schlimmer of Germany, expressed support for protesters fighting for their rights, saying he would do the same if it was his country.

Apart from the Tung Chung subway stop, dozens of youths also rallied at malls belonging to rail link operator MTR Corp., accusing it of helping police during a violent raid at the Prince Edward subway station on Aug. 31.

MTR shut down the Prince Edward station later Saturday after some protesters started gathering again. They later placed white flowers and burned paper offerings at the station’s exit as a sign of mourning.

The station has been a focus this past week for protesters, who want the rail operator to release security camera footage to substantiate rumors that some people died during the police raid.

Police reiterated in a statement Saturday that there had been no deaths since the protests began in early June. It said online rumors of deaths were malicious and aimed at sowing deeper division in society.

As night fell, protesters outside the Prince Edward subway station turned their focus for a second straight night to the police station next to it. They pointed laser beams at officers and later set fire to a pile of plastic foam boxes and other debris across the road. Riot police chased them and were seen using pepper spray, but protesters kept regrouping in familiar cat-and-mouse battles. Several people were caught.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 40 of 75

Late Friday, police fired volleys of tear gas and rubber bullets while protesters set off street fires, smashed traffic lights and vandalized three subway stations. Graffiti on walls read "Boycott China" and "Liberty or death."

The persistent violence during the protests has hurt Hong Kong's economy and sparked fears of a Chinese military intervention. Chinese officials have warned that Beijing will "not sit idly by" if the situation worsens.

Apart from the extradition bill's withdrawal, protesters also have demanded an independent investigation into accusations of police brutality, the unconditional release of those detained during the demonstrations, no more labeling of the protests as riots and direct elections of Hong Kong's leaders.

Lam, the Hong Kong leader, has rejected those demands.

The protests show no signs of receding, with plans to march to the U.S. Embassy on Sunday to drum up international support.

'Hour of darkness' for Bahamas; 43 dead, with toll to rise

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN Associated Press

ABACO, Bahamas (AP) — The hurricane death toll is rising in the Bahamas, in what its leader calls "this hour of darkness."

Search and rescue teams were still trying to reach some Bahamian communities isolated by floodwaters and debris Saturday after Hurricane Dorian struck the northern part of the archipelago last Sunday. At least 43 people died.

Several hundred people, many of them Haitian immigrants, waited at Abaco island's Marsh Harbour in hopes of leaving the disaster zone on vessels arriving with aid. Bahamian security forces were organizing evacuations on a landing craft. Other boats, including yachts and other private craft, were also helping to evacuate people.

Avery Parotti, a 19-year-old bartender, and partner Stephen Chidles, a 26-year-old gas station attendant had been waiting at the port since 1 a.m. During the hurricane, waves lifted a yacht that smashed against a cement wall, which in turn collapsed on their home and destroyed it.

"There's nothing left here. There are no jobs," said Parotti, who hopes to start a new life in the United States, where she has relatives.

Dorval Darlier, a Haitian diplomat who had come from the Bahamian capital of Nassau, shouted in Creole, telling the crowd that sick people along with women and children should be evacuated before men.

Prime Minister Hubert Minnis said late Friday that 35 people were known dead on Abaco and eight on Grand Bahama island.

"We acknowledge that there are many missing and that the number of deaths is expected to significantly increase," he said. "This is one of the stark realities we are facing in this hour of darkness."

On Saturday, U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted that Minnis had told him that there would have been "many more casualties" without U.S. help. Trump credited the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the U.S. Coast Guard and the "brave people of the Bahamas."

The U.S. Coast Guard has evacuated some people from devastated areas by helicopter. The United Nations, the British Royal Navy, American Airlines and Royal Caribbean and other organizations have mobilized to send in food, water, generators, roof tarps, diapers, flashlights and other supplies.

Marvin Dames, security minister in the Bahamas, said authorities were striving to reach everyone, but the crews can't just bulldoze their way through fallen trees and other rubble because there might be bodies not yet recovered.

"We have been through this before, but not at this level of devastation," Dames said.

Dames said the runway at the airport on Grand Bahama island had been cleared and was ready for flights. Authorities also said that all ports had been reopened on that island and Abaco, both of which were devastated by the Category 5 storm.

On Grand Bahama, a long line formed at a cruise ship that had docked to distribute food and water. Among those waiting was Wellisy Taylor, a housewife.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 41 of 75

"What we have to do as Bahamians, we have to band together. If your brother needs sugar, you're going to have to give him sugar. If you need cream, they'll have to give you cream," she said. "That's how I grew up. That's the Bahamas that I know."

For more of AP's coverage of Hurricane Dorian, go to: <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

AP FACT CHECK: Trump and Democrats mangle science

By CALVIN WOODWARD, HOPE YEN and SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Science took a beating in the political arena this past week as President Donald Trump sowed confusion about Hurricane Dorian's path and Democratic presidential candidates rang false alarms about the air we breathe.

Trump found himself contradicted by his government's own meteorologists when he warned of danger to Alabama, then spent days defending his outlier forecast. By week's end, curiosity over who had drawn a loop on a weather map played out alongside life-shaping questions about who should, and shouldn't, flee the storm.

On broader questions about climate, and air quality in particular, neither Trump nor some Democrats seem to be able to get it right.

A sampling from a week of statements from Trump and the Democratic campaign on weather, war, climate, the economy and more:

WAR

JOE BIDEN, Democratic presidential candidate, on the Iraq war: "Immediately, that moment it started, I came out against the war at that moment." — interview Tuesday with NPR.

THE FACTS: Not so. As a senator in 2002, Biden had voted to give President George W. Bush the authority to invade Iraq, which he did in March 2003 as part of a "shock and awe" bombing campaign with some coalition allies. Four months later, in July, Biden was still expressing strong support for the military engagement.

"Nine months ago, I voted with my colleagues to give the president of the United States of America the authority to use force, and I would vote that way again today," Biden told the Brookings Institution.

It wasn't until 2005 that he came around to calling the war a mistake, blaming Bush because "we went too soon. We went without sufficient force. And we went without a plan."

STORMY WEATHER

TRUMP: "In addition to Florida - South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama, will most likely be hit (much) harder than anticipated. Looking like one of the largest hurricanes ever. Already category 5." — tweet Sunday, 7:51 a.m.

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE, Birmingham: "Alabama will NOT see any impacts from #Dorian. We repeat, no impacts from Hurricane #Dorian will be felt across Alabama. The system will remain too far east." — tweet Sunday, 8:11 a.m.

THE FACTS: The episode showed what has been learned from other destructive storms: Trump can't be counted on to provide reliable information as a potential natural disaster takes shape, even as his agencies try to do so. It was never "most likely" that Alabama would be hit hard, never mind by "one of the largest hurricanes ever."

Within a half hour of Trump's tweet, the weather service's office in Birmingham, Alabama, had tamped down any expectations of a hit on Alabama with its "no impacts" tweet. A meteorologist in the Birmingham office said the tweet was in response to residents' concerns.

And Christopher Vaccaro, speaking for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, which oversees the weather service, said that day: "The current forecast path of Dorian does not include Alabama." The official forecast at 8 a.m. Sunday, closest to Trump's warning tweet, showed a large zone of possible strikes, but Alabama was outside that zone by at least 180 miles.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 42 of 75

At the time, several graphics issued by the National Hurricane Center showed that parts of Alabama had a small chance — 5% to 10% — of getting tropical storm force winds. Graphics from the previous week had suggested much more of Alabama could see an impact, though the odds even then were against it. But those graphics, which are not official forecasts in any event, were outdated by Sunday.

Meantime, Alabama was not mentioned in any of the 75 forecast advisories the hurricane center issued between Aug. 27 and Sept. 2, a period covered by Trump's tweet.

Digging in his heels, Trump on Wednesday displayed a map of the hurricane forecast from the previous week. It had been altered to include what appeared to be a hand-drawn half-circle that extended the cone of uncertainty over a swath of Alabama. He had no explanation for the alteration.

Then late Friday, NOAA issued a statement walking back its position from the previous weekend, and now lending a measure of support to the president. It said the tweet from the Birmingham weather office about no impact to Alabama had been "inconsistent with probabilities from the best forecast products available at the time."

This time, the "spokesperson" was anonymous.

HOT AIR

PETE BUTTIGIEG: "For me and everybody I know, for the children that we hope to have, for the people who will be alive at the turn of the century, when if we don't change what we're doing, we could lose half the world's oxygen because of what's going on in the oceans. That is unthinkable." — CNN town hall with Democratic presidential candidates Wednesday.

THE FACTS: This is not sound science. You and your descendants can breathe easy about the planet's oxygen levels. There are other things to worry about from climate change, fossil fuel combustion and Amazon fires.

Climate scientists told The Associated Press that Buttigieg's claim that half of Earth's oxygen is at risk is false.

—"That one is indeed a howler," said Michael E. Mann, director of the Earth System Science Center at Pennsylvania State. Global oxygen concentrations "are maintained by long-term geological cycles and nothing here is going to alter that in any significant way."

—"If climate change is left unchecked, the atmosphere could lose about a tenth of one percent of its oxygen content by the end of the century," said Jonathan Overpeck, professor at the University of Michigan's School for Environment and Sustainability. "There is no science behind the idea that we could lose half the world's oxygen. Instead, it's only a tiny amount. ... One thing we don't have to worry about is oxygen levels in the atmosphere."

—While burning fossil fuels does use up oxygen, it's a far smaller amount than Buttigieg suggests, said Texas A&M University climate scientist Andrew Dessler. He calculated the figures and came up with at most a reduction of oxygen of about 2%, adding "this is an absolute upper limit. More reasonable estimates would be much, much smaller, probably less than a few tenths a percent. And this is if we burn everything."

—Atmospheric scientist Scott Denning of Colorado State University has estimated that if oxygen production were to stop now, Earth would have 1 million years of oxygen left.

Such scientists see an urgent need to do more to address the emissions that are warming the climate and bringing profound change to life as billions know it. Depletion of atmospheric oxygen is not one of those changes.

BETO O'ROURKE, proposing U.S. leadership on climate change: "Convene those other top wealthy economies to make sure that this is our focus, to save the lungs of the planet that produce 6 percent of the oxygen that we breathe and to ensure that we do not trigger a crisis in the Amazon. Once it is set, we will never be able to roll back." — Candidates' town hall on CNN.

THE FACTS: Lands of the Amazon are not "the lungs of the planet." That's a familiar phrase but not an accurate one.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 43 of 75

Oxygen production comes primarily from ocean sediments, not forests, which indeed generate oxygen but also consume it.

“Even if all plants in the Amazon stopped doing photosynthesis, we would not notice,” Jonathan Foley, executive director of Project Drawdown, a global climate solutions, told the AP. “It would take millions of years for the atmosphere to run out of oxygen.”

The Amazon is key in draining heat-trapping carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. Scientists also see grave consequences to nature and communities from fires in the rainforest. But Earth is not losing its lungs.

TRUMP: “Who’s got the world’s cleanest and safest air and water? AMERICA!” — tweet Wednesday.

TRUMP: “I want crystal clean water and the cleanest and the purest air on the planet - we’ve now got that!” — tweet Wednesday.

THE FACTS: False. Air quality hasn’t improved under the Trump administration and dozens of nations have less smoggy air than the U.S.

As to water, Trump is correct that one measure, Yale University’s global Environmental Performance Index, found the U.S. tied with nine other countries as having the cleanest drinking water.

But after decades of improvement, progress in air quality has stalled. Over the past two years the U.S. had more polluted air days than just a few years earlier, federal data show.

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

The Obama administration set records for the fewest air-polluted days.

The nonprofit Health Effects Institute’s State of Global Air 2019 report ranked the United States 37th dirtiest out of 195 countries for ozone, also known as smog. The U.S. ranks eighth cleanest on the more deadly category of fine particles in the air.

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

ECONOMY AND TRADE

TRUMP: “China has now had the worst year that they’ve had in 57 years. This is the worst year they’ve had in 57 years. And they want to make a deal.” — speaking to reporters Wednesday in Hurricane Dorian briefing.

TRUMP: “China wants very much to make a deal. We’ll see. They had the worst year in over 50.” — remarks Wednesday at announcement of state opioid response grants.

THE FACTS: Not even close.

It’s true that China’s economy is decelerating, slowed by Trump’s taxes on Chinese imports and by Beijing’s deliberate campaign to combat runaway debts. The International Monetary Fund expects the Chinese economy to grow 6.2% this year. Though much faster than the U.S., that’s the slowest in a long time for China — since 1990, or 29 years, in fact.

But it’s a fantasy to suggest the Chinese economy is the worst in a half century or more. In 1962, 57 years ago, the country was an impoverished wasteland recovering from the massive famine caused by Mao Zedong’s radical economic policies.

The economy would also plummet during the chaos of the Cultural Revolution of the 1960s. Since adopting economic reforms in the late 1970s, China has lifted hundreds of millions of people out of poverty, established a growing middle class and vaulted over Japan to become the world’s second-biggest economy.

TRUMP: “We haven’t taken 10 cents in from China. If you look back over the years, it’s been the other way around. They’ve taken from us; we never take from them. Now we’re taking from them.” — remarks Wednesday in briefing on Hurricane Dorian.

THE FACTS: It’s false to say the U.S. never collected a dime in tariffs on Chinese goods before Trump

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 44 of 75

took action; they are simply higher in some cases than they were before. He's also wrong to suggest that Americans aren't paying in any way for the tariffs.

As he escalates a trade war with China, Trump refuses to recognize a reality that his own chief economic adviser, Larry Kudlow, has acknowledged. Tariffs are mainly, if not entirely, paid by companies and consumers in the country that imposes them.

In a study in May, the Federal Reserve Bank of New York, with Princeton and Columbia universities, estimated that tariffs from Trump's trade dispute with China were costing \$831 per U.S. household on an annual basis, before tariffs were recently escalated. Analysts also found that the burden of Trump's tariffs falls entirely on U.S. consumers and businesses that buy imported products.

A report last month by JPMorgan Chase estimated that tariffs would cost the average American household \$1,000 per year if tariffs on an additional \$300 billion of U.S. imports from China proceed in September and December. Trump has since bumped up the scheduled levies even higher, probably adding to the U.S. burden. To be sure, China is feeling the economic hit, too.

TRUMP: "Germany, and so many other countries, have negative interest rates, 'they get paid for loaning money,' and our Federal Reserve fails to act! Remember, these are also our weak currency competitors!" — tweet Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Trump once again misrepresents the impact of Federal Reserve policies and is mistaken about Germany's economy, suggesting that it enjoys some kind of advantage. In fact, negative yields are a sign of that economy's weakness.

The German economy shrank in the previous quarter and there are expectations from investment banks that it could soon fall into a recession. Nor is the phenomenon isolated to Germany. Japan and much of Europe are also struggling with interest rates on government debt that are negative or close to negative.

Investors are betting that stimulus efforts by the European Central Bank will keep rates persistently low. But the negative interest rates on German bonds also reflect that government's aversion to issuing debt, even though the borrowing would allow it to spend more on roads and bridges to spur stronger economic growth.

By having even slightly positive interest rates compared with the rest of the world, the United States is in a better position to attract global investment.

JAMES COMEY

TRUMP: "Based on the IG Report, the whole Witch Hunt against me and my administration was a giant and illegal SCAM. The House of Representatives should now get back to work on drug prices, healthcare, infrastructure and all else. The Mueller Report showed No Collusion, No Obstruction!" — tweet Tuesday.

THE FACTS: Trump is presumably referring to a recent Justice Department inspector general report that criticized former FBI Director James Comey's handling of memos about his interactions with the president. But the report passed zero judgment on the investigation into whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia, a probe Comey that led until his May 2017 firing and that Trump has repeatedly derided as a "witch hunt." It did not criticize the FBI for opening the investigation or suggest in any way that it was a "giant and illegal SCAM."

The president's also wrong about the findings of special counsel Robert Mueller's report. It did not find evidence to establish a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia, but that's not the same thing as "No Collusion." The report also found instances in which the president sought to obstruct the investigation but said that Justice Department legal protocol prohibits the indictment of a sitting president.

Associated Press writers Paul Wiseman, Josh Boak and Eric Tucker contributed to this report.

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AP Interview: Gorsuch rues loss of civility but mum on Trump

By MARK SHERMAN and JESSICA GRESKO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Justice Neil Gorsuch is following the path of Supreme Court colleagues-turned-authors in a new book in which he laments the loss of civility in public discourse.

The 52-year-old justice wrote "A Republic, If You Can Keep It" because Americans should remember that their political opponents "love this country as much as we do," Gorsuch said in an interview with The Associated Press in his Supreme Court office. The book is being published Tuesday.

But Gorsuch had little to say about President Donald Trump, who appointed him to the Supreme Court and who routinely brands his opponents dopes, losers, liars and worse.

"If you're asking me about politics, I'm not going to touch that," Gorsuch said.

All Gorsuch would say about Trump is that during the nomination process in 2017, the president "was very gracious to my family."

Penguin Random House gave Gorsuch a \$225,000 advance for the book, a collection of speeches, essays and judicial decisions. Gorsuch also sets forth his view of the proper role of each branch of the federal government — the presidency, Congress and the courts — and defends his originalist approach to interpreting laws and the Constitution according to their meaning when written.

He is the latest justice, following Sonia Sotomayor, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Clarence Thomas and Stephen Breyer, to write a book while on the court.

Seated in his corner office a little over a month before the Oct. 7 start of the new Supreme Court term, Gorsuch appeared relaxed and upbeat. He showed off a plaque he brought back from his summer teaching sojourn in Padua, Italy, signed by "the boys" of the local police station. He'll travel to California and Texas to speak about his book at the Richard Nixon library and George W. Bush presidential center before the term begins, in addition to speaking at the National Archives in Washington.

One theme of the book is a common refrain among the justices when they speak in public, especially in the aftermath of Justice Brett Kavanaugh's tumultuous Senate confirmation hearings: Judges are not politicians in robes, even if their decisions in high-profile cases often can be predicted based on the president who appointed them.

"It's one thing to think that judges occasionally, mistakenly, wrongly decide cases based on who they like and who they dislike as parties. It's another thing to think that judges are just politicians who are supposed to do that. And I saw a lot of that thinking" during his own confirmation hearings in 2017, Gorsuch recalled.

In November, Chief Justice John Roberts offered a plain-spoken rebuke to Trump after the president described a judge who ruled against his asylum policy as an "Obama judge." "We do not have Obama judges or Trump judges, Bush judges or Clinton judges. What we have is an extraordinary group of dedicated judges doing their level best to do equal right to those appearing before them," Roberts said in response to a question from the AP.

While Gorsuch avoids personal attacks, he takes aim at judges and legal scholars who prefer a "living Constitution" that adapts to the times over the originalist view.

Among the criticisms of originalism is that the Constitution, as Breyer has said, uses broad language that the founders knew would have to be flexible to changes in society. Another is that originalism almost always leads to outcomes preferred by conservatives. "Baloney. Rubbish," Gorsuch said. "You know, the living Constitution is going to take your rights away and it's going to add ones that aren't there. ... We have a written Constitution. It's about honoring the words the people chose to adopt. What are the first three words of the Constitution? It's 'We the people,' not 'We the states,' not 'We the nine old judges.'"

It's the same sentiment he expressed in a speech to the conservative Federalist Society in 2017. "Originalism has regained its place at the table of constitutional interpretation, and textualism in the reading of statutes has triumphed. And neither one is going anywhere on my watch," he said then to thunderous applause.

In his book, Gorsuch makes a plea for kindness and manners, recounting advice from the English grand-

mother of his wife, Louise, who told him that he would regret things he did and things left undone, but that he would never be sorry for being kind.

And he notes that George Washington had to copy by hand all 110 rules of civility that were written by the Jesuits in 1595. In the interview, Gorsuch paraphrased one rule that he particularly liked.

"Do not speak so closely to another person with such enthusiasm that you bedew the other man with your spittle," he said, from a safe distance. "It's a good rule. It's a good rule."

Agency reverses course on Trump's Alabama hurricane claim

By **SETH BORENSTEIN** and **KEVIN FREKING** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal agency has reversed course on the question of whether President Donald Trump tweeted stale information about Hurricane Dorian potentially hitting Alabama, upsetting meteorologists around the country.

On Sunday, Trump had warned that Alabama, along with the Carolinas and Georgia, was "most likely to be hit (much) harder than anticipated."

The National Weather Service in Birmingham, Alabama, tweeted later: "Alabama will NOT see any impacts from #Dorian. We repeat, no impacts from Hurricane #Dorian will be felt across Alabama. The system will remain too far east."

But the president has been adamant throughout the week that he was correct, and the White House has deployed government resources and staff to back him.

The latest defense came out Friday evening, when the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration issued a statement from an unidentified spokesman stating that information provided by NOAA and the National Hurricane Center to the president had demonstrated that "tropical-storm-force winds from Hurricane Dorian could impact Alabama." The advisories were dated from last Wednesday, Aug. 28, through Monday, the statement read.

The statement also said the Birmingham NWS tweet Sunday morning "spoke in absolute terms that were inconsistent with probabilities from the best forecast products available at the time."

The statement from NOAA contrasts with comments the agency's spokesman, Chris Vaccaro, made Sunday. "The current forecast path of Dorian does not include Alabama," Vaccaro said at the time.

Friday's NOAA statement, released just before 5 p.m., points to a few graphics issued by the National Hurricane Center to support Trump's claims. The maps show percentage possibility of tropical storm force winds in the United States. Parts of Alabama were covered, usually with 5% to 10% chances, between Aug. 27 and Sept. 3. Maps on Aug. 30 grew to cover far more of Alabama, but for only 12 hours, and the highest percentage hit 20% to 30% before quickly shrinking back down.

Alabama was not mentioned in any of the 75 forecast advisories the hurricane center sent out between Aug. 27 and Sept. 2. From Aug 28 to Aug. 31, a handful of locations in Alabama were mentioned in charts that listed percentage chance of tropical storm force winds or hurricane winds, maxing out at about 11% chance for Montgomery to get tropical storm force winds.

Former National Hurricane Center Director Bill Read blasted NOAA leadership Friday night on his Facebook page calling the situation "so disappointing" and saying he would comment because NOAA employees were ordered to be quiet.

"Either NOAA Leadership truly agrees with what they posted or they were ordered to do it. If it is the former, the statement shows a lack of understanding of how to use probabilistic forecasts in conjunction with other forecast information. Embarrassing. If it is the latter, the statement shows a lack of courage on their part by not supporting the people in the field who are actually doing the work. Heartbreaking," Read wrote.

"What the Birmingham NWS office sent out Sunday morning was correct and served the public well," Read continued. "It clearly let the public know that they were not at risk from the impacts of Hurricane Dorian."

Dan Sobien, president of the union representing weather service employees, tweeted Friday, "Let me assure you the hard working employees of the NWS had nothing to do with the utterly disgusting and

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 47 of 75

disingenuous tweet sent out by NOAA management tonight.”

Alex Sizemore, a meteorologist at NWS in Birmingham, tweeted, “The irony in all of this Twitter mess is that the tweet we sent out had nothing to do with what Trump tweeted, we had no knowledge of it at the time.” Sizemore said the Sunday tweet came in response to people calling the NWS office.

“Now this. Goodness,” he added.

Other meteorologists also voiced concerns about NOAA’s actions Friday.

“I am very disappointed to see this statement come out from NOAA,” Oklahoma University meteorology professor Jason Furtado told The Associated Press. “I am thankful for the folks at NWS Birmingham for their work in keeping the citizens of Alabama informed and up to date on weather hazards.”

Furtado said NOAA’s statement and the president’s Twitter “war on weather” are undermining confidence in meteorologists, adding, “The job just got harder because of this issue.”

University of Georgia meteorology professor Marshall Shepherd, former president of the American Meteorology Society, simply responded, “OMG.”

Brian McNoldy, a hurricane researcher at the University of Miami, cited the focus that NOAA placed on “tropical force winds” in its Friday evening statement. He said the first assertion about such winds from Dorian affecting Alabama is fine, but the second assertion “seems to be excessive.”

McNoldy said the National Weather Service “had the right tone and message for the time. Alabama, for some time, was on the fringe of probabilities of experiencing tropical storm winds. That is not very threatening.”

“The Birmingham office was correct,” said a NOAA staffer familiar with the situation but speaking on the condition of anonymity for fear of being fired in reprisal.

MIT meteorology professor Kerry Emanuel said Trump’s “broadcast of false information is inexcusable.”

NOAA’s mission is to understand and predict changes in the Earth’s environment. It is part of the Commerce Department, overseen by Secretary Wilbur Ross. The White House did not immediately respond to a question of whether someone at the White House had asked NOAA to issue its statement.

Associated Press writer Hope Yen contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to reflect that Alabama was included in charts mentioning wind speed probabilities from August 28 to August 31. The story previously said it was not.

For more of AP’s coverage of Hurricane Dorian, go to: <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

India loses touch with lander on its final approach to moon

By **AIJAZ RAHI** and **SHEIKH SAALIQ** Associated Press

BANGALORE, India (AP) — India’s space agency said it lost touch with its Vikram lunar lander on Saturday as it made its final approach to the moon’s south pole to deploy a rover to search for signs of water.

The fate of the lander — whether it crashed or landed — wasn’t immediately known. A successful landing would have made India just the fourth country to land a vessel on the lunar surface, and only the third to operate a robotic rover there.

The space agency said the lander’s descent was normal until 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the lunar surface.

“Let us hope for the best,” said Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who was at Mission Control in the southern city of Bangalore.

The entire control center was jubilant during the first 10 minutes of the lander’s descent, with scientists breaking out in occasional cheers. The mood suddenly turned somber and then dejected when the lander stopped sending data during its final minutes of descent.

“I can understand the sadness in your face,” Modi later told gathered scientists after being briefed by the space agency’s chairman. “I have lived the moment with you when communication with the spacecraft

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 48 of 75

was lost.”

K. Sivan, the agency chairman, said the data was being analyzed to find out what happened.

The roughly \$140 million mission, known as Chandrayaan-2, was intended to study permanently shadowed moon craters that are thought to contain water deposits that were confirmed by the Chandrayaan-1 mission in 2008.

India's achievements in space have been hailed by Modi as a symbol of the country's rising ambition as a global power.

Even after communication was lost, scientists at mission control chanted “Victory for Mother India” in response to Modi's speech.

The space agency's chairman had earlier called Chandrayaan-2 the “most complex mission ever” undertaken by the agency.

The mission lifted off on July 22 from the Satish Dhawan space center in Sriharikota, an island off the coast of the southern state of Andhra Pradesh.

After its launch, Chandrayaan-2 spent several weeks making its way toward the moon, ultimately entering lunar orbit on Aug. 20.

On Sept. 2, Vikram separated from the mission's orbiter, and the lander began a series of braking maneuvers to lower its orbit and ready itself for landing.

Only three nations — the United States, the former Soviet Union and China — have landed a spacecraft on the moon.

Last January, China achieved the first landing on the far side of the moon. In April, an Israeli spacecraft attempting to land crashed moments before touchdown.

Saaliq reported from New Delhi.

Johnson and Salvini: 2 soaring stars lose big political bets

By **FRANCES D'EMILIO** Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Who would have bet that two soaring stars of European politics would have gambled so badly on strategic power plays?

Both British Prime Minister Boris Johnson and Italian right-wing politician Matteo Salvini found themselves in corners this week, each in his own way having lost bets that their popularity would carry the day.

Instead, analysts and fellow politicians say, both men badly miscalculated the crucial role of democratic institutions like parliament in the age of populist politics and underestimated the time-tested tactic of bitter enemies ganging up together in countermoves.

“They confused their popularity with power, and they thought because of their popularity they would be able to ram through their plans,” said Wolfango Piccoli, an analyst and co-president of Teneo intelligence, based in London.

The circumstances for each leader in these waning weeks of summer are decidedly different.

In London, the unpredictable Johnson is still in power, although his gambit to sideline Parliament in his iron-clad determination to ensure Britain exits the European Union on Oct. 31 backfired. Over in Rome, while trying to trigger early elections so he could become premier, firebrand Salvini lost his two powerful coalition posts, as virulently anti-migrant interior minister and as deputy premier in Italy's first all-populist government.

In Johnson's case, faced by a feisty Parliament, where he enjoyed only the slimmest of working majorities, he took a gamble in late August. The prime minister declared that Parliament would be suspended for weeks in the crucial run-up to the Brexit deadline. But Johnson's strategy only ended up uniting lawmakers, with the rebels including 21 lawmakers from his own Conservative Party. His move cost him his working majority and left his Brexit strategy in tatters.

One of the lawmakers who was suspended from the Conservative group in Parliament this week after voting against Johnson's government blamed the prime minister's mistake on hiring as key advisers those

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 49 of 75

who ran the successful "leave" campaign in the 2016 referendum on EU membership. But those advisers have scant experience in working with Parliament.

"Just maybe they thought they could win over Parliament and they can succeed if they ran things like a campaign," lawmaker Alistair Burt said. "You can't. It's a misjudgment."

Salvini was riding high, after his nationalist League party triumphed in European Parliament elections in May. Advisers pressed him to pull his League from Premier Giuseppe Conte's then barely year-old coalition, confident the Italian president would dissolve Parliament and set elections this fall.

Instead, Salvini spent much of the summer basking in his own glory, working crowds of adoring vacationers at seaside resorts. Back in Rome, in trattorie and party backrooms, his political rivals, the opposition Democrats and the League's ill-matched coalition partner, the 5-Star Movement, were strategizing to keep him from power.

"If you are on the beach, getting mojitos and selfies left and right, and everyone's thanking you for stopping the invasion of Africans, you feel you're some kind of Superman who can do anything," said Franco Pavoncello, professor of political history and president of John Cabot University in Rome. The reference to Africans reflects the contention by Salvini, and much of his voter base, that migrants cause crime and rob work from Italians.

During his "wild, two-week vacation," Salvini "lost touch with reality to some extent, political reality," said John Harper, a history professor at Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies in Bologna.

When Salvini did make his move, yanking his party from Conte's coalition, it proved to be too late. The 5-Stars, co-founded by caustic comic Beppe Grillo, and the Democrats, whose powerbrokers include wily former Premier Matteo Renzi, then cut a deal.

Blindsided, Salvini seemed shocked that Conte on Wednesday formed his second government, again with the 5-Stars but this time with the Democrats while the League is banished to Parliament's opposition ranks. Until nearly the end, Salvini desperately lobbied the 5-Stars to again govern with his League.

"It would have been hard for him to have believed that Renzi and Grillo, bitter enemies, would get together and turn out to be more Machiavellian and more ruthless than anyone expected," Harper said.

Used to getting his way, Salvini cried foul. But President Sergio Mattarella reminded the nation that in a parliamentary democracy what matters is whether a coalition commands a working majority in the legislature.

Still, "I'm not sure it is the role of Parliament itself that they didn't take into account," Harper said. "In both cases, they seemed to underestimate the capacity of their opponents to thwart them and to unite."

Johnson at times has used populist tactics, such as claiming that out-of-touch politicians are trying to defy the will of the people on Brexit. He is known for surprises and still may win a national election if one is held.

"By Christmas, things can be looking good for him, he could be looking like a strategic genius," Harper said. But Salvini "has definitely lost this round," with the new coalition motivated to banish the specter of early elections.

Ultimately, said the London-based Piccoli, "you can do very well in opinion polls, but there are rules, there are institutions that need to be taken into consideration."

Gregory Katz, Jeffrey Schaeffer and Jill Lawless in London contributed to this report.

Tourist-dependent Bahamas says it's still open for business

By DEE-ANN DURBIN and ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON Associated Press Writers

The Bahamas was on track for a record year of tourism before Hurricane Dorian hit. Now, the outlook for that vital sector is uncertain.

Some of the best-known resorts in the 700-island chain, like Atlantis, Paradise Island, were unscathed by the monster storm. So was Nassau, the largest city.

But 100 miles away, on Grand Bahama Island and the Abaco islands, many smaller hotels and vacation rentals were damaged or destroyed. That leaves the Bahamas with a double challenge: convincing tourists

Proton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 50 of 75

to keep coming without trivializing the suffering on the affected islands.

"All of the donations are welcome, but they can also, very much, assist us by still visiting the islands of the Bahamas in the unaffected areas. They are open for business," said Ellison Thompson, the deputy director general of the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Aviation.

The Bahamas depend heavily on tourism, which supplies half their annual gross domestic product of \$5.7 billion, according to the Bahamas Investment Authority. By comparison, tourism brings in 20% of Hawaii's annual GDP and less than 3% of the GDP of the United States.

The Ministry of Tourism confirmed on Friday that all hotels on Abaco and Grand Bahama are closed. Together, the islands have around 3,000 hotel rooms, or 19% of the 16,000 rooms in the Bahamas, according to Frank Comito, the CEO of the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association. They also have hundreds of vacation homes. Airbnb lists more than 600 rentals for Grand Bahama and the Abacos islands.

According to government statistics, Grand Bahama received 670,000 visitors in 2018, the vast majority arriving on cruise ships. More than 100,000 visitors flew last year into Marsh Harbour, the largest town in the Abaco islands.

Comito has beachfront property in the Abaco islands but doesn't know how it had fared. Some hotels were providing updates on Facebook. For instance, the owners of Pelican Beach Villas said their ocean-front cottages near Marsh Harbour were completely destroyed and they were evacuated to Nassau by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers. Firefly Resort Abaco tweeted photos of downed trees and a building with no roof and a collapsed wall.

"Hurricane Dorian destroyed our paradise. We will rebuild," the resort said in its Twitter post.

There's also some industry in the area. Grand Bahama is home to the Freeport Container Port, a deep water port for oceangoing container ships. Hong Kong-based Hutchinson Ports, which owns the facility, said its emergency team was helping with rescue efforts and trying to re-establish power at the port. Spokesman Anthony Tam said the company's nearby cruise terminal sustained minimal damage and was expecting ships carrying humanitarian supplies as early as Monday.

Those businesses could help speed the recovery. Carnival Cruise Lines said it's still committed to a port development project in Grand Bahama announced earlier this year. Slated to be completed in 2021, the port will be the largest Carnival Cruise port in the world and is expected to create at least 1,000 jobs.

Tourism to unaffected islands could also bring in much-needed cash and provide jobs to displaced hotel workers. At the start of this year, the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism and Aviation was reporting record tourist arrivals thanks in part to the recently completed Baha Mar luxury resort. On its home page, Baha Mar has a prominent link to donate to hurricane relief efforts.

"If I were the minister of tourism, I would be strongly supporting an awareness campaign," said Rober-tico Croes, who researches small island destinations at the University of Central Florida's Rosen College of Hospitality Management. "What is important is that the overall perception continues to be positive."

Bahamas Prime Minister Hubert Minnis made that plea Friday.

"One of the best ways that people around the world can show their support and solidarity... is to visit our other islands by air or by cruise ship," he said.

Pallab Mozumder, an environmental economist at the Florida International University, says rebuilding homes, businesses and networks of utilities in the northern Bahamas will cost between \$15 billion and \$25 billion. He expects it will take five years or longer to recover from the catastrophe. Hurricane Dorian's Category 5 strength and extremely low speed — which exacerbated flooding — made the devastation worse, he said.

Comito said the speed of the rebuilding effort will depend on a lot of things, including how quickly insurance claims can be processed, government incentives and the availability of building supplies and labor.

After hurricanes Irma and Maria hit the Caribbean in 2017, the World Travel and Tourism Council estimated it would take four years for the impacted islands to get back to their previous level of tourism. But Comito said that recovery is ahead of schedule. Ninety percent of Puerto Rico's hotel rooms are back online, while the U.S. Virgin Islands has 70% of its previous capacity.

Durbin reported from Detroit. Gomez reported from Miami.

'Only animals can live here': Storm victims await evacuation

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN Associated Press

ABACO, Bahamas (AP) — Carrying their meager possessions in duffel bags and shopping carts, hundreds of desperate storm victims gathered at the port in Grand Abaco on Friday in hopes of getting off the hurricane-devastated island, amid signs of rising frustration over the pace of the disaster-relief effort.

"It's chaos here," said Gee Rolle, a 44-year-old construction worker who waited with his wife for a boat that could take them to the capital, Nassau. "The government is trying their best, but at the same time, I don't think they're doing a good enough job to evacuate the people. It ain't livable for nobody. Only animals can live here."

The Bahamian Health Ministry said helicopters and boats were on the way, but officials warned of delays because of severe flooding.

The search for victims and survivors went on, meanwhile, five days after Dorian slammed the Bahamas with 185 mph (295 kph) winds that obliterated countless homes. Health Minister Duane Sands reported late Friday that the official death toll had been raised to 43 from 30. "We expect it to rise," Sands added in a text message to The Associated Press

At the port, some of those who lined up behind a yellow cloth tape arrived as early as 1 a.m., hoping to get to Nassau.

"It's going to get crazy soon," said Serge Simon, 39, who drives an ice truck and waited with his wife and two sons, 5 months old and 4. "There's no food, no water. There are bodies in the water. People are going to start getting sick."

There were no government-organized evacuations yet, but the Royal Bahamas Defense Force helped people board a 139-foot (42-meter) ferry that had come to pick up its employees and had room for an additional 160 people. The crowd waited calmly as marines separated women and children to let them board first.

Also, a barge that had dropped off port-a-potties and heavy equipment in Abaco took some 300 people to Nassau.

Prime Minister Hubert Minnis spoke to the crowd at the port, using a Creole interpreter for a group of Haitians awaiting evacuation, and assured them: "All of you will be treated with respect."

Minnis said he was satisfied with the speed of the government's response and told the storm victims, "All I need you to do is just be patient and wait because everybody is coming."

Officials said all ports had reopened.

An international company that owns an oil terminal on Grand Bahama said damage by the storm had resulted in a significant oil spill on the surrounding ground but added that so far there was no sign of leakage into the sea. The company, Equinor, which is majority-owned by Norway's government, said it had not yet determined how much oil had leaked from the tanks, which can hold 6.75 million gallons of crude oil and condensate.

An array of organizations, countries and companies — including the United Nations, the U.S. government, the British Royal Navy, American Airlines and Royal Caribbean — have mobilized to send in food, water, generators, roof tarps, diapers, flashlights and other supplies.

The U.S. Coast Guard said it had rescued 239 people in the Bahamas and was still conducting search missions.

On hard-hit Grand Bahama Island, a long line formed at a cruise ship that had docked to distribute food and water. Among those waiting was Wellisy Taylor, a 65-year-old housewife.

"What we have to do as Bahamians, we have to band together. If your brother needs sugar, you're going to have to give him sugar. If you need cream, they'll have to give you cream," she said. "That's how I grew up. That's the Bahamas that I know."

Associated Press writers Danica Coto in San Juan, Puerto Rico; Marko Alvarez in Freeport, Bahamas; Carlton Nixon in Abaco; and Kelli Kennedy in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, contributed to this report.

For more of AP's coverage of Hurricane Dorian, go to: <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

'Lucky, no?' Nadal fights past Berrettini into US Open final

By HOWARD FENDRICH AP Tennis Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Rafael Nadal was down 4-0 in a first-set tiebreaker against a bigger, younger opponent finding ways to cause trouble in their U.S. Open semifinal.

So, a reporter wanted to know later, was Nadal already thinking ahead to how to come back in the next set?

"No," Nadal responded quickly, shaking his head. "No. My goal was to win that point."

He did, of course. And while he would soon twice stand a single point from ceding that set, Nadal never panicked, never allowed himself a letdown. He hung tough, waited for 24th-seeded Matteo Berrettini to wilt ever so slightly and then pounced.

Nadal moved closer to a fourth U.S. Open championship and 19th Grand Slam title overall — one away from Roger Federer's record for men — by pulling away for a 7-6 (6), 6-4, 6-1 victory over Berrettini on Friday night.

"I was a little bit lucky, no?" said Nadal, who will face No. 5 Daniil Medvedev of Russia in Sunday's final. "I survived at that moment and ... after that, the match completely changed."

Sure did. He took the last four points of the tiebreaker, then broke once in the second set and three times in the third, while never facing a single break point in the match.

"For a good part of the match, I felt up to the test," said Berrettini, a 23-year-old from Rome. "I was ready."

But Berrettini is still learning his way, while Nadal is, as the Italian's coach, Vincenzo Santopadre, put it: "a champion with a capital 'C,' superhuman."

This will be Nadal's 27th major final, and Medvedev's first. They've played each other once before, in the final of the Montreal Masters hard-court tournament in August, and Nadal won 6-3, 6-0.

"He's one of the more solid players on tour," Nadal said. "He is making steps forward every single week."

Medvedev advanced earlier Friday by beating Grigor Dimitrov 7-6 (5), 6-4, 6-3 for his tour-leading 50th win of the season.

The 23-year-old Russian first made a name for himself at the U.S. Open by earning the wrath of spectators. During his on-court interview Friday, Medvedev referenced his "tournament of controversies," which included accumulating \$19,000 in fines and antagonizing booing fans last week, saying he knew it was "not going to be easy with the public."

Medvedev's tennis was a bit scratchy Friday, and like Nadal, he barely avoided dropping the opening set. But he did just enough with his mostly defensive style to get past Dimitrov, who had eliminated Federer in a five-set quarterfinal.

"I do think he was better player in first set. I do think I was kind of lucky to win it," Medvedev said. "Then the momentum changed completely. I think after, I was playing better than him."

A year ago at this time, Nadal was retiring from his semifinal against Juan Martin del Potro because of knee pain. He's famously had trouble with his body over the years, particularly when it comes to less-forgiving hard courts, but right now, he sure looks healthy, hale and hungry as ever.

The 33-year-old Spaniard — Federer, it's worth noting just turned 38 — made it to the semifinals at every major this year. Nadal lost in the Australian Open final to Novak Djokovic in January, won a 12th French Open title in June, and lost to Federer in the final four at Wimbledon in July.

Berrettini had never been to a Grand Slam semifinal but didn't look intimidated early on against Nadal. Born a decade apart, this was their first matchup, and so the early stages were as much a chance for

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 53 of 75

Nadal to familiarize himself with the guy as it was for fans who might not know much about Berrettini.

What's obvious is that his strengths are a big serve that tops 130 mph and a forehand that can end points. Less apparent at first glance is Berrettini's touch, which he showed off with about a half-dozen first-strike drop shots to claim points in the first set, taking advantage of just how faaaaar behind the baseline Nadal stood to return.

Mostly, Berrettini threw his barrel-chested, 6-foot-5 (1.95-meter), 198-pound (90-kilogram) frame behind forehands that approached 100 mph. Nothing subtle about them. Berrettini is built like a boxer and he often borrows terms from that sport when discussing his matches, such as when he spoke metaphorically about wearing down opponent Gael Monfils with body blows in their exhausting five-set quarterfinal.

The key to the opening set and, indeed, the entire semifinal, was that tiebreaker.

Berrettini grabbed a 4-0 lead, then kept getting closer to the finish line. He led 5-2. Then 6-4, needing one point to take the set, as raucous supporters stood and yelled.

That, then, is when Nadal needed to dig in, and did.

Berrettini? Unaccustomed to these stakes and these moments, he wasn't quite up to the task.

Nadal flicked a forehand passing shot that dipped enough to make Berrettini's volley try rather tough, and the ball found the net. One set point erased. On the next, Berrettini tried a drop shot, but this one was only so-so and it, too, landed in the net. A second set point was gone, and Berrettini covered his mouth.

The next two points — the last of the set — also went to Nadal via errors by Berrettini, a backhand into the net on a 24-stroke exchange, followed by a forehand that sailed long. Nadal reacted by shouting and pumping his fist repeatedly. Berrettini's jaw dropped. Fans rose and roared.

Berrettini hardly packed it in from there, but Nadal was simply better, grinding away until his foe finally succumbed. After Berrettini managed to save nine break points in a row, Nadal converted his 10th of the match to lead 4-3 in the second set.

Soon enough, Nadal was able to move on from this test and start thinking about beating Medvedev — and gaining on Federer.

"It means a lot," Nadal said, "to be back where I am today."

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

Smoke, not fire, blamed for 34 deaths in dive boat disaster

By STEFANIE DAZIO and BRIAN MELLEY Associated Press

SANTA BARBARA, Calif. (AP) — Dozens of people trapped on a scuba diving boat that caught fire off the Southern California coast appear to have died from smoke inhalation, not burns, authorities said Friday.

The 34 people who died were sleeping in a cramped bunkroom below the main deck of the Conception when the fire broke out before dawn Monday and quickly engulfed the boat.

Preliminary findings on the causes of death, announced by Santa Barbara County Sheriff Bill Brown, raise the possibility the victims inhaled highly toxic smoke and died in their sleep before being scorched by flames that burned their bodies beyond recognition.

"The indicators are from the preliminary examination of the bodies that the victims died prior to being burned," Brown said.

The revelation came as investigators searched for the cause of the deadly blaze and divers looked for the body of the one missing victim. The Coast Guard said safety concerns over the weather halted efforts to salvage the boat Friday.

Clergy and others offered words of solace Friday evening in a vigil at a Santa Barbara park.

The dead were "our friends and our family members. Our common love for diving binds us together for eternity," dive instructor Don Barthelmess said.

Thirty-four scuba tanks were arranged in memory of those killed when the Conception caught fire Monday off Santa Cruz Island.

Mourners wept, embraced and placed white carnations in baskets. The flowers and a wreath will be

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 54 of 75

placed at an existing waterside memorial to those lost at sea.

While local, state and federal agencies try to solve the mystery of what doomed the dive boat, the investigation has not turned criminal, Brown said, though he said that was a possibility.

Under federal law known as the seaman's manslaughter statute, a captain or crew member can be charged with a crime if their negligence or misconduct results in death.

Laurie Levenson, a former federal prosecutor who is a professor at Loyola Law School, said it's too early to discuss charges.

"There are lots questions to answer, including what even constitutes negligence. In other words, do you have to have somebody on watch, enough fire extinguishers or ways to, you know, get out — enough exits?" Levenson said. "Certainly, if they find out there was negligence or misconduct this is a possibility, but it's too soon."

Twenty-three of the 33 bodies recovered have been positively identified through DNA, and their family members around the world are being notified, Brown said. Relatives have been tracked down as far away as Singapore, Japan and India.

Brown said the cause and manner of death was being determined through external exams and not traditional autopsies. Final results will depend on toxicology tests.

Dr. Howard Robin, an expert in forensic pathology, said it's hard to know how the people died without an autopsy. But he said it's possible they died in their sleep from carbon monoxide poisoning.

"You don't know if they suffered or not," Robin said. "I would think if there's a fire and they were breathing in the carbon monoxide, there would be soot, and then there would be a cough and ... then they would wake up."

Robin said the lack of autopsies could present a challenge during any lawsuits brought by family members because those results are typically used to support damages for pain and suffering.

The owner of the boat, Truth Aquatics Inc., pre-emptively filed a lawsuit Thursday under a pre-Civil War provision of maritime law that could protect it from potentially costly payouts to families of the dead, a move condemned by some observers as disrespectful and callous.

The company said in a statement posted Friday on Instagram that the lawsuit is an "unfortunate side of these tragedies" and pinned the action on insurance companies and other so-called stakeholders.

"This wouldn't be something that we as a family would even consider," Truth Aquatics said. "The timing is on them. Our hearts and minds are on the tragedy and finding answers."

Coast Guard records show the boat passed its two most recent inspections with no safety violations. Previous customers said Truth Aquatics and the captains of its three boats were very safety conscious.

Five crew members jumped overboard after trying to rescue the 33 scuba divers and one crew member whose escape routes were blocked by fire, federal authorities and the boat's owner said. The crew, including the captain, said they were driven back by flames, smoke and heat.

They jumped from the bridge area to the main deck — one breaking a leg in the effort — and tried to get through the double doors of the galley, which were on fire.

That cut off both escape routes from the sleeping quarters: a stairway and an escape hatch that exited in the galley area. The crew then tried, but failed, to get into windows at the front of the vessel.

Captain Jerry Boylan stayed aboard trying to send radio distress calls and was the last one in the water, said Glen Fritzler, co-owner of Truth Aquatics.

"The other crew at a certain point when the flames had engulfed the boat and they were in the water, they could see Jerry jump from the upper deck, a long jump. And there was a trail of smoke following him. They thought he was on fire," Fritzler told KEYT-TV in Santa Barbara.

"Within minutes, they would've been consumed," he said. "So they did their best. They did re-enter the vessel from the back of the boat after they swam around it. They could not get to firefighting equipment because everything was engulfed."

Fritzler said the experience has traumatized the survivors.

"They're breaking down," he said. "They're seeking counseling. It's a very tough time for them."

Melley reported from Los Angeles. Associated Press writer John Antczak in Los Angeles contributed to this story.

House Judiciary preparing vote on impeachment hearing rules

By MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee is escalating its impeachment investigation into President Donald Trump, preparing a vote as soon as next Wednesday to establish procedures for hearings the panel hopes to hold this fall.

The details are still being negotiated, but a procedural vote next week could set rules for the hearings, according to a person familiar with the plan. The person requested anonymity because the resolution is still being worked out and the person wasn't authorized to discuss it.

The rules could include allowing staff to question witnesses; allowing some evidence to be presented in closed sessions to protect sensitive materials; and allowing the president's counsel to respond in writing to evidence and testimony, among other guidelines. The vote would be similar to procedural votes taken at the beginning of the impeachment investigations of Presidents Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton, according to the person.

Tentative details of the resolution were discussed on a call with members of the committee Friday as they prepare to return to Washington next week after a six-week recess. House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler said just before the recess that the committee is already in an impeachment investigation as it has called multiple witnesses related to former special counsel Robert Mueller's report and sued the White House for blocking testimony.

The vote would make clear that the committee is indeed serious about moving forward with an impeachment probe, even as House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has urged caution to members, saying earlier this month that the public still isn't there on impeachment. But it would only be a technical step, and the committee would still have to introduce articles of impeachment and vote on them before the full House would be able to consider approving charges against Trump. And even then, the Republican-led Senate would almost certainly not vote to convict him and remove him from office.

Many moderates in the caucus, who helped win the Democratic majority last year, say they should be focused on other issues and next year's election.

"I've been traveling all of August," Rep. Henry Cuellar of Texas said this week. "This is not an issue people bring up. I think a lot of people would rather just vote him out, vote the president out."

Other Democrats argue that impeachment is a process without a payoff, since the Senate would never remove Trump.

Maryland Rep. Jamie Raskin, a member of the Judiciary panel who has backed impeachment proceedings, said, "That's a legitimate thing for us to think about, and it's a political puzzle we have to solve over the next few months."

The committee's impeachment vote, which was first reported by Politico, will come as the panel has signaled it will broaden its impeachment probe beyond Mueller's report. The Judiciary panel and the House Oversight and Government Reform Committee announced Friday that they are demanding information about the spending of taxpayer money at the president's hotels and properties, partly to inform the impeachment investigation.

The committees said there have been "multiple efforts" by Trump and administration officials to spend federal money at his properties, including Vice President Mike Pence's stay this week at a Trump resort in Doonbeg, Ireland.

The Democrats describe Pence's visit, and the possibility that next year's Group of Seven summit will be held at Trump's Miami-area Doral golf resort, as corrupting the presidency. Payments from foreign officials are particularly troubling, they say, considering the emoluments clause in the Constitution that bans the president from taking gifts from other governments.

"We have been focused on the Mueller report, and that is a very small part of the overall picture," said Raskin. "We must get America focused on the ongoing violations against basic constitutional principles."

Pelosi echoed the Democratic investigators, calling Trump's properties "a cesspool of corruption" and a "black hole for taxpayers' money." She noted that Trump's trips to his Florida resort Mar-a-Lago can cost millions of dollars per visit.

"The American people deserve a government that serves their interests, not one that's being exploited to line the president's pockets," Pelosi wrote in a blog post.

Aside from reviewing his use of his properties, the Judiciary panel is also expected to investigate hush money payments Trump made to kill potentially embarrassing stories, and has subpoenaed the Department of Homeland Security to explore whether the president offered pre-emptive pardons for lawbreaking. More subpoenas are likely.

Other committees are investigating Trump's financial entanglements as well. The House intelligence and financial services panels are seeking records from two banks with which he did business, probing whether there may be links to money laundering.

House intelligence committee Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., has long said Congress should focus on following Trump's finances — a subject Mueller stayed away from. In an interview Friday, Schiff said his panel will continue on that track this fall, including Trump's business links to the Persian Gulf region and his efforts before the 2016 election toward building a tower in Moscow.

Schiff said he thinks people's views are "pretty well dug in" on the Russia investigation.

"These other issues are also very powerful," he said. "This is a guy who promised to drain the swamp."

Associated Press writer Andrew Taylor contributed from Washington.

Desperate for leniency: Macy, Longoria go to bat for Huffman

By PHILIP MARCELO Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Felicity Huffman and her lawyers pleaded Friday for probation, community service and a fine instead of jail time for her role in the college admissions scandal, buoyed by letters of support from her famous husband, William H. Macy, and her "Desperate Housewives" co-star Eva Longoria.

Huffman, in a three-page letter filed Friday with the federal court in Boston that is handling the sweeping bribery scheme, said she has "a deep and abiding shame" for her actions.

She said she has found motherhood to be "bewildering" and had turned to the scheme in the hopes of giving her oldest daughter a chance to pursue her dream of acting.

Huffman said in the letter that her daughter has a diagnosed learning disability and struggles with math.

"In my desperation to be a good mother, I talked myself into believing that all I was doing was giving my daughter a fair shot," Huffman wrote to U.S. District Judge Indira Talwani. "I see the irony in that statement now because what I have done is the opposite of fair. I have broken the law, deceived the educational community, betrayed my daughter, and failed my family."

U.S. Attorney Andrew Lelling, meanwhile, argues that Huffman should spend 30 days in jail because she knew the scheme was wrong and participated anyway.

"Her efforts weren't driven by need or desperation, but by a sense of entitlement, or at least moral cluelessness, facilitated by wealth and insularity," his office wrote in its filing Friday. "Millions of parents send their kids to college every year. All of them care as much she does about their children's fortunes. But they don't buy fake SAT scores and joke about it ('Ruh Ro!') along the way."

Huffman used the Scooby-Doo catchphrase in an email after her daughter's high school tried to make her take the exam with its own proctor instead of one preferred by the consultant she was paying.

Huffman's filing also included more than two dozen letters of support, among them pleas from Macy and Longoria.

Macy, who wasn't charged in the scheme, said in his own letter to the judge that their family has struggled since his wife's arrest.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 57 of 75

Huffman has rarely left the house and hasn't received an audition or job offer since her arrest six months ago, he said.

Their oldest daughter is taking a gap year and not attending college for now, Macy said. And the family, which also includes a younger daughter in high school, is also seeing a therapist together.

"Felicity's only interest now is figuring out how to make amends," Macy wrote, "and help her daughters heal and move on."

Longoria, in her two-page statement, recalls Huffman had a "gentle character" and "kind heart" while the two starred in "Housewives."

"When I began the TV show, I was very new to the business and industry as a whole. Felicity was the first one to take me under her wing," she wrote. "I know I would not have survived those years if it wasn't for the friendship of Felicity."

Longoria also wrote: "She always leads with her heart and has always put others first."

Huffman is among 51 people charged in a scheme in which prosecutors say wealthy parents paid an admissions consultant to bribe coaches and test administrators to help their children get into prestigious colleges.

She pleaded guilty in May to fraud charges for paying \$15,000 to have a proctor correct her daughter's SAT exam answers. She is scheduled to be sentenced Sept. 13.

The amount she paid is among the smaller bribes alleged in the scheme. Fellow actress Lori Loughlin and her fashion designer husband, Mossimo Giannulli, for example, are charged with paying \$500,000 for their two daughters to get into college. Unlike Huffman, they are fighting the charges.

Huffman's lawyers are arguing for one year of probation, 250 hours of community service and a \$20,000 fine. They say in their filing that fraud cases involving standardized tests "almost always" result in probation and that incarceration is "exceptionally rare."

They also argue that a sentence including 250 hours of community service would be significantly more than judges typically hand down.

Huffman's lawyers say the 56-year-old Emmy Award-winning actress proposes completing those service hours with organizations that work with at-risk youth in the Los Angeles area, where she lives.

The U.S. attorney's office also seeks a year of probation after jail and a \$20,000 fine.

It argues that a one-month jail sentence recognizes that Huffman quickly accepted responsibility after being arrested and charged. Under federal sentencing guidelines, prosecutors could have sought up to six months' incarceration.

Associated Press writer Bill Kole contributed to this report.

Dorian's floodwaters trap people in attics in North Carolina

By JEFFREY COLLINS and BEN FINLEY Associated Press

ATLANTIC BEACH, N.C. (AP) — A weakened Hurricane Dorian flooded homes on North Carolina's Outer Banks on Friday with a fury that took even storm-hardened residents by surprise, forcing people to climb into their attics. Hundreds were feared trapped by high water, and neighbors used boats to rescue one another.

Medics and other rescuers rushed to Ocracoke Island — accessible only by boat or air — to reach those who made the mistake of defying mandatory evacuation orders along the 200-mile (320-kilometer) ribbon of low-lying islands.

"We are flooding like crazy," Ocracoke Island bookshop owner Leslie Lanier texted. "I have been here 32 years and not seen this."

Its winds down to 90 mph (145 kph), Dorian howled over the Outer Banks as a far weaker storm than the brute that wreaked havoc on the Bahamas at the start of the week. Just when it looked as if its run up the Southeast coast was coming to a relatively quiet end, the Category 1 hurricane sent seawater surging over neighborhoods, flooding the first floors of many homes, even ones on stilts.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 58 of 75

"There is significant concern about hundreds of people trapped on Ocracoke Island," Gov. Roy Cooper said. Over and over, longtime residents said that they had never seen flooding so bad, and that places in their homes that had never flooded before were inundated.

"We were all on social media laughing about how we'd done well and there was really no flooding at all, just rain, typical rain," Steve Harris, who has lived on Ocracoke Island for most of the last 19 years. And then, "the wall of water just came rushing through the island."

"It just started looking like a bathtub, very quickly," said Harris, who was safe in his third-floor condo. "We went from almost no water to 4 to 6 feet in a matter of minutes."

The Coast Guard began landing local law enforcement officers on the island via helicopter and airlifting out the sick, the elderly or others in distress, Hyde County authorities said. National Guard helicopters also flew supplies and a rescue team in. Residents were told to get to the highest point in their homes in the meantime.

"Several people were rescued from their upper floors or attics by boat by good Samaritans," Ocracoke Island restaurant owner Jason Wells said in a text message.

In Buxton on Hatteras Island, close to where Dorian blew ashore, Radio Hatteras volunteer Mary Helen Goodloe-Murphy said that people were calling in to report that "houses are shaking like crazy" and that "it's never been like this before."

By evening, the governor said that officials were aware of no serious injuries on the Outer Banks from the storm. One 79-year-old man was airlifted from Ocracoke Island because of a pre-existing condition, authorities said. People in need of temporary housing were being taken to a shelter on the mainland, the governor said.

"The hurricane has left behind destruction where storm surge inundated Ocracoke Island," Cooper said. "Currently the island has no electricity and many homes and buildings are still underwater."

Around midmorning, the eye of the storm came ashore at Cape Hatteras, Dorian's first landfall in the continental U.S. after a week and a half in which it spread fear up and down the coast and kept people guessing as to where it would go.

By late afternoon, Dorian had peeled off the coastline and was finally making its exit out to sea. It is expected to remain a hurricane as it sweeps up the Eastern Seaboard through Saturday, veering far enough offshore that its hurricane-force winds are unlikely to pose any threat to land in the U.S.

Power outages had dropped by about one-third, to around 213,000 in the Carolinas and Virginia.

At least four deaths in the Southeast were blamed on Dorian. All were men in Florida or North Carolina who died in falls or by electrocution while trimming trees, putting up storm shutters or otherwise getting ready for the hurricane.

As Dorian closed in, more than a quarter-million residents and visitors were ordered to evacuate the Outer Banks, which stick out from the Eastern Seaboard like the side-view mirror on a car. But many just tied down their boats, removed objects from their yards that could blow away, and hunkered down.

Dorian slammed the Bahamas at the start of the week with 185 mph (295 kph) winds, killing at least 30 people and obliterating countless homes. From there, it swept past Florida and Georgia, then sideswiped the Carolinas on Thursday, spinning off tornadoes that peeled away roofs and flipped recreational vehicles.

Still, the damage was far less than feared in many parts of the Carolinas, including historic Charleston, South Carolina, which is prone to flooding even from ordinary storms, and Wilmington, North Carolina, the state's biggest coastal city.

Joseph Pawlick went out Friday morning to rake leaves, twigs and other debris from the sidewalk outside his Wilmington home.

"I slept like a baby last night. This, thankfully, was not bad," he said.

Finley reported from Norfolk, Virginia. Contributing to this report were Associated Press writers Gary D. Robertson, Martha Waggoner and Jonathan Drew in Raleigh, North Carolina; Tom Foreman Jr. in Winston-Salem, North Carolina; and Seth Borenstein in Washington.

For more of AP's coverage of Hurricane Dorian, go to: <https://apnews.com/Hurricanes>

2 Singaporeans among California boat fire victims

BY AMY TAXIN and JULIE WATSON Associated Press

From a veteran water polo coach to a Singaporean data scientist, the passengers aboard the ill-fated Conception dive boat were linked by their love for the water.

Here are the victims who have been identified so far from the deadly fire that engulfed the vessel, killing 34 people off California's wind-swept Channel Islands during their three-day excursion over Labor Day weekend.

VETERAN WATER POLO COACH

Before Justin Dignam, 58, founded a payroll company he coached water polo at universities.

Dignam was a veteran water polo player who played at University of Richmond before coaching a team at Iona College and becoming the head coach of Wesleyan University's men's team, according to Team USA Water Polo. He also served as a referee.

Big Fish Employer Services President Jeff Hill called Dignam a "fearless" CEO in a letter posted to the company's website. Hill said he was heartbroken but promised to carry on in leading the company to honor what Dignam started when he founded it in 2003 in Placentia, California.

"With dedication in the face of any adversity, we will carry on as the capable team that Justin relied upon, just as he would expect," Hill wrote.

Dignam is from Anaheim Hills, California, and is survived by a wife and two children.

He continued to play water polo in the masters community and showed true passion for the sport, said Greg Mescall, communications director for USA Water Polo.

Dignam "would spot you across a room and as he headed your way, you would just see a big smile forming on his face," Mescall said in an email. "He'll be missed by many, me included."

TENNESSEE DOCTOR

Ted Strom, 62, was a staff physician at the Memphis Veterans Affairs Medical Center.

He was also an associate professor at the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, and taught hematopathology and transfusion medicine to medical students and residents, according to his profile on LinkedIn.

"His exceptional service to Veterans as a staff physician is a testament to the type person that he was," the hospital said in a statement. "He will certainly be missed."

Strom, who lived in Germantown, Tennessee, received his medical degree and doctorate in biochemistry at the University of Chicago, according to the profile.

His family requested privacy and said in a statement that "he passed in a place he cherished while doing something he loved."

CONNECTICUT COUPLE

Sanjeeri Deopujari, a dentist, and Kaustubh Nirmal, a strategic business technologist, lived in Stamford, Connecticut.

Nirmal's cousin, Rajul Sharma, told the Los Angeles Times that the married couple were soul mates.

"God took them away from us untimely and unfairly, but even he didn't have the heart to separate them in death," he told the newspaper.

Nirmal had a master's degree in management information systems from New York University and worked for Ernst & Young, according to his LinkedIn profile.

The couple had a dog named Bebe, and loved her "to the moon and back," said neighbor Marlene Springer. "It is such a sad time for everyone," she said.

CELEBRATING A TEEN'S BIRTHDAY

Apple engineer Steve Salika, 55, and his wife, Diana Adamic, 60, went on the trip with their daughter Tia Salika to celebrate the teen's 17th birthday.

Apple colleague Dan Garcia, 46, joined them with his girlfriend Yulia Krashennaya, 40.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 60 of 75

Krashennaya was a product manager at Spiralinks where she did contracting work for Cisco Global Event Marketing, Richard Stehn, a company spokesperson told The Mercury News.

The couple, who lived in Berkeley, were avid divers and underwater photographers who went on trips around the world, the paper reported.

An Apple senior vice president Deirdre O'Brien said Garcia "was as passionate about his job at Apple as he was about his love of diving. Both leave many friends behind and will be deeply missed."

His aunt posted on her Facebook page that he had also worked for Amazon and called him a "gifted engineer" and a "talented artist in many venues."

"Dan was an incredible, special young man, 46 years young," his aunt Blanche Garcia wrote.

Salika met Adamic at Apple. Adamic later left the company, but Salika remained for 30 years, touching so many people with his "energy and enthusiasm," O'Brien said in a statement.

For the birthday trip, Tia Salika brought along her 16-year-old friend Berenice Felipe from her school, Pacific Collegiate Charter School, a high-performing institution serving grades seven to 12 in Santa Cruz, according to a letter sent to the school community obtained by NBC News.

The girls volunteered together at the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter, as did Adamic, who was "was an ally to all living things — orphan kittens, wild birds, youth volunteers — and a champion for the natural world around us," Jen Walker, a former humane educator at the animal shelter posted on the shelter's Facebook page.

Walker called Tia "an amazing young woman, filled with shy grace and the purest enthusiasm." She said she helped foster kittens, among other things, and her friend Berenice "was a model of gentle support for the animals and children she worked with at the shelter."

Tom Peyton, vice president of Kids Sea Camp in South Carolina, said his all-inclusive scuba diving company taught Tia to dive at the age of six and they went on their trips every year since.

"This family was incredibly adventurous, very fearless," he said. "They loved family life, the ocean and the environment."

'WATER PRINCESS'

Vaidehi Williams lived in Northern California and was passionate about water conservation.

She worked for the Soquel Creek Water District and was raising her two children with her husband, Sarma Williams, according to a GoFundMe page set up to assist the family.

"Vaidehi has touched so many people from so many walks of life," the site said. "She had a way of bringing people together and seized every opportunity to live life to its fullest."

Williams gave presentations about water conservation in schools, drove the district's educational trailer and wore a water droplet costume at the county fair and an Earth Day event, the district said in a statement.

She worked for the district for 18 years, most recently as communication specialist, and helped start its geographic information system platform, the statement said.

"She brought joy to work every day and was a dear friend to all of us," the district said. "She will forever be our 'Water Princess.'"

A FAMILY WHO SHARED A LOVE OF DIVING

The Quitasol sisters were celebrating their father's birthday by going on another adventure with him and his wife, Fernisa Sison, family members said. The family had been scuba diving together for at least a decade.

Michael Quitasol met Sison, 57, at San Joaquin Delta College, where they both studied nursing. Fernisa also taught first-year nursing students at the college in 2005 and 2006 and later as an adjunct instructor.

The couple worked at St. Joseph's Medical Center in Stockton. Later, Quitasol's daughter, Evan, landed a nursing job there.

Her sister Angela Quitasol was a science teacher at a middle school in Stockton. Another sister, Nicole, moved to the San Diego area and worked at a Coronado restaurant.

Dominic Selga said the Quitasol family and his ex-wife, Sison, had been on the boat "five or six" times. He called the Quitasols "great people" and said the two families spent Mother's Day and Father's Day holidays together.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 61 of 75

The girls' stepfather, Chris Rosas, described them to the Los Angeles Times as "the most kind, most loving people I've ever met — and I'm not just saying that because they're family."

A FREE SPIRIT

Allie Kurtz, 26, was the sole crewmember who died aboard the Conception.

She previously worked in the movie industry. But she left a job and life in Santa Monica earlier this year to move to Santa Barbara and follow her dream of working on a boat, family members said.

Kurtz worked as a cook on another boat for Truth Aquatics and was recently thrilled to be promoted as a deckhand on the Conception.

Kurtz, who grew up in Illinois, was free-spirited, well-traveled and studied theater and opera.

Her 71-year-old grandmother, Doris Lapporte, said she always loved the water and used to kid that she wanted to be a pirate someday. Her father, Robert Kurtz, and sister Olivia, 20, joked that she had fins and gills. They said they plan to scatter her ashes at sea.

"She left this world doing something she absolutely loved. This was her dream, and she was finally able to fulfill this dream," her sister said.

A STATE ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENTIST AND HER PHOTOGRAPHER HUSBAND

Adrian Dahood-Fritz, 40, and her 40-year-old husband, professional photographer Andrew Fritz, had just moved to California from Texas for Dahood-Fritz's new job as a senior environmental scientist for California's Ocean Protection Council under the California Natural Resources Agency.

Dahood-Fritz led efforts to manage the state's network of marine protected areas and cared deeply about the ocean, California Gov. Gavin Newsom said in a statement Thursday. She had done research in Antarctica.

"She embodied marine conservation and was a highly accomplished and respected scientific researcher," Newsom said.

The couple previously lived in Taylor, Texas, where they were known for their photography skills and volunteer work with animals.

Friend Josh Baker said he grew up with Fritz, and the two started a photography business in 2015. Fritz did portraits, weddings and other events. He also shot nature photography, mostly to fulfill his own passion, he said on his photography website.

In May, Fritz wrote in his website's blog that he was so enamored at seeing a Cheetah run at the San Diego Safari Park he had to put down his camera and watch with his own eyes.

Baker said Fritz was supposed to fly back to Austin in a few weeks to teach a photography class in which he was known for taking students to the Texas' Hill Country to shoot the night sky.

"He would teach classes, and they would be sold out for months," Baker told the Austin American-Statesman.

Baker said he and Fritz also formed a photography club called the North Austin Photographic Society.

Fritz had traveled the world scuba diving.

SINGAPOREAN CITIZENS

Wei Tan, a 26-year-old from Goleta, California, was among those identified Friday by authorities.

Tan, who was from Singapore, studied chemical engineering at University of Michigan and industrial engineering and operations research at University of California, Berkeley.

"It hurts, it will always hurt, but we will move on," her older sister Cheerin Tan posted on Facebook.

Earlier this year, Tan started working as a data scientist for Evidation Health, according to her social media pages.

Christine Lemke, Evidation's president, said the news was heartbreaking.

"Her smile lit up the world and she'll be sorely missed," she said in a statement.

Maribel Leonio, executive officer at Singapore's consulate in San Francisco, said another Singaporean citizen, Sunil Singh Sandhu, was also on the list of passengers.

His father, Sojit Singh, told The New Paper in Singapore his mind went blank when he heard the news.

"I thought this was a hoax," he said. "My whole life is gone."

Singh said his son was a health buff who took up scuba diving about two months ago.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 62 of 75

In a LinkedIn profile, Sandhu said he worked as a silicon photonics senior scientist at Pointcloud Inc in Northern California.

He obtained a doctorate in electrical engineering from Stanford University in 2011.

He later worked as a post-doctoral fellow researching the interaction between matter and light, the profile said.

He also studied Japanese, Chinese and Russian and previously served a year in Singapore's armed forces as an infantry officer, the profile said.

ENGINEERING FRIENDS

Carrie McLaughlin and Kristian Takvam had successful careers at the education platform Brilliant in San Francisco.

McLaughlin, 35, was a senior software engineer, and Takvam was Brilliant's vice president of engineering.

The loss of the two friends was heartbreaking for their colleagues in Northern California.

"Carrie and Kristian were incredible friends and colleagues who brought immense passion, talent, leadership, and warmth, and they will be missed dearly," Brilliant chief executive Sue Khim said in a statement.

McLaughlin, who lived in Oakland, grew up in Palo Alto and graduated from the University of California, San Diego in 2005, according to her Facebook page. She was also a watercolor artist.

'THEY WENT TO HEAVEN DOING SOMETHING TOGETHER THAT THEY BOTH LOVED'

Neal Baltz and Patricia Beitzinger loved the outdoors and adventure, according to Baltz's family.

The couple, who lived in Ahwatukee Foothills in southern Phoenix, traveled the world together, taking scuba diving trips in Micronesia and the Caribbean, among other places.

"They went to heaven doing something together that they both loved," Neal's father, John Baltz, told ABC affiliate KNXV-TV in Phoenix.

Baltz worked as an engineer for a semiconductor company and studied electrical engineering at the University of Texas at Austin and the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

He also loved making wine and enrolled in an enology program at a northern Arizona community college to learn more, the Los Angeles Times reported.

Baltz was an upbeat, friendly student who went through life with joy, said Michael Pierce, the director of enology and viticulture at the Southwest Wine Center.

"He loved so many things," Pierce told the paper. "He loved the ocean, he loved his dogs, he loved Patricia. We are a small community. It's a huge loss for us."

A MARINE BIOLOGIST ON A MISSION

Marine biologist Kristy Finstad joked that her blood was salty in a post on her scuba diving company's website.

She first put on a dive tank at the age of nine and had done hundreds of dives in the rugged, wind-swept Channel Islands, off Santa Barbara's coast, before leading the tour over Labor Day weekend.

The 41-year-old Finstad first swam in the national park as a toddler under her father's arm, according to the company's website.

She took over Worldwide Diving Adventures started by her mother in the 1970s and co-owned the company with her husband, also an avid diver.

Finstad studied damselfish and corals in the Tahitian Islands, dove for black pearls in the French Polynesian Tuamotus Islands and counted salmonids for the city of Santa Cruz, where she lived. She also did research for the Australian Institute of Marine Science and wrote a restoration guidebook for the California Coastal Commission.

"My mission is to inspire appreciation for our underwater world," she wrote on her company's website.

She and her husband had just returned from sailing across the South Pacific. It was part of their 10-year plan that started on the back of a napkin in 2006.

They left from the Channel Islands in 2015 on the journey and planned to return in 2018. Before they set off, Finstad wrote: "Our new boss is King Neptune: when it blows we hunker down; when there's surf we paddle in; when there's rain we wash up. In terms of time-lines, the best we can do is point in the right direction."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 63 of 75

FATHER-DAUGHTER SCIENTISTS

Raymond "Scott" Chan, 59, and his 26-year-old daughter, Kendra Chan, shared a love of science and diving. The two, who both lived in Los Altos, took at least two boat trips to the Channel Islands each year, according to their family.

Raymond Chan, who went by his first name Scott, gave up a 20-year career in Silicon Valley to teach.

Chan said on his LinkedIn page that his teaching was fed by his "passion and wealth of real-world experience from research laboratories, and the electronics, computer, and high-performance automotive industries."

He was well liked at American High School in Fremont, where he taught Advanced Placement physics classes for the past three years, according to the school district.

"His students knew him to be an innovative and inspiring teacher who developed a passion for physics among his students," the Fremont Unified School District said in a statement. "His loss is a tremendous tragedy for our school district."

Kendra Chan was a wildlife biologist for the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Ventura.

"I was so proud, so proud of her and all that she was doing," her mother, Vicki Moore told FOX affiliate KTVU in San Francisco. "She was absolutely an amazing young woman."

A University of California, Davis graduate, Chancellor Gary S. May said she was dedicated to creating a healthier planet.

"Kendra's fascination with marine ecology will continue to inspire everyone she touched," he said in a statement.

A VISUAL EFFECTS DESIGNER AND CLOSE FRIEND LIVING LIFE TO FULLEST

Visual effects designer Charles McIlvain, 44, and his close friend and neighbor Marybeth Guiney lived life to the fullest, according to his wife, Jasmine Lord, in a statement from McIlvain's family.

McIlvain worked on "Spider-Man" and "Green Lantern" among other films.

"His laugh was the greatest and his smile could light up the dark," the family said in a statement. "He embraced life with exceptional joy, openness and humor, and all who knew him felt that warmth."

McIlvain worked as a visual effects designer for Walt Disney Imagineering and as a pipeline engineer and technical animation supervisor at Sony Pictures Imageworks. He also worked at Netflix .

"Chuck was a magnetic person who had an incredible ability to connect with people and help them," Netflix said in a statement. "This is devastating news for those who were fortunate to know him, and he will be deeply missed by his friends and co-workers at Netflix."

Culver City Councilman Alex Fisch said he was a close friend who loved to dive, snowboard and mountain bike.

"I can't emphasize enough the unique combination of creativity, intelligence and wonderful presence that he had," Fisch said.

Guiney, 51, was a sales director and ocean enthusiast who advocated for the protection of sharks. From Boston, she formerly worked as a sales executive for the New England Patriots, which said in a statement that the organization was "deeply saddened" over her death.

"She was the person you wanted to be around. She was fun — the best smile, the best laugh," Carrie Benabou, a friend of Guiney's, told ABC's affiliate in Boston, WCVB.

A HAIRDRESSER AND NATURE PHOTOGRAPHER

Lisa Fiedler, a 52-year-old hairdresser and photographer, said on her photography website that the moment she picked up the camera, she realized "I enjoyed creating and sharing images that reflect the way I absorb the grandeur of nature."

A native of Michigan, Fiedler lived in Mill Valley, just north of San Francisco, where she worked as a hair stylist at Dagaz Salon. Her photographs were stunning, colorful images of majestic Red Woods, hummingbirds in flight and water rushing over boulders in Northern California. She also photographed life and nature in Guatemala, China, Tibet and Holland.

Lisa's mother, Nancy Fiedler, who lives in Corte Madera, said her daughter thought of herself as "part fish" because of her ocean addiction.

"Everybody loved her. She was a kind, gentle person. She was a naturalist, she loved nature," her mother told San Francisco's ABC affiliate, KGO television.

Alicia Love, a friend and co-worker, told the Marin Independent Journal that she was someone who was "independent, adventurous and didn't let anything hold her back."

Watson reported from San Diego, Taxin from Santa Ana, California.

N. Carolina election tests Trump clout, suburbs' GOP flight

By EMERY P. DALESIO and ALAN FRAM Associated Press

MINT HILL, N.C. (AP) — A tossup special election in North Carolina is shaping up as a pre-2020 test of President Donald Trump's pull on voters and whether the suburbs are continuing the flight from Republicans that fueled the party's 2018 House election losses.

The House district flows eastward from the prosperous Charlotte suburbs into rural areas hugging the South Carolina border. It's up for grabs on Tuesday after state officials invalidated last November's election following allegations of voter fraud by a GOP operative.

The Democrat in that race, former Marine and Harvard MBA Dan McCready, is running again, portraying himself as a centrist who puts "country over party" and opposes impeaching Trump. His opponent, Republican state senator and attorney Dan Bishop, is a Trump loyalist who sponsored the state's now-repealed 2016 law restricting the use of bathrooms by transgender people.

Both parties are pouring resources into the state, hoping to claim a morale-boosting win to juice candidate recruitment and fundraising. But the real X-factor is Trump himself, who parachutes into Fayetteville on Monday for an election-eve rally in hopes of securing a district he won by 11 points in 2016 and that Republicans have held since 1963. With Vice President Mike Pence also campaigning for Bishop on Monday, the race is testing Trump's influence on voters and whether Democrats can sustain the momentum that powered their midterm election wins.

"This is a pretty Republican district. This is not a seat you'll be able to explain away very well" if Bishop loses, said former Rep. Tom Davis, R-Va., who once chaired the House GOP campaign committee. A defeat would mean "Republicans are in trouble in the suburbs," he said.

The contest also features other emerging national themes.

Ads from Bishop, 55, impose the faces of McCready and other favorite GOP targets, including House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and progressive firebrand Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, atop swaying clown figures as Bishop says he'll fight "these crazy liberal clowns." A spot by McCready, 36, highlights Bishop's opposition to a bill helping ease prescription drug costs and says, "North Carolina families just can't afford politicians like Dan Bishop."

Special elections usually produce low turnout but lots of intensely partisan voters, and often don't forecast the next general election. But with Trump's national popularity stubbornly low and GOP hopes of recapturing House control hinging on suburban districts like this one, both parties see the race as a potential bellwether.

Under the microscope will be voters like Dorian DiPangrazio, 53, a real estate agent who lives in a leafy Charlotte neighborhood. Six in 10 of the district's voters live in or around the city, a major financial hub, split between Mecklenburg and Union counties and making them key battlegrounds.

DiPangrazio, who shares a name with the hurricane that battered the Carolina shores Friday and disrupted early voting, considers herself an independent. She expects to back McCready, citing his military background and work financing solar energy projects. She says Trump has "demonstrated so many negative qualities," including insulting women, and dismisses his support for Bishop because "I don't believe a word Donald Trump says, period."

Matt Haynes, a Republican from Stallings, also said he's open to McCready, citing the Democrat's background as a Marine Corps officer in Iraq and entrepreneur. McCready backs legislation helping young immigrants brought illegally to the U.S. get legal status, a contrast with Bishop's support of Trump's proposed

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 65 of 75

Mexican border wall.

"My first election that I could vote was in 2000, and then I've always voted Republican. But I've said if there was a Democratic candidate that I felt like would do a better job, I would put that candidate in and ... there's a part of me that feels like McCready is that guy," Haynes said Thursday. "The only reason I haven't done early voting is I'm still praying and weighing my decision."

Democrats wrested House control from Republicans last November, capturing 39 GOP-held seats. Turnover occurred in suburban seats in blue-leaning states like California, Virginia and New Jersey, but also once-red areas surrounding cities like Dallas, Houston, Atlanta, Oklahoma City and Charleston, South Carolina. Losses among suburban women were particularly troubling for the GOP.

Now just 30% of women approve of how Trump is handling the presidency, compared to 42% of men, according to last month's Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research poll. Also ominous for Republicans, last fall's AP VoteCast survey of more than 115,000 midterm voters nationwide showed suburban residents backed Democratic over GOP House candidates, 55% to 44%.

A McCready win or even a narrow Bishop victory could suggest that GOP hemorrhaging of voters ringing cities is continuing, even in the South.

"If we are even close in this one, that spells trouble for them in 2020," said Democratic consultant AJ Lenar, who isn't involved in the race.

Feeding GOP woes, 15 House Republicans have said they won't seek reelection next year, putting more seats at risk as they try toppling Democrats' 235-197 majority. There's also one independent and two vacancies, including a second seat along North Carolina's coast that Republicans seem likely to retain Tuesday.

Because he also sought the seat last year, McCready has enjoyed huge cash and name recognition advantages.

Besides the \$6.3 million he spent for 2018, McCready reported spending \$4.5 million this year, compared to \$1.8 million for Bishop. But top outside GOP groups including the National Republican Congressional Committee and the Congressional Leadership Fund have unleashed over \$6 million, vastly outspending their Democratic counterparts.

In an interview, Bishop attributed the close race to McCready's head start but said Trump's visit will galvanize voters "with his vision of an economy that's booming." McCready said separately that while the Charlotte area is doing well, once-bustling rural communities where many Bishop voters live and where Trump's appeal is strongest see "just empty parking spaces."

Rep. Tom Emmer, R-Minn., who heads the NRCC, the House GOP political arm, predicted a "photo finish" Bishop win and said Trump would invigorate party turnout. He conceded Bishop's name recognition struggle, saying polling showed voters who are ready to vote Republican "just don't know who that Republican is."

Bishop may not have name recognition, but he's counting on GOP base voters like Amy Ferguson turning out.

Ferguson, 29, said she backs Bishop and credited Trump's support for him.

"His administration is coming through," Ferguson said. "So, anybody that he supports, you know, as of right now, we kind of want to support, too."

Trump held a rally for Bishop in July shortly after tweeting that four House Democratic women of color should leave the country. When he began verbally attacking Rep. Ilhan Omar of Minnesota at the rally, the crowd chanted, "Send her back!"

Democrats say that even if Trump pushes Bishop to victory, it's a strategy that can't be replicated when all 435 House seats are on the ballot in 2020.

"He won't be able to go and dig into every House race across the country," said Cole Leiter, a spokesman for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee.

Fram reported from Washington.

Follow Emery P. Dalesio on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/emerydalesio> .

This story has been corrected to show the North Carolina city is Mecklenburg, not Mecklenberg.

Reaching a deal in national opioids case proving difficult

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma made headlines earlier this year when it reached a landmark deal with Oklahoma over the toll the opioids crisis has taken on that state. Attempts to get a national settlement resolving all claims against the company are proving more difficult.

Sources familiar with negotiations between Purdue, multiple state attorneys general and lawyers representing scores of local governments have said the talks are essentially at a standstill, six weeks before the first federal trial is scheduled to begin.

Purdue has said it wants to reach a deal that would settle all claims by state and local governments. Getting there is complicated by having so many voices at the table, some attorneys general who prefer putting the company and its controlling family on trial, questions over how a "structured bankruptcy" by Purdue would work, and disagreements over payouts between state and local governments.

"It's complex, and you just can't snap your fingers and think everybody's going to agree to everything," said Joe Rice, one of the lead lawyers for local governments who also is working for some states on the case.

The parties have been trying for months to work out a nationwide settlement, something U.S. District Court Judge Dan Polster has been encouraging. He is overseeing multidistrict litigation from his courtroom in Cleveland.

Under one proposal that became public about two weeks ago, Purdue would enter a structured bankruptcy that could be worth \$10 billion to \$12 billion over time. Included in the total would be \$3 billion from the Sackler family, which would give up its control of Purdue and contribute up to \$1.5 billion more by selling another company it owns, Mundipharma.

Sources familiar with the talks but not authorized to speak publicly about them have said those remain the broad parameters for a potential settlement but are not clear on how close the sides are to reaching a deal.

They say some state attorneys general don't want to accept that proposal, and there have been no signs that Purdue or the Sackler family are willing to offer more.

It's also uncertain exactly who would need to approve a tentative settlement for it to become final.

Nearly 2,000 lawsuits filed by city and county governments, as well as unions, hospitals, Native American tribes and lawyers representing babies who were born in opioid withdrawal have been consolidated under Polster. Most of those lawsuits also name other opioid makers, distributors and pharmacies. Yet the lead negotiators are state attorneys general who have filed separate lawsuits in their state courts against Purdue and, in some cases, others in the drug industry.

"This is far from typical," said Carl Tobias, a law professor at the University of Richmond in Virginia, who is following the case. "What they're contemplating is a whole other animal that I don't think has been used."

The cases involved in the Cleveland litigation are not the only ones against Purdue, the maker of OxyContin, the prescription painkiller that many of the government claims point to as the drug that gave rise to the nation's deadly opioid epidemic.

Purdue wants a settlement to resolve all claims against it, including hundreds filed in state courts. That is likely one reason it has resisted settling with Ohio's Cuyahoga and Summit counties, whose combined trial next month is scheduled to be the first of the federal cases.

Three other opioid makers have already announced settlements of their cases with the two counties.

"Purdue Pharma believes a settlement that benefits the American public now is a far better path than years of wasteful litigation and appeals," the Stamford, Connecticut-based company said in a statement. "We are actively working with state attorneys general and other plaintiffs on solutions that have the potential to save tens of thousands of lives and deliver billions of dollars to the communities affected by the opioid abuse crisis."

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 67 of 75

The lawsuits against Purdue claim that OxyContin brought in billions for the Sacklers as the company persuaded prescribers that powerful opioid painkillers were appropriate in higher doses and for more patients than had previously received them. The suits also allege the company downplayed the risks of addiction.

Facing the crush of suits, the company said earlier this year that it was considering filing for bankruptcy protection. It avoided a trial in the Oklahoma lawsuit by agreeing to a settlement worth \$270 million, including some money from the Sacklers.

People familiar with the negotiations but not authorized to speak about them have told The Associated Press the structured bankruptcy plan would allow the company to keep selling opioids as a public benefit trust, with the profits as part of the settlement money. The rights to overdose antidotes it has in development also would be included.

If the company does not have a settlement in place before the Oct. 21 trial date, it could file a "freefall" bankruptcy, an option that likely would mean less money for the plaintiffs. Lawsuits against the Sacklers might be able to continue but would face the challenge that much of the family's money is believed to be outside the U.S.

The first step to reaching a nationwide settlement is getting buy-in from most state attorneys general.

Polster has said any deal should have the backing of at least 35 of them, according to a source familiar with the talks. But that number could be flexible, and the states agreeing would likely need to include those with the largest populations and those hit hardest by the opioid crisis on a per-capita basis.

Some attorneys general have been skeptical of the settlement offer.

Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey suggested in a statement that the terms don't go far enough: "Our fight against Purdue and the Sacklers is about exposing the facts, making them pay for the harm they caused, and shutting them down for good," she said. "The people who have been hurt by Purdue's misconduct have spoken, loud and clear, about how important it is to have real accountability."

Most attorneys general have declined to comment, but people familiar with the talks say some of the dissatisfaction from the plaintiffs is about the Sacklers not guaranteeing more money in the deal.

Associated Press writers Dave Collins in Hartford, Connecticut, and Steve LeBlanc in Boston contributed to this report.

Follow Geoff Mulvihill at <http://www.twitter.com/geoffmulvihill>

Modest hiring enough to fuel sluggish but durable US economy

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Hiring by U.S. employers was slower but steady in August, and hourly pay jumped — trends that should sustain the U.S. economy's record-long expansion in the coming months.

Yet with the economy still under threat from a weak global economy and President Donald Trump's trade war with China, Chairman Jerome Powell made clear Friday that the Federal Reserve is poised to cut interest rates.

The government's jobs report Friday showed that U.S. employers, for now, are still adding jobs at a modest pace. Hiring did slow to 130,000 jobs in August, below the average pace of the past six months.

The unemployment rate stayed at 3.7% for a third straight month, near the lowest level in five decades. And more Americans entered the workforce in August, a positive development that increased the proportion of adults who are either working or seeking work to its highest level since February.

Still, the impact of the trade war, which has yet to be fully felt by consumers and retailers, could soon inflict damage. The Trump administration has just imposed 15% tariffs on about one-fifth of Chinese imports and plans to impose another such round of import taxes on Dec. 15.

All those tariffs will fall on consumer goods ranging from clothes and toys to electronics and sporting goods, likely raising prices for shoppers and shrinking retailers' narrow profit margins.

Trump's previous import taxes had fallen mainly on parts and components used by manufacturers. The

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 68 of 75

additional costs imposed by those tariffs and the threats of additional ones have caused businesses to cut back their spending. In addition, retaliatory tariffs from China have cut into U.S. exports.

All that has left consumers as the most important driver of U.S. economic growth. And for now, Americans are still spending. Consumer spending rose in the April-June quarter by the most in five years and also increased at a healthy clip in July. Average hourly pay rose 11 cents in August to \$28.11, up 3.2% from a year earlier, easily ahead of inflation.

"With slower, but still-solid job gains and good wage growth, households will continue to spend," Gus Faucher, chief economist at PNC, said. "The U.S. economy should avoid recession."

Over the past six months, employers have added an average of 150,000 jobs, down from an average of 223,000 last year. Even so, job gains at that pace are enough to lower the unemployment rate over time.

Last month's job gains were boosted by the temporary addition of 25,000 government workers for the 2020 Census. Excluding all government hiring, the economy added just 96,000 jobs in August, the fewest since May.

One reason hiring is slipping is that with the unemployment rate so low, companies are having a harder time finding qualified workers. The solid wage gain in August suggests that more businesses are deciding that they need to offer higher pay to attract and keep employees.

"That's a sign we're in pretty good shape here," said Drew Matus, an economist at Metlife Investment Management.

Speaking at an event in Switzerland, Powell said he thought the U.S. consumer is in good shape and that the job market was "strong."

Trade fights are causing "some uncertainty," Powell added. The Fed is monitoring economic data, he said, and will "act as appropriate to sustain the expansion."

Accordingly, the Fed is considered certain to cut its benchmark short-term rate when it next meets in two weeks and perhaps again later in the year if the impact of the trade war were to intensify.

In the meantime, the effects of the trade war are evident in industry-specific hiring figures. Manufacturers added just 3,000 jobs in August, the latest sign that their hiring has tumbled since last year.

Employment in shipping and warehousing companies was essentially unchanged last month, with fewer factory and farm goods to transport. Retailers cut 11,000 jobs, the seventh straight month of decline, though that is mostly a reflection of the impact of online shopping.

Robert McCutcheon, president of the Americans for Britax, which makes child car seats and other baby gear, says the U.S.-China trade war has sharply cut his profits. Britax assembles its car seats at its U.S. plant in Fort Mill, South Carolina yet has paid 25% tariffs for nearly a year on the textile covers it imports from China. On Sept. 1, it was hit with new tariffs on metal parts, like belt buckles, that it also imports.

The company had been eating the additional costs but is now raising prices for its customers to offset the duties. If that hurts sales, the company may have to cut back on work hours or even lay off workers, McCutcheon said.

"We plainly cannot afford this hit to our bottom line," he said.

A report this week by the staffing firm Challenger, Gray & Christmas Inc., suggested that the trade war has begun to cause U.S. job losses. More than 10,000 Americans were laid off in August because of trade difficulties, according to company announcements tracked by the firm.

"Employers are beginning to feel the effects of the trade war and imposed tariffs by the U.S. and China," said Andrew Challenger, a company vice president.

Still, for many companies in service industries that depend on U.S. consumers, business remains mostly healthy. Mike Bitar, managing director of the recruiting firm Protis Global, said the companies he works with — mostly beverage companies, consumer goods makers and restaurants — are still pushing to hire more people.

"We have not seen any slowdown at all," he said.

Bitar tells clients that if they want to hire managers who don't require any training, they'll have to pay more — up to 10% to 15% higher than the typical salary for that position, given the tight labor market.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 69 of 75

If they're willing to train new managers, he said, they can avoid paying the premium.

In Friday's jobs report for August, one positive sign was an increase in the proportion of Americans age 25 through 54 with jobs. Economists typically focus on that age bracket because it filters out students and older Americans nearing retirement. Eighty percent of them now have jobs, the highest level since January 2008, just after the Great Recession began.

Mark Fleming, chief economist at First American Financial, said the increase suggests that millennials in their late twenties are stepping up their job searches.

"We're finally beginning to see the heart of the millennial generation finishing their education and getting jobs," Fleming said.

AP Business Writers Martin Crutsinger and Bani Sapra contributed to this report.

In the Amazon, indigenous debate how to save their lands

By LUIS ANDRES HENAO Associated Press

TEKOHAW, Brazil (AP) — Warriors wielding bows and arrows, elderly chieftains in face paint and nursing mothers gathered recently in a Brazilian village to debate a plan that some hope will hold at bay the loggers and other invaders threatening the nine tribes of the Tembe.

The sustainable development plan is meant to help the Tembe profit from the Amazon forest without ruining it. They also want to keep outsiders away from their 1,080-square-mile (2,766-square-kilometer) Alto Rio Guama homeland that is officially protected but in practice under siege.

Recent clashes saw the Tembe burning the trucks and equipment of illegal loggers on their territory, which is in a Brazilian state plagued by thousands of fires burning on cleared Amazon jungle lands.

Mugabe dies; liberated Zimbabwe, then held it for 37 years

By FARAI MUTSAKA and CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA Associated Press

HARARE, Zimbabwe (AP) — Former Zimbabwean leader Robert Mugabe, an ex-guerrilla chief who took power when the African country shook off white minority rule and presided for decades while economic turmoil and human rights violations eroded its early promise, has died in Singapore. He was 95.

Mugabe enjoyed strong support from Zimbabwe's people soon after he became the first post-colonial leader of what had been British-controlled Rhodesia.

Often violent farm seizures from whites who owned huge tracts of land made him a hated figure in the West and a hero in Africa.

His successor, President Emmerson Mnangagwa, tweeted word Friday that an "icon of liberation" had died. Mnangagwa, a long-time loyalist until Mugabe dismissed him from his Cabinet, named Mugabe as a national hero, Zimbabwe's highest posthumous honor.

He said the nation would observe an official mourning period for its late leader, "a great teacher and mentor" and a "remarkable statesman of our century." No date or other details were given.

Singapore's Foreign Ministry said it was working with Zimbabwe on arrangements to fly Mugabe's body home. In recent years, Mugabe sought medical treatment at Gleneagles Hospital in Singapore.

Presidential spokesman George Charamba told The Associated Press that Mugabe was readmitted to the hospital complaining of chest pains. His personal doctor, Dr. Jonathan Matenga, was flown to Singapore and with Mugabe when he died at 4:45 a.m. Friday, Charamba said.

Mugabe's popularity began to rise again after Mnangagwa failed to deliver on promises of economic recovery and appeared to take an even harsher and more repressive stance against critics. Many began to publicly say they missed Mugabe.

Forced to resign amid pressure from the military, his party and the public in November 2017,

Mugabe was defiant throughout his long life, railing against the West for what he called its neo-colonialist attitude and urging Africans to take control of their resources — a populist message that was often a hit,

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 70 of 75

even as many nations on the continent shed the strongman model and moved toward democracy.

A target of international sanctions over the years, Mugabe nevertheless enjoyed acceptance among peers in Africa who chose not to judge him in the same way as Britain, the United States and other Western detractors.

"They are the ones who say they gave Christianity to Africa," Mugabe said of the West during a visit to South Africa in 2016. "We say: 'We came, we saw and we were conquered.'"

Even as old age took its toll and opposition to his rule increased, he refused to step down until the pressure became unbearable in 2017 as his former allies in the ruling party accused him of grooming his wife, Grace, to take over — ahead of long-serving loyalists such as Mnangagwa, who was fired in November 2017 before returning to take over with the help of the military.

Spry in his impeccably tailored suits, Mugabe maintained a schedule of events and international travel during his rule that defied his advancing age, though signs of weariness mounted. He walked with a limp, fell after stepping off a plane in Zimbabwe, read the wrong speech at the opening of parliament, and appeared to be dozing during a news conference in Japan. However, his longevity and frequently dashed rumors of ill health delighted supporters and infuriated opponents who had sardonically predicted he would live forever.

"Do you want me to punch you to the floor to realize I am still there?" Mugabe told an interviewer from state television who asked him in early 2016 about retirement plans.

After the fighting between black guerrillas and the white rulers of Rhodesia, as Zimbabwe was then known, ended, Mugabe reached out to whites. The self-declared Marxist stressed the need for education and built new schools. Tourism and mining flourished, and Zimbabwe was a regional breadbasket.

However, a brutal military campaign waged against an uprising in western Matabeleland province that ended in 1987 augured a bitter turn in Zimbabwe's fortunes. As the years went by, Mugabe was widely accused of hanging onto power through violence and vote fraud, notably in a 2008 election that led to a troubled coalition government after regional mediators intervened.

"I have many degrees in violence," Mugabe once boasted on a campaign trail, raising his fist. "You see this fist, it can smash your face."

Mugabe was re-elected in 2013 in another ballot marred by alleged irregularities, though he dismissed his critics as sore losers.

Amid the political turmoil, the economy of Zimbabwe, traditionally rich in agriculture and minerals, deteriorated. Factories were closing, unemployment was rising and the country abandoned its currency for the U.S. dollar in 2009 because of hyperinflation.

The economic problems are often traced to the violent seizures of thousands of white-owned farms that began around 2000. Land reform was supposed to take much of the country's most fertile land — owned by about 4,500 white descendants of mainly British and South African colonial-era settlers — and redistribute it to poor blacks. Instead, Mugabe gave prime farms to ruling party leaders, party loyalists, security chiefs, relatives and cronies.

Zimbabwe's main opposition leader, Nelson Chamisa, said he was "mourning with the rest of Africa" over the death of Mugabe in the African tradition of Ubuntu, or humanity toward others, calling him one of Zimbabwe's founding fathers and a freedom fighter.

However, Chamisa, who leads the Movement for Democratic Change, also acknowledged the pain over "decades of political disputes" surrounding his governance.

"Memories really go to the deficits of governance, goes to the issue of human rights situation in the country, goes to the collapse of systems," he said.

He also said Mugabe's death on foreign soil is a "sad indictment" of the country's economic situation.

On the streets of Harare, the capital, people gathered in small groups Friday and discussed Mugabe.

"I will not shed a tear, not for that cruel man," said Tariro Makena, a street vendor. "All these problems, he started them and people now want us to pretend it never happened."

Others said they missed him.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 71 of 75

"Things are worse now. Life was not that good but it was never this bad. These people who removed him from power have no clue whatsoever," said Silas Marongo, holding an axe and joining men and women cutting a tree for firewood in suburban Harare. They needed the wood to beat severe electricity shortages that underline the worsening economic situation.

Amnesty International said Mugabe left behind "an indelible stain on his country's human rights record." Mugabe's early years as a leader saw "notable achievements" through his heavy investment in health care and education, the human rights group said, but he later eroded his own track record.

"While casting himself as the saviour of Zimbabwe, Robert Mugabe inflicted lasting damage upon its people and its reputation," Muleya Mwananyanda, Amnesty International's Deputy Regional Director for Southern Africa, said.

Mugabe was born on Feb. 21, 1924, in Zvimba, 60 kilometers (40 miles) west of the capital of Harare. As a child, he tended his grandfather's cattle and goats, fished for bream in muddy water holes, played football and "boxed a lot," as he recalled later.

Mugabe lacked the easy charisma of Nelson Mandela, the anti-apartheid leader and contemporary who became South Africa's first black president in 1994 after reconciling with its former white rulers. But he drew admirers in some quarters for taking a hard line with the West, and he could be disarming despite his sometimes harsh demeanor.

"The gift of politicians is never to stop speaking until the people say, 'Ah, we are tired,'" he said at a 2015 news conference. "You are now tired. I say thank you."

Torchia reported from Johannesburg. AP writer Carley Petesch in Dakar, Senegal contributed to this report.

NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By BEATRICE DUPUY, ARIJETA LAJKA and AMANDA SEITZ undefined

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these is legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the real facts:

CLAIM: Photo of a massive, cyclone-like cloud shows Hurricane Dorian headed to Florida.

THE FACTS: The image is a digital artwork that was shared widely on social media as Hurricane Dorian made its way toward the U.S. In some posts, the image was shared with a false caption saying it showed Dorian over the Bahamas coming to Florida. The storm artwork was created by Brent Shavnore and published on his Instagram account on April 12, well before the hurricane had formed. Shavnore confirmed in an email to the AP that the image was digitally created. He said he gives YouTube tutorials to teach people how to make digital art similar to his.

CLAIM: Hillary Clinton said in a Sept. 1 tweet that, "Hurricane Dorian has already devastated the Bahamas and is about to devastate the Great State of Florida. Please help us help the victims by giving a huge donation to Clinton Foundation Today. We rebuilt Haiti and we'll rebuild Nassau and Orlando."

THE FACTS: The tweet shared on social media that appears to show Clinton soliciting donations for the victims of Hurricane Dorian is not real. That message was not tweeted by her or from her account. The false tweet was shared as a screenshot in posts on social media. As of Friday, Clinton had sent only one tweet about Hurricane Dorian. That tweet on Aug. 30 read, "Stay safe, Florida. If you haven't already, make sure to check off these emergency preparedness steps," and included a link to hurricane readiness tips from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Nick Merrill, a spokesman for Clinton, confirmed in an email to the AP that she did not send the tweet.

CLAIM: Video shows a South African mall ablaze, with people leaping from the building amid civil unrest in the country.

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 72 of 75

THE FACTS: The video, viewed widely on Facebook, was altered to suggest it was taken in South Africa. In the video, a narrator says: "This is a shopping mall that has been set on fire," as the words "South Africa" scroll across the screen. However, the video was actually taken on May 24, in Surat, India, when a fire broke out in a four-story tutoring center, killing 19 students and injuring dozens more. The AP covered that fire, and images from the time match the multi-level storefront building in the video. In addition, numerous videos with scenes from the Indian fire can be found online. In the last few days, there has been a rise in looting and arson attacks against foreign-owned businesses in Johannesburg and South Africa's capital, Pretoria.

CLAIM: A photo showing a hospital room in disarray, with blood pooled on the floor, was taken following the recent mass shooting in Odessa, Texas.

THE FACTS: The photo was not taken after the Texas shooting. It was taken in 2018 by a Temple University medical student and was included with an essay that ran in The New York Times in February. The photo was shared with a false caption on Facebook after a gunman went on a rampage in West Texas, leaving seven people dead and about two dozen injured. The photo was taken at Temple University Hospital on Sept. 11, 2018, by Eric Curran, now a fourth-year medical student at the university. Curran told the AP in an email that the photo shows the hospital room after staff treated a victim of gun violence. The New York Times ran the photo with a personal essay by Curran recounting how hospital staff worked to treat victims of gun violence. "The trauma bay in the emergency department at Temple University after resuscitation efforts failed," the caption of the photo in the Times read.

This is part of The Associated Press' ongoing effort to fact-check misinformation that is shared widely online, including work with Facebook to identify and reduce the circulation of false stories on the platform. The video circulating widely on Facebook was captured earlier this year when a fire broke out in a four-story building in Surat, India, killing 19 students and injuring dozens more.

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US tells migrant woman 8 months pregnant to wait in Mexico

By NOMAAN MERCHANT and VERÓNICA G. CÁRDENAS Associated Press

MATAMOROS, Mexico (AP) — Eight-and-a-half-months pregnant and experiencing contractions, a Salvadoran woman who had crossed the Rio Grande and was apprehended by the Border Patrol was forced to go back to Mexico.

Agents took her to the hospital, where doctors gave her medication to stop the contractions. And then, according to the woman and her lawyer, she was almost immediately sent back to Mexico.

There, she joined the more than 38,000 people forced to wait across the border for immigration court hearings under a rapidly expanding Trump administration policy. And her plight highlights the health risks and perils presented by the "Remain in Mexico" program.

The woman was waiting Thursday with her 3-year-old daughter in a makeshift tent camp in Matamoros, Mexico, next to an international bridge, due to give birth any day, said her attorney, Jodi Goodwin.

"She's concerned about having the baby in the street or having to have the baby in a shelter," Goodwin said.

Pregnant women face special hazards in Mexico because places where migrants wait to enter the U.S. often don't have access to regular meals, clean water, and medical care.

Many shelters at the Mexico border are at or above capacity already, and some families have been sleeping in tents or on blankets in the blistering summer heat. Reports have abounded of migrants being attacked or kidnapped in Mexican border cities, especially in Tamaulipas state across from South Texas,

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 73 of 75

where the Salvadoran mother is waiting for a November court date.

The Associated Press is not identifying the woman from El Salvador because she fears for her safety.

The U.S. government does not automatically exempt pregnant women from the "Remain in Mexico" program. U.S. Customs and Border Protection declined to comment on the woman's case.

The program — officially called the Migrant Protection Protocols — was instituted by the U.S. and Mexico as a way of deterring migrants from crossing the border to seek asylum. Mexico has cooperated with the expansion of the program at the behest of President Donald Trump, who threatened crippling tariffs in June if Mexico did not do more to stop migrants.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security has said people in "vulnerable populations" may be exempt from being sent to Mexico. But pregnant women are not necessarily considered "vulnerable" by CBP, a subsidiary of the department.

"In some cases, pregnancy may not be observable or disclosed, and may not in and of itself disqualify an individual from being amenable for the program," CBP said in a statement. "Agents and officers would consider pregnancy, when other associated factors exist, to determine amenability for the program."

Goodwin provided copies of the 28-year-old woman's immigration paperwork and the bracelet from when she was admitted to Valley Regional Medical Center.

"In this particular case, this woman was actually taken to the hospital by CBP," she said. "There's no way that CBP could suggest that her pregnancy wasn't known."

The paperwork instructs her to return to Brownsville on Nov. 14 for a court hearing.

The U.S. government is establishing temporary tent courtrooms in Brownsville and Laredo, Texas, where immigration judges from around the U.S. will hear migrants' cases by video. The hearings will start in those cities later this month.

The woman's notice lists her address as a migrant shelter in Matamoros several miles from the primary international bridge near the camp where she is staying. Goodwin says she has never been to that shelter.

There are at least six cases of pregnant women border-wide who have been sent back to Mexico, according to U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, an Oregon Democrat who recently sent a letter to the Department of Homeland Security's inspector general demanding an investigation into the issue. Goodwin also represents a woman from Peru who was seven months pregnant when border agents allowed her to enter, only to send her back to Mexico the next day.

Mexico offers limited health coverage to people regardless of nationality that includes some of the screenings a pregnant woman needs, said Lina Villa, a Mexico-based health official for Doctors Without Borders. But many migrants don't know that they can get that coverage, she said.

As their deliveries near, many migrant women aren't sure whether they'll have access to a hospital and if they will need surgery, Villa said. They are worried about their child being born in Mexico instead of the U.S. and what that might mean for their prospects of eventually entering the U.S., she said.

"It's a very, very difficult group of people that needs a lot of help, and they don't get enough," she said.

Merchant reported from Houston. Associated Press journalist Colleen Long contributed to this report from Washington.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Sept. 7, the 250th day of 2019. There are 115 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 7, 1977, the Panama Canal treaties, calling for the U.S. to eventually turn over control of the waterway to Panama, were signed in Washington by President Jimmy Carter and Panamanian leader Omar Torrijos (toh-REE'-hohs).

On this date:

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 74 of 75

In 1892, James J. Corbett knocked out John L. Sullivan to win the world heavyweight crown in New Orleans in a fight conducted under the Marquess of Queensberry rules.

In 1901, the Peace of Beijing ended the Boxer Rebellion in China.

In 1936, rock-and-roll legend Buddy Holly was born Charles Hardin Holley in Lubbock, Texas.

In 1940, Nazi Germany began its eight-month blitz of Britain during World War II with the first air attack on London.

In 1963, the National Professional Football Hall of Fame was dedicated in Canton, Ohio.

In 1972, the International Olympic Committee banned Vince Matthews and Wayne Collett of the U.S. from further competition for talking to each other on the victory stand in Munich during the playing of the "Star-Spangled Banner" after winning the gold and silver medals in the 400-meter run.

In 1990, Kimberly Bergalis of Fort Pierce, Florida, came forward to identify herself as the young woman who had been infected with AIDS, allegedly by her late dentist. (Bergalis died the following year.)

In 1996, rapper Tupac Shakur was shot and mortally wounded on the Las Vegas Strip; he died six days later.

In 2005, police and soldiers went house to house in New Orleans to try to coax the last stubborn hold-outs into leaving the storm-shattered city. President George W. Bush led the nation in a final tribute to William H. Rehnquist, remembering the late chief justice as the Supreme Court's steady leader and a man of lifetime integrity.

In 2007, Osama bin Laden appeared in a video for the first time in three years, telling Americans they should convert to Islam if they wanted the war in Iraq to end.

In 2008, troubled mortgage giants Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac were placed in government conservatorship.

In 2017, more than a half million people were ordered to leave South Florida as Hurricane Irma approached; Georgia's governor ordered nearly 540,000 coastal residents to move inland. One of the most powerful earthquakes ever recorded in Mexico struck off the country's southern coast, toppling hundreds of buildings and killing at least 90 people. (A deadlier quake would strike central Mexico nearly two weeks later.)

Ten years ago: Addressing a Labor Day picnic in Cincinnati, President Barack Obama declared that modern benefits like paid leave, minimum wage and Social Security "all bear the union label" as he appealed to organized labor to help him win the health care fight in Congress. Three British Muslims were convicted in London of plotting to murder thousands by downing at least seven airliners bound for the U.S. and Canada. The Pittsburgh Pirates were assured of a record-breaking 17th straight losing season as they fell to the Chicago Cubs 4-2. (The Pirates would go on to have three more consecutive losing seasons before breaking the streak in 2013.)

Five years ago: The head of the Arab League, Nabil Elaraby, urged members to confront Islamic State extremists "militarily and politically." A star-studded funeral was held in New York for comedian Joan Rivers, who had died three days earlier at age 81. Serena Williams won her third consecutive U.S. Open championship and 18th major title overall, taking 75 minutes to beat good friend Caroline Wozniacki 6-3, 6-3.

One year ago: President Donald Trump, citing national security, called on the Justice Department to investigate and unmask the author of a critical New York Times opinion piece purportedly written by a member of an administration "resistance" movement. In a speech at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, former President Barack Obama blasted his successor's policies and his pattern of pressuring the Justice Department. Former Trump campaign adviser George Papadopoulos was sentenced to 14 days in prison for lying to the FBI about his contacts with Russian intermediaries. Starbucks opened its first store in Italy, including a 22-foot bronze cask that was part of the roasting process.

Today's Birthdays: Jazz musician Sonny Rollins is 89. Singer Gloria Gaynor is 76. Singer Alfa Anderson (Chic) is 73. Actress Susan Blakely is 71. Rock musician Dennis Thompson (MC5) is 71. Actress Julie Kavner is 69. Rock singer Chrissie Hynde (The Pretenders) is 68. Rock musician Benmont Tench (Tom Petty & the Heartbreakers) is 66. Actor Corbin Bernsen is 65. Actor Michael Emerson is 65. Pianist Michael Feinstein is 63. Singer/songwriter Diane Warren is 63. Singer Margot Chapman is 62. Actress J. Smith-Cameron is 62. Actor W. Earl Brown is 56. Actor Toby Jones is 53. Actress-comedian Leslie Jones (TV: "Saturday Night Live")

Groton Daily Independent

Saturday, Sept. 7, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 069 ~ 75 of 75

is 52. Model-actress Angie Everhart is 50. Actress Diane Farr is 50. Country singer Butter (Trailer Choir) is 49. Actress Monique Gabriela Curnen is 49. Actor Tom Everett Scott is 49. Rock musician Chad Sexton (311) is 49. Actress Shannon Elizabeth is 46. Actor Oliver Hudson is 43. Actor Devon Sawa (SAH'-wuh) is 41. Actor JD Pardo is 40. Actor Benjamin Hollingsworth (TV: "Code Black") is 35. Actress Alyssa Diaz (TV: "Ray Donovan"; "Zoo") is 34. Singer-musician Wes Willis (Rush of Fools) is 33. Actress Evan Rachel Wood is 32. Actor Ian Chen (TV: "Fresh Off the Boat") is 13.

Thought for Today: "The theory seems to be that as long as a man is a failure he is one of God's children, but that as soon as he succeeds he is taken over by the devil." — H.L. Mencken, American journalist-author (1880-1956).

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