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Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

18 - Wednesday

- St. John's: Confirmation, 3:45 p.m.
- Emmanuel: Confirmation, 7 p.m.; Bible Study, 7 p.m.
- C&MA: Adult Bible Study, Youth Group, Kid's Club, 7 p.m.
- UMC: Coffee time, 9 a.m.; Ad Council, 7 p.m.; Confirmation Parent Meeting, 7 p.m.
- Breakfast: Cereal
- Lunch: Garlic Cheese Bread, Cooked Carrots
- Senior Menu: Hot turkey combos, mashed potatoes and gravy, 7 layer salad, peach sauce.
- Dress-up Day: MS/HS is Meme; Elementary is Sports Day

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

19 - Thursday

- 3:30 p.m.: Cross Country at Lee Park
- 6 p.m.: Volleyball hosts Sisseton
- St. John's: Quilting, 9 a.m. UMC: UMW, 1:30 p.m.
- Breakfast: Eggs and Sausage Lunch: Chicken Leg, Mashed Potatoes
- Senior Menu: Oven fried chicken, potato salad, carrots/broccoli medley, pears, whole wheat bread.
- Dress-up Day:
- Elementary School: Sunglasses Day
- MS/HS: Class Colors (Seniors black, juniors white, sophomores gray, freshmen gold, eighth graders purple, seventh graders blue, sixth graders red, staff pink.)

Groton Area posts 3-0 win over Mobridge-Pollock

Groton Area's volleyball team went to 6-0 on the season with a 3-0 win over Mobridge-Pollock. The match was carried live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Allied Climate Professionals, Bahr Spray Foam, BaseKamp Lodge, DeHoet Trucking, Groton Auto Works, Hanlon Brothers, John Sieh Agency, Milbrandt Enterprises and Professional Management Services.

Groton Area and Hill City are the only undefeated teams left in Class A as Northwestern handed Miller its first loss of the season, 3-1.

Midway in the first game, Groton Area scored six straight points to put distance away from their competitor and went on for a 25-12 win.

Mobridge-Pollock came out firing on all cylinders to start the second game, taking an 8-0 lead. Groton Area then scored seven straight points of its own. Nicole Marzahn had a block that tied the



Madeline Fliehs goes high in the air for the ball and returns it to the Mobridge-Pollock side. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Indigo Rogers

(Photo by Paul Kosel)

game at nine and the Tigers took the lead for good, 10-9. Groton Area outscored Mobridge-Pollock, 13-2, and went on for the 25-16 win.

Groton Area had a six point rally midway in the third game and went on for a 25-10 win.

Nicole Marzahn led the Tigers with 13 kills and one block. Indigo Rogers had six kills and two ace serves. Eliza Wanner had four kills, three ace serves, nine digs and one assist. Tady Glover had three ace serves. Kaylin Kucker had two ace serves, two kills and 23 assists. Payton Colestock had an ace, a kill and eight digs. Stella Meier had three kills while Madeline Fliehs had two kills.

Megan Zahn led Mobridge-Pollock with 10 kills. Callie Weisbeck had three ace serves, one kill and six assists. Channing Wientjes had four kills, Landyn Henderson had two kills and a block, Emily Wientjes and Haley Brockel each had six digs and Emma Keller had nine assists.

Groton Area won the junior varsity match, 25-19 and 25-22, and the Tigers made it a clean sweep with a C match win, 19-25, 25-15 and 15-9.

Groton Area will be hosting Sisseton on Thursday night.

- Paul Kosel

Governor Kristi Noem Delivers Flooding Address Delivered last night



Good evening. I wanted to take a couple minutes of your time this evening to give you an update on the largest natural disaster our state has ever seen. Federal disasters have been declared in 58 of 66 counties and three tribal reservations. As South Dakotans, we are used to extreme weather. But the persistent wet weather, starting with the bomb cyclone in March and the heavy rain every few weeks since then, has created a slow-rolling natural disaster of epic proportions. Just last week, Madison received over 11 inches of rain they didn't need. The flooding that's followed has destroyed homes, roads, and businesses.

Montrose, Dell Rapids, Renner, Mitchell and so many other communities are experiencing many of the same issues. Some for the second time this year. We've had dams fail and culverts that have been blocked by floating 1-ton bales of hay. We've had sections of state highways wash away overnight and vehicles fall into the rushing water.

According to the National Weather Service, broad areas of Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Nebraska have received precipitation amounts of

more than 400 percent above normal during the first two weeks of September. The upper Missouri River basin annual runoff is forecasted to hit two times the average by the end of the year.

Last week, the State Department of Transportation closed I-90 due to flooding as well. This closure is unprecedented. Since President Eisenhower announced the interstate project in the 1950's and the major East-West artery through our state was built, it just doesn't close because of a rainfall. That's not supposed to happen.

This much water, this fast can, of course be dangerous. It can injure and it can kill. And it has. Losing even one to these storms is too many. But I am thankful for our first responders and emergency management teams and their tireless efforts to keep us safe. Our city, county, and state leaders across South Dakota have moved front-line resources to where they are needed each and every time we've had extreme weather this year. They are some of the most selfless, hardest-working leaders in our state. Often times their homes are flooding too when the water comes. But they are in the Emergency Operations Center helping others, protecting our infrastructure, and keeping people safe.

As I have seen the devastation firsthand and talked to folks, I am getting a lot of the same questions over and over. So, let me share some of the information we have, with all of you here tonight.

First of all, disaster response begins and ends with the local response. That's the process the federal government requires and it works well. As I mentioned, our local emergency managers know their communities like the back of their hand. So when things get bad enough to need backup, the state comes in to work with the local government. We assist to help locate resources in other communities, we provide inmates to help with filling sandbags and cleanup. We also help assess the damages and request a federal disaster declaration when needed.

We've had one federal disaster declared this year and three additional requests that are pending with the President, together totaling \$56 million in requests so far. The flooding we're experiencing right now will likely reach a level where I will request yet another federal disaster declaration from the President. Federal disaster dollars are never as timely as we would like, but we appreciate the responsiveness we've seen so far.

I also get a lot of questions about utilizing the National Guard. We've done that as well this year. When a rural water line washed out in a creek bed this spring and 8,000 individuals in Oglala Lakota County were without water, I ordered the National Guard to send soldiers and trucks with large freshwater tanks on them to help distribute water until the line was fixed. The decision to call up the National Guard is never an easy one. As governor, I'm committed to utilizing these citizen-soldiers judiciously. From a military readiness perspective, as well as a cost, we must call up these soldiers when no other suitable options are available.

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Often times other resources such as DOT trucks or inmates are a better, more affordable fit for the need.

Additionally, some have started making calls for a special session of the legislature. I do not see the need for a special session at this time. As the latest flood waters recede, I know we will find significant public infrastructure damage. Maintaining and restoring our roads and bridges is critical for commerce. Sewer systems are necessary. The restoration costs will be immense. That said, our state has the funding mechanisms in place to respond to the disasters we face. There is no doubt that we will have tough discussions and decisions about our budget come January, but I don't see the need for any new legislation that would require a special session to date. If that changes, I will be the first to inform the public and the legislature.

I have also called for the Secretary of the Department of Transportation to work with state engineers and others to ensure that our interstates are never again closed for flooding. We just can't have that happen. Our population is spread out. When we lose the ability to travel on interstates and major highways due to flooding, we are compounding the disaster. In the era of big data, we can and must be able to plan for the worst-case scenarios when it comes to rainfall and weather.

Finally, the question I get most often is the question that makes me so proud to be a South Dakotan. It's a simple one: "How can I help?" Neighbors helping neighbors. It's our history. It's the spirit of our state. If you want to help right now, there are many resources available. There are national disaster recovery groups helping as well as local resources like 211.

Over the longer term, I have my team looking into enhancing our state disaster response portal to connect volunteers and resources with local efforts at disasters. For example, if you have a couple days of time and a chainsaw, then the goal would be to connect you to those who need help in Sioux Falls after the tornado.

The stories of neighbors helping neighbors that we hear about are amazing. After the tornado in Sioux Falls last week, I heard about a man named Mike, who spent his weekend driving around town responding to 211 requests for help and just stopping at other spots where it was obvious that a helping hand would be appreciated. He helped fix a flat tire on an old tractor that was being used for cleanup. He took loads of branches and trees to the disposal center. And he helped an older gentleman who lived in an apartment clean up in a couple hours what the man thought would take him a month. Mike helped a lot of people in one day. He wasn't after anything for himself. He concluded his recap of the day saying, "a firm handshake and a sincere thank you is good enough." There have been a lot of Mikes helping this year across our great state. It makes me proud of our state.

In closing, the wet weather we've experienced this year will set records. We are living history right now. And we're not fully through it yet either. Forecasters are now saying that even if we have an average moisture fall and winter we could be dealing with major flooding again in the spring.

It's tough to think about even more flooding next spring as we continue to deal with clean up right now. But like I said earlier this year, the storms are strong, but South Dakotans are stronger. We'll get through it. We always do. We can get knocked down, but we don't stay down. It's in our blood. For as long as people have made their way across the plains to make South Dakota their home, we have struggled against extreme weather and a tough environment. But that's what makes this place so special – along with the people who call it home. It takes effort to get here and to live here. You don't just end up here. To be a South Dakotan is to be someone who consciously chooses to make this place your home and to thrive here. And I couldn't imagine living anywhere else.

Thanks for taking time to tune in. Stay strong. Thank you and may God bless South Dakota.

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Guthmiller places second at Redfield

Cade Guthmiller was four strokes behind Redfield-Doland's Dylan Stephen as Guthmiller placed second at the Redfield Invitational Golf Meet held Tuesday. Guthmiller shot a 45 in the front nine and a 37 in the back nine for a total score of 82. Guthmiller had the best score in the back nine.

Also golfing were Hunter Kassube. He shot a 56 and a 53 for a total score of 109. Brevin Fliehs shot a 50 and a 61 for a total score of 111.

Groton Coffee Cup League

Team Standings: Biker Chix 5, Ten Pins 4, Kens 4, James Valley 3.

High Games: Joyce Walter 163, Vickie Kramp 161, Sam Bahr 158.

High Series: Vickie Kramp 461, Joyce Walter 440, Sam Bahr 411.

Groton Garden Club

The Groton Garden Club met at the home of Deb McKiver . Ten members answered roll call with their favorite ice cream flavor . It was decided to give our "Pennies for Pines" contribution to sponsor 2 "plantation" in the SD National Forest in memory of DeLoris Knoll, past member. Eunice McColister reported getting the Smoky Bear information ready to give to the elementary school students next week. The groups did decorate main street on Tuesday, September 17, at 1:00 and will weed the park, October 3, at 8:30, am. Pereboom's in Webster will host the Fall Board meeting on September 28, at 11:00. Deb McKiver moved to amend the standing rules to read, "meeting time from 5:30p.m. to 6:30 pm on the 3rd Monday of each month." The next meeting will be October 21, at 6:30 at Avantara with Linda Anderson, Deb McKiver will give the program. Following the meeting Pam Rix gave the program "How to get your plants ready for Winter."

Webster Cross Country Meet

5000m Boys Race: 12, Isaac Smith, 19:56.33; 52, Jackson Garstecki, 24:36.62; 54, Noah Poor, 24:44.44.

3000m Girls JV Race: 12, Sierra Ehresmann, 17:24.20; 18, Riley Rosenau, 18:10.53;

3000m Boys JV Race: 15, Dragr Monson, 14:17.26; 17, Dilon Abeln, 14:27.97; 43, Steven Paulson, 16:18.10; 44, Kannon Coats, 16:36.63; Cyrus DeHoet, 17:21.49; 58, Braden Freeman, 22:15.77; 59, James Brooks, 23:44.06.

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Twin Tuesday's Winners

Left to right are Lane Tietz and Colby Dunker 8th grade, Jordan Bjerke and Jackson Cogley 10th grade, Trey Gengerke and Chandler Larson 11th grade, Tadyn Glover 12th grade missing is Eliza Wanner 12 th grade, Shallyn Foertsch and Jacelynne Gleason 9th grade, Rylee Dunker and Hannah Sandness 6th grade missing is 7th grader Turner Thompson and Christian Ehresmann. (Photo by Tina Kose!)

South Dakota GAME, FISH AND PARKS



GFP Commission Adopts Resolutions for Hunt for Habitat Revenue and Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation Efforts

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission adopted two resolutions at their most recent meeting.

Resolution 19-21 determined that funds raised through the Hunt for Habitat raffle will be used to support habitat development and enhancements on public lands, in particular Game Production Areas (GPAs) and School and Public Lands.

The Hunt for Habitat raffle ran from July 1 through August 16 and offered the opportunity to win a Custer State Park buffalo tag or one of three packages containing a deer tag, antelope tag and elk tag. The raffle raised \$320,990 to enhance habitat in South Dakota.

Habitat needs and projects have been identified on GPAs and School and Public Lands across the state and include:

- New grassland plantings – 22,500 acres
- New perennial pollinator and food plots – 1,700 acres
- New woody cover and tree planting – 1,000 acres
- Grazing infrastructure

Riparian management The second resolution, 19-22, identified the need to consider recruitment, retention and reactivation of resource users, including hunters, trappers, anglers and all outdoor enthusiasts. These efforts are collectively known as R3.

When determining whether to adopt or amend a regulation, the commission will consider R3 impact by

asking:

Whether the regulation or fee inhibits a user's ability to participate.

Whether the regulation increases the opportunity for new and existing users.

How the regulation impacts the next generation of hunters, anglers, trappers and outdoor recreationists.

Whether the regulation enhances the quality of life for current and future generations by getting families outdoors.

###

Groton Photography

will be doing photo sessions at the



No appointments are necessary, but if you want to set up a time, Call/Text Paul at 605/397-7460

e-mail paperpaul@grotonsd.net

Message on Facebook - theGDI

Sitting Fee: \$10

8x10 - \$8.00

5x7 - \$5.00

4x6 - \$4.00

Digital File E-mailed to you - \$10.00

Photo Button: \$5.00

GFP Commission Accepts Petition to Adjust Dog Training Days on Public Lands

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission accepted a citizen petition to adjust the days when dog training on horseback can occur on public lands.

Current rules only allow dog trainers to ride horses while training dogs on public lands on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays from the first Friday of August through the first Sunday in September.

The petition requested a change from Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays to Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, citing the age of chicks in early August. The petitioner contends that disturbing young grouse or pheasants on three consecutive days could potentially break up covies, making birds more susceptible to predators.

The proposal for this rule change will be on the agenda of the GFP Commission's next meeting, which will be held Oct. 3-4 at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

GFP Commission Changes Big Game Baiting Dates and Velvet Antler Tagging Requirements

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission changed the dates allowed for baiting big game animals.

The commission adopted a rule change that will move the restricted dates for baiting from the current Aug. 15-Feb. 1 and March 15-May 31, to Aug. 1-Feb. 1 and March 15-May 31.

This adjustment is a response to the earlier start date of the South Dakota archery season and provides an approximate one-month window from the time the bait must be removed prior to the start of the archery deer hunting season.

The commission also repealed the administrative rule that mandated antlers in the velvet stage be tagged.

###

GFP Commission Proposes Changes to Mountain Lion Hunting Season; Expansion of Custer State Park Coyote Hunting

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission proposed several changes to the South Dakota mountain lion hunting season.

The commission proposed to extend the season within the Black Hills Fire Protection district from March 31 to April 30. The season begins Dec. 26.

The proposal also calls for the creation of 250 nonresident licenses and establish a proposed cost of \$280 for that license.

The proposal would allow for an increase in Custer State Park access permits from 57 to 65.

An expanded allowance for the use of dogs that originates on private land to cross over or culminate on any public lands where unleashed dogs are permitted was also proposed. This is a change from the current regulation which only allows such a hunt to cross over or culminate on SD School and Public Lands or Bureau of Land Management properties. The current restriction for the Fort Meade Recreation Area would remain.

Matching the dates proposed for the mountain lion season, the commission also proposed to extend the season dates for hunting coyotes in Custer State Park. The proposal would change the season dates

from Dec. 26 - March 31 to Dec. 26 - April 30.

In addition, the commission proposed to remove the previous requirement of obtaining a free access permit to coyote hunt in the park.

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

GFP Commission Proposes to Allow Telescopic Muzzleloader Optics

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission will be considering a proposal to adjust the allowance of telescopics on muzzleloaders.

The proposal initially came to the commission via the public petition process due to the limited availability of the currently allowed no magnification power scopes. The proposed change would allow the use of 1-4X or 1-6X scopes during the muzzleloader season.

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

GFP Commission Proposes Modifications to Trapping Regulations

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission proposed to modify the period in which a trapper must check their set traps and snares. In response to a petition asking for change and a discussion of an alternative approach between the GFP Commission and Department, two alternate proposals are now under consideration and will be acted upon at the October commission meeting.

Under one proposal, as recommended by the department, the change would adjust the existing administrative rule to require that all traps and snares in South Dakota be checked prior to 12 o'clock midnight of the third full calendar day following a previous check or when the trap was initially set. The current rule requires that all traps and snares East River be checked prior to 12 o'clock midnight of the second full calendar day. There is no change in check times for traps and snares West River. Regulations also remain unchanged for any trap or snare entirely submerged in water that remains set beneath the ice, which are to be checked prior to 12 o'clock midnight of the fifth full calendar day statewide, following a previous check or when the trap was initially set.

The second proposal under consideration, brought forward by public petition, would change the trap check requirement to every 24 hours in South Dakota. This proposal would also allow GFP personnel to grant extensions to the 24-hour check time due to unanticipated complications or emergencies.

This proposal requires people, before setting traps and snares, to study the weather reports for the next 48 hours and make a record of that data. It is expected that such person will not set traps and snares when a reasonable person would conclude that weather-related complications would likely preclude checking traps and snares within 24 hours.

This proposal also allows Game, Fish and Parks personnel to release or euthanize an animal held in a trap or snare longer than 24-hours and would allow any person, after receiving permission from GFP personnel, to release or euthanize an animal in a trap or snare longer than 24-hours. If an animal is being trapped for profit and must be euthanized by an authorized person of GFP, the profit would revert to

GFP. Finally, the proposal would require GFP to keep records on trap check time extensions and provide an annual summary report to the GFP Commission.

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

Commission Proposes Lake Aeration Rule; Changes to Fish Importation Rules

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission proposed to create a new rule that would establish the department as the designated agent of the commission for the permitting of aeration systems in meandered waters or other waters to which the state has acquired a right, title or interest.

The commission also proposed to simplify fish importation rules by allowing for a single importation permit from an out-of-state source to be valid for a year from the importer's last inspection, and to list which fish species need to be tested for specific disease-causing pathogens, as part of the importation process.

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

GFP Commission Proposes Modifications to the Hoop Net, Trap and Setline Regulations

SPEARFISH, S.D. – The South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission proposed several changes to the state's hoop net, trap and setline regulations.

The package of proposed changes includes:

Adding a definition of setline in rule.

Allowing the use of wire fish traps.

Changing hoop net, trap and setline rules to require them to be emptied by midnight the day following when they were set instead of within 72 hours.

Changing hoop net, trap and setline gear restrictions on border waters to match those for inland waters.

Allowing the use of hoop nets, traps, and setlines in the James, Vermillion, and Big Sioux River mainstems.

Allowing the use of hoop nets and traps in western Missouri River tributaries.

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

GFP Commission Proposes Additions to Aquatic Invasive Species and Containment Waters Lists

SPEARFISH, S.D. – With the discovery of zebra mussels in Lake Sharpe and the high probability of the mussels being present in Lake Francis Case, the Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) Commission proposed to add those reservoirs to the list of designated containment waters for aquatic invasive species (AIS) management.

The commission also proposed to add spiny waterflea, round goby, and white perch to the AIS list in South Dakota.

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

###

GFP Commission Considers Increase to Park, Camping Fees

SPEARFISH, S.D. - At their most recent commission meeting, the Department of Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) proposed changes to state park entrance and camping fees for the first time since 2014.

Deputy Secretary Kevin Robling outlined the need for the proposed changes to the Game, Fish and Parks Commission.

"Damage from flooding and storms has been significant this year," Robling told the commission. "We are facing repair costs of approximately \$8 million. On top of this expense, revenue has been impacted by decreased visitation because of weather and weather-related damage. Some campgrounds had to be closed as a result of flooding."

Under the proposal, annual passes to state parks would go from \$30 to \$36 and the daily fee would move from \$6 to \$8. A 7-day motorcycle pass to Custer State Park would increase to \$20.

In campgrounds, prime campsites would increase from \$21 to \$26, preferred sites would move from \$19 to \$23 and modern sites from \$17 to \$20. Fees for non-electric, tent-only sites may be going down in some cases. These sites are proposed to be set at \$15 statewide to ensure park opportunities are affordable for everyone.

The proposed increase is in line with the rate of inflation and with fees in surrounding states. The revenue raised from this increase will directly support repairs and upkeep in state parks.

"The modest increases for individuals would potentially mean an additional \$3 million in revenue for GFP to maintain and repair park amenities and necessities, like roads and bridges," said Robling. "We need to make sure our parks are meeting the high standards of excellence that all our park visitors expect, now and for generations to come."

To comment in person, the public hearing will be held Oct. 3 at 2 p.m. CT at the AmericInn in Chamberlain. Comments can also be submitted online at gfp.sd.gov/forms/positions or mailed to 523 E. Capitol Ave., Pierre, SD 57501. To be included in the public record and to be considered by the commission, comments must include a full name and city of residence, and meet the submission deadline of 72 hours before the public hearing (not including the day of the public hearing).

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Roberts County Democratic Party

is hosting a

STEAK FRY DINNER

Friday, September 20, 2019 • 6:30 p.m.

Valley View Golf Course

Speaker will be Joel Heitkamp

KFGO morning show "News & Views"

TICKET PRICE: \$50

To purchase tickets call: Gary Hanson 268-0448

Jason Frerichs 605-949-2204, Dave Gleason 237-1923

Groton Class of '69 50th Year Reunion

Saturday, Sept 21st

Olive Grove Golf Course

The public is invited to attend after
6:30 to renew acquaintances
with OLD friends



2019 Groton Area Elementary Preschool Developmental Screening for 3 year olds September 24 and 25

Parents of children age 3 in the Groton Area School District are asked to contact Heidi Krueger at the Groton Area Elementary School during school hours at 397-2317 to either confirm their screening time or set up a time. Letters will be send out the week of September 16. If your child is already receiving services or enrolled at Groton Elementary School they will not need to be screened. If your child has already been screened but you have concerns please contact the elementary school. If you are new to the district and have a child under the age of 5, we also ask you to contact the elementary school.

The Developmental Screening will take place at Groton Area Elementary School.



(0911.0918)

Langford Front Porch Help Wanted



Immediate opening for a FT General Manager at The Front Porch Bar & Grill, Langford SD. This person will ensure a profitable and efficiently run restaurant/bar operation through innovative

menus, events, staff management and business operations. Wage DOE. Must be 21 years old. Contact Paula Jensen at (605) 228-5963 or email resume by September 30, 2019 to langfordfrontporch@venturecomm.net.

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*Tribute to 100
years of the
American Legion*



*Coffee and
Birthday
Cake*

THE AMERICAN LEGION

1919

2019

100 Years

*Please help us celebrate a Century
of the American Legion*

VETERANS STILL SERVING AMERICA

Friday, Sept 20, 2019 ~ 3:30 p.m., Groton Legion Post #39

1 free drink to any Veteran

Program to include

Legion history






Local performers singing songs from the following periods


WW I ~ WW II ~ Korea ~ Vietnam to present time

MILITARY RITES AT THE CONCLUSION IN HONOR OF OUR DECEASED COMRADES PERFORMED BY GROTON POST #39




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Today	Tonight	Thursday	Thursday Night	Friday
				
Sunny	Clear	Sunny	Chance T-storms	T-storms Likely
High: 79 °F	Low: 54 °F	High: 81 °F	Low: 66 °F	High: 82 °F

NWS ABERDEEN  SEPTEMBER 18-20

Dry
through the day Thursday

Today	Thursday	Friday
		
75 to 80°	near 80°	77 to 83°
Breezy northwest winds across north central SD in the morning	Breezy southeast winds across north central SD	Widespread Showers & Thunderstorms. Scattered strong to severe storms possible Friday afternoon into Friday night.

Updated: 9/18/2019 4:36 AM
Published on: 09/18/2019 at 12:39 AM

It will be dry through Thursday, then widespread showers and storms are expected Friday through Saturday morning. Some of the storms Friday afternoon into Friday night could become strong, or severe. Stay tuned to the latest forecasts.

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Today in Weather History

September 18, 2000: Mid-September record to near record heat occurred across central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. Aberdeen, Kennebec, Pierre, and Wheaton all set record highs for the day. Aberdeen and Wheaton set record highs of 95 degrees. Kennebec rose to a record high of 99 degrees while Pierre rose to 104 degrees on this day in 2000. Some of the near record highs occurred at Timber Lake and Mobridge with 92 degrees and 97 degrees, respectively.

1926: The great "Miami Hurricane" produced winds of 138 mph that drove ocean waters into the Biscayne Bay drowning 135 persons. The eye of the hurricane passed over Miami, at which time the barometric pressure reached 27.61 inches. Tides up to twelve feet high accompanied the storm, which claimed a total of 372 lives.

1941: One of the greatest aurora borealis or northern lights ever observed in the central Atlantic and mid-central portions of the U.S. occurred on the night of September 18-19th. The displays continued from twilight until just before dawn and were observed as far south as Florida and southern California.

1926 - The great "Miami Hurricane" produced winds reaching 138 mph which drove ocean waters into the Biscayne Bay drowning 135 persons. The eye of the hurricane passed over Miami, at which time the barometric pressure reached 27.61 inches. Tides up to twelve feet high accompanied the hurricane, which claimed a total of 372 lives. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Early morning thunderstorms in northern Texas produced wind gusts to 65 mph at Sulphur Springs, and 2.50 inches of rain in one hour at Commerce, which caused widespread street flooding. Bonham TX received 4.50 inches of rain which also resulted in widespread street flooding as Pig Branch overflowed its banks. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - A strong cold front produced severe thunderstorms in the north central U.S. High winds behind the cold front gusted to 92 mph at Fort Collins CO, and up to a foot of snow blanketed the mountains of Montana, with seven inches reported at Great Falls. High winds in Colorado caused three million dollars damage. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1989 - Hurricane Hugo hit Puerto Rico, producing wind gusts to 92 mph at San Juan, and wind gusts to 120 mph at Roosevelt Roads. Hugo produced a storm surge of four to six feet, and northeastern sections of the island were deluged with more than ten inches of rain. Hugo claimed the lives of a dozen persons in Puerto Rico, and caused a billion dollars damage, including 100 million dollars damage to crops. Thunderstorms representing what remained of Hurricane Octave continued to bring heavy rain to the valleys of northern California. Heavier 24 hour rainfall totals included 3.15 inches at Redding, and 2.66 inches at Red Bluff. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

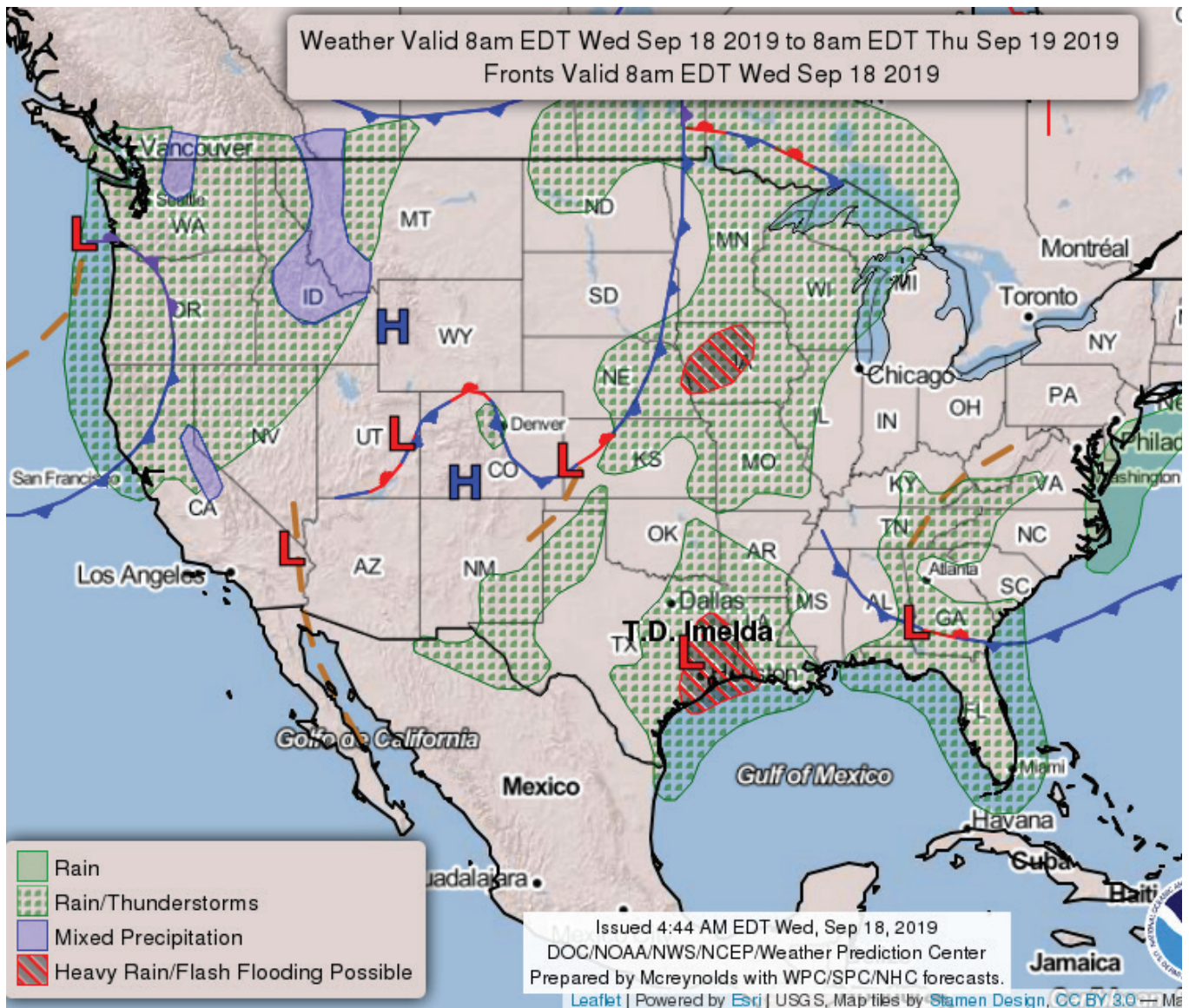
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 87 °F at 4:27 PM
Low Temp: 72 °F at 7:27 AM
Wind: 36 mph at 1:28 AM
Day Rain: 0.24

Record High: 95° in 2000
Record Low: 22° in 1896
Average High: 71°F
Average Low: 45°F
Average Precip in Sept.: 1.27
Precip to date in Sept.: 5.14
Average Precip to date: 17.56
Precip Year to Date: 24.90
Sunset Tonight: 7:39 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:17 a.m.



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ONE WAY

The famous entertainer, W. C. Fields, was an agnostic. One day, a friend came to visit him and found him reading the Bible.

"Bill," he exclaimed, "it's so good to see that you are reading the Bible. When did you change and become a Christian?"

"I haven't changed," he replied quickly. "I'm looking for some loopholes."

No matter how hard he searched, he never discovered a loophole in God's Word.

There are many who do the same thing. They do not study God's Word to learn of His salvation and grace. They read it looking for errors and contradictions.

Others have difficulty in accepting God's Word as the final authority for truth. They do not want to believe that there is no other name besides the name of Jesus that they can call upon for salvation. They want to believe that there are many paths that lead to heaven and truth. What they want to believe comes from man-originated beliefs - not the Word of God.

God designated Jesus to be the only Redeemer and Savior. There never has been, nor ever will be, any other name for people to call upon for God's salvation. While there are some problems that may have more than one solution, when it comes to being forgiven of our sins, there is only One solution. Salvation and eternal life is by grace through faith in Christ alone.

Prayer: Thank You, Father, for Your Son Jesus, in whose Name and through whose life's work we can be saved. May we accept Your salvation through faith in Him. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

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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)

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News from the Associated Press

Tuesday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Hamlin, 25-12, 25-21, 25-17
Alcester-Hudson def. Centerville, 25-21, 25-16, 25-14
Baltic def. West Central, 25-11, 25-17, 25-20
Belle Fourche def. Broadus, Mont., 25-10, 21-25, 25-15, 25-12
Bison def. Newell, 25-23, 25-18, 25-23
Bridgewater-Emery def. Freeman, 18-25, 25-18, 25-22, 25-18
Chamberlain def. Todd County, 25-17, 25-17, 25-16
Chester def. Elkton-Lake Benton, 24-26, 25-12, 25-16, 25-17
Clark/Willow Lake def. Florence/Henry, 25-18, 25-12, 25-20
Colman-Egan def. Deubrook, 25-20, 25-18, 17-25, 25-8
Crow Creek def. Sunshine Bible Academy, 16-25, 25-20, 25-7, 25-18
Dell Rapids def. Canton, 25-22, 25-18, 25-13
Dupree def. Wall, 25-14, 25-18, 25-23
Edgemont def. Hemingford, Neb., 25-21, 25-14, 21-25, 21-25, 15-9
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Lennox, 25-20, 25-23, 25-20
Faulkton def. Leola/Frederick, 25-15, 25-11, 25-8
Flandreau Indian def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-2, 25-14, 25-8
Garretson def. Flandreau, 18-25, 25-11, 25-14, 25-14
Gayville-Volin def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-13, 25-15, 20-25, 25-12
Gregory def. Bennett County, 25-19, 25-19, 19-25, 25-19
Groton Area def. Mobridge-Pollock, 25-12, 25-16, 25-10
Hanson def. Canistota, 25-22, 23-25, 25-21, 25-17
Harrisburg def. Brandon Valley, 20-25, 25-20, 25-16, 25-17
Hettinger/Scranton, N.D. def. Harding County, 25-21, 25-20, 25-16
Highmore-Harrold def. Potter County, 16-25, 25-21, 22-25, 25-19, 15-12
Hill City def. Hot Springs, 25-15, 25-13, 25-15
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Aberdeen Christian, 24-26, 25-14, 25-16, 25-10
Howard def. Menno, 25-22, 25-22, 25-16
Kadoka Area def. New Underwood, 20-25, 25-12, 25-17, 25-17
Langford def. North Central, 25-23, 25-5, 25-21
Lead-Deadwood def. Spearfish, 25-23, 17-25, 23-25, 28-26, 15-13
Lemmon def. Mott-Regent, N.D., 25-15, 25-19, 25-17
Milbank Area def. Waubay/Summit, 25-18, 25-10, 25-7
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-14, 25-18, 23-25, 25-17
Northwestern def. Miller, 23-25, 25-23, 25-14, 25-16
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. Iroquois/Doland, 25-18, 25-18, 25-17
Parker def. Tea Area, 23-25, 25-16, 27-25, 25-17
Parkston def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-16, 25-17, 17-25, 25-20
Pierre def. Yankton, 15-25, 25-14, 25-18, 25-20
Pine Ridge def. Little Wound, 25-12, 25-13, 25-20
Rapid City Christian def. Philip, 29-27, 25-19, 24-26, 25-18
Rapid City Stevens def. Sturgis Brown, 25-17, 25-17, 25-22

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Sanborn Central/Woonsocket def. Wessington Springs, 23-25, 25-19, 23-25, 25-18, 15-12
Scotland def. Andes Central/Dakota Christian, 19-25, 25-9, 25-16, 25-16
Sioux Falls Christian def. McCook Central/Montrose, 25-20, 25-14, 20-25, 25-20
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Brookings, 25-21, 25-11, 25-18
Sioux Falls Washington def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-14, 17-25, 25-17, 25-21
Sioux Valley def. DeSmet, 25-15, 13-25, 25-11, 25-19
St. Thomas More def. Custer, 25-20, 25-18, 25-17
Takini def. Crazy Horse, 7-25, 25-18, 25-14, 25-12
Tiospa Zina Tribal def. Deuel, 25-23, 25-11, 25-21
Tri-Valley def. Beresford, 25-23, 15-25, 12-25, 25-22, 15-13
Tripp-Delmont/Armour def. Bon Homme, 25-15, 25-12, 25-21
Wagner def. Avon, 25-27, 30-28, 26-24, 25-14
Warner def. Ipswich, 22-25, 32-30, 25-21, 25-16
Watertown def. Aberdeen Central, 20-25, 18-25, 25-10, 25-20, 15-8
Webster def. Wilmot, 25-20, 25-19, 25-10
White River def. Jones County, 25-16, 25-14, 25-19
Winner def. Lyman, 25-11, 25-11, 25-13
Wolsey-Wessington def. Mitchell Christian, 25-9, 25-12, 25-4

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

12-15-30-50-65, Mega Ball: 1, Megaplier: 4

(twelve, fifteen, thirty, fifty, sixty-five; Mega Ball: one; Megaplier: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$192 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$70 million

NTSB: Pilot in fatal SD crash should not have had passenger

LAKEVIEW, S.D. (AP) — The National Transportation Safety Board says a South Dakota pilot who died in a single-engine plane crash along with his teenage son should not have had a passenger.

According to a preliminary NTSB report, 39-year-old Clint VanderWey was certified only as a student pilot. Under federal aviation regulations, VanderWey was prohibited from being a pilot in command of a plane carrying a passenger.

VanderWey and his 16-year-old son, Jed, were killed Sept. 8 when their Cessna 140 crashed in prairie near the family's farm near Nebraska.

The NTSB says VanderWey took off from his private airstrip. Family members said VanderWey, who ran an irrigation service, would fly over water towers to report the water level to farmers.

The preliminary report found no mechanical problems with the plane before the crash.

Noem: South Dakota weather 'slow-rolling natural disaster'

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem says the storms that have struck South Dakota this year are the "largest natural disaster" the state has ever seen.

Noem said in a Facebook video Tuesday that starting with the "bomb cyclone" pummeling South Dakota with snow in March — followed by rain every few weeks — the state has experienced "a slow-rolling natural disaster of epic proportions."

The Argus Leader reports federal disasters have been declared in 58 of 66 counties and on three reser-

ventions in South Dakota so far this year. The state has had one federal disaster declared this year and has three federal disaster requests awaiting approval by President Donald Trump. Noem says those requests total \$56 million in damage.

Noem says last week's flooding will likely result in another federal disaster request.

Man linked to Russian agent asks for delay in fraud case

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — An attorney for a South Dakota man linked to an admitted Russian covert agent is asking a judge to delay his client's trial on accusations he bilked at least \$2.3 million from dozens of people in a bogus investment scam.

Businessman and conservative political operative Paul Erickson, of Sioux Falls, is scheduled for trial Oct. 1 on 11 counts of wire fraud and money laundering. Investigators say Erickson spent the money on personal expenses such as motels, flights and college tuition for Maria Butina, his ex-girlfriend.

Butina was sentenced in April to 18 months for gathering intelligence on the National Rifle Association and other groups at the direction of a former Russian lawmaker.

Erickson's attorney, Clint Sargent, said in a motion filed Tuesday that prosecutors are fine with the delay.

Killer serving 2 life terms dies in South Dakota prison

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A man serving two life sentences in the South Dakota State Penitentiary has died following an illness, corrections officials said.

Edwin Swallow, 60, died Sunday in comfort care at the prison's Jameson Annex. According to the South Dakota Department of Corrections.

Swallow had no chance for parole after he was found guilty of first-degree murder for fatally shooting 17-year-old Cynthia Wilson and first-degree manslaughter for killing her 46-year-old father, Conrad Wilson, in 1982 at their Rapid City home. Prosecutors said the shootings happened when Swallow, then 23, and two others tried to rob Connie Wilson.

Swallow was also sentenced to 45 years in a Texas prison after pleading guilty to three count of first-degree murder and one count of attempted murder, Argus Leader archives show.

Swallow committed the Texas crimes the year before the Wilsons were killed. He was sentenced in 1983 for the Texas case and indicted the next year by a Pennington County grand jury for the Rapid City slayings. A jury found him guilty of the Wilsons' deaths in 1986.

The exact cause of Swallow's death wasn't released.

Victim of fatal boat accident on Lake Oahe identified

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Authorities have identified the victim of a fatal boating accident on a Hughes County lake.

Sheriff Darin Johnson says 49-year-old Loyal Lee Bossert, of Sioux Falls, fell out of a boat he was driving on Lake Oahe Saturday and was struck by the propeller.

Someone spotted the empty boat going in circles near Peoria Flats, about 12 miles north of Pierre, and called authorities.

The Argus Leader says authorities found Bossert's body submerged in the water after using the boat's GPS unit.

Johnson says Bossert was the only person on the boat and alcohol was not a factor. The man's pickup and trailer were located at West Shore boat ramp.

Israel's 2 main political parties deadlocked after election

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israel's two main political parties were deadlocked Wednesday after an unprecedented repeat election, with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu facing an uphill battle to hold on to his job.

The election's seeming political kingmaker, Avigdor Lieberman, said he'll insist upon a secular unity government between Netanyahu's Likud and Benny Gantz's Blue and White parties, who based on partial results are currently tied at 32 seats each out of the 120 in parliament.

Without Lieberman's endorsement, both parties appear to have fallen well short of securing a parliamentary majority with their prospective ideological allies.

With results still pouring in, Lieberman insisted the overall picture was unlikely to change. He also demanded a secular "liberal" government shorn of the religious and ultra-Orthodox allies the prime minister has long relied upon.

"The conclusion is clear, everything we said throughout the campaign is coming true," he said outside his home in the West Bank settlement of Nokdim. "There is one and only option: a national unity government that is broad and liberal and we will not join any other option."

That could spell serious trouble for the continuation of Netanyahu's lengthy rule.

Gantz, a former military chief, has ruled out sitting with a Netanyahu-led Likud at a time when the prime minister is expected to be indicted on corruption charges in the coming weeks. It raised the specter of an alternate Likud candidate rising to challenge Netanyahu, though most of its senior officials have thus far pledged to stand solidly behind their leader.

Netanyahu, the longest serving leader in Israeli history, had desperately sought an outright majority with his hard-line and ultra-Orthodox allies in hopes of passing legislation to give him immunity from his expected indictment.

Israel's attorney general has recommended charging Netanyahu with bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three scandals, pending a long-awaited hearing scheduled in the coming weeks. A formal indictment would increase the pressure on Netanyahu to step aside if he does not have immunity.

The partial results released Wednesday by the Central Election Commission were based on a tally of 56% of the potential electorate. Overall turnout was 69.4%.

According to the partial results, Likud with its natural allies of religious and ultra-nationalist parties mustered just 56 seats — or five short of the needed majority.

Gantz's Blue and White and its center-left allies garnered 55 seats, placing Lieberman's Yisrael Beiteinu and its nine seats in the middle as the deciding factor.

The only precedent for a unity government in Israel came after the 1984 election and saw a rotating premiership between the heads of the two largest parties.

The joint list of Arab parties, who have never sat in an Israeli government, also finished strong, with results indicating they had earned 12 seats to become the third-largest party in parliament. Should a unity government be formed, its leader Ayman Odeh, would become the country's next opposition leader, an official state position that would grant him an audience with visiting dignitaries, a state-funded bodyguard, monthly consultations with the prime minister and a platform to rebut his speeches in parliament.

Addressing his supporters early Wednesday, Netanyahu refused to concede defeat and vowed to form a new government that excludes Arab parties, continuing his campaign rhetoric of questioning the loyalty of the country's Arab minority — a strategy that drew accusations of racism and incitement.

"There neither will be nor can there be a government that relies on anti-Zionist Arab parties. Parties that reject the very existence of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state. Parties that vaunt and praise bloodthirsty terrorists who murder our soldiers, citizens and children," he said.

In his first comments Wednesday morning outside his home, Gantz said he had already begun working toward forming a "unity government" but urged patience until the final results were announced, likely on Thursday.

Focus will then shift toward Israel's president, Reuven Rivlin, who is tasked with selecting the candidate

he believes has the best chance of forming a stable coalition. Rivlin is to consult with all parties in the coming days before making his decision. Lieberman's recommendation will carry a lot of weight regarding who will be tapped as the prime minister designate.

The candidate would then have up to six weeks to form a coalition. If that fails, Rivlin could give another candidate for prime minister 28 days to form a coalition. And if that doesn't work, new elections would be triggered yet again. Rivlin has said he will do everything possible to avoid such a scenario and Lieberman has ruled it out as well.

Lieberman's primary stated goal is to push out what he sees as the excessive power of the ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties and have wide a coalition that can effectively tackle Israel's most pressing security and economic challenges. But Netanyahu accused his former ally of plotting to oust him from office out of personal spite.

Behind the two is decades of a roller-coaster relationship. Lieberman, once Netanyahu's chief of staff, has held a series of senior Cabinet posts and was often a staunch partner. But he's also been a rival, critic and thorn in Netanyahu's side.

The Moldovan-born Lieberman started as a top Netanyahu aide in the 1990s before embarking on a political career of his own as a nationalist hard-liner and champion of immigrants like the former Soviet Union like himself. But he resigned last year as defense minister because Netanyahu kept blocking his plans to strike hard against Gaza militants.

Lieberman passed up the chance to return to the post following April's election, refused to join Netanyahu's emerging coalition and forcing the do-over vote. Assuming he sticks to his guns this time as well, Netanyahu could be done as Israel's prime minister.

Lieberman is now "the linchpin," wrote Nahum Barnea, a prominent columnist in the Yediot Ahronot daily. "I don't think that anyone is prepared to risk a third election, not even for Netanyahu," Barnea added. "Maybe the time has come to say goodbye."

Follow Heller at www.twitter.com/aronhellerap

Bermuda gets ready for pass by Category 3 Hurricane Humberto

MIAMI (AP) — People on Bermuda rushed to make final preparations for an expected close brush with Hurricane Humberto, a powerful Category 3 storm that caused authorities on the British Atlantic island to order early closings of schools, transportation and government offices.

National Security Minister Wayne Caines said schools, government offices and ferries on the island would close at noon and bus service would halt at 4 p.m.

Officials expected tropical storm-force winds to begin whipping at Bermuda before dawn and warned that hurricane-force gusts would probably last until early Thursday. Humberto was predicted to pass just to the north, though a small shift in its path could bring the storm over the island itself. The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Humberto's maximum sustained winds strengthened to 115 mph (185 kph) and it would probably remain a Category 3 hurricane through Thursday though there could be some fluctuations in its winds. The storm was centered about 285 miles (458 kilometers) west of Bermuda early Wednesday, moving east-northeast at 16 mph (256 kph).

In Texas, the remnants of Tropical Storm Imelda threatened to drench parts of Southwest Texas and southwestern Louisiana with up to 18 inches (46 centimeters) of rain over the next few days. It was the first named storm to hit the Houston area since Hurricane Harvey's much heavier rains flooded more than 150,000 homes around the city and caused an estimated \$125 billion in damage in Texas.

Tropical Storm Jerry also formed Wednesday morning, forecast to become a hurricane Friday as it nears the outermost Caribbean islands Thursday night or Friday.

Meanwhile, Tropical Storm Lorena was moving off Mexico's Pacific Coast, and forecasters now expect it to become a hurricane Friday as it approaches shore. They warned of heavy rains and flooding to resorts from Zihuatanejo to Cabo Corrientes. Lorena had top winds of 60 mph (95 kph) early Wednesday and was

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centered about 145 miles (230 kilometers) southwest of Zihuatanejo, moving northwest at 14 mph (22 kph). Further off Mexico's Pacific Coast, Tropical Storm Mario also was expected to be a hurricane by Friday as it approaches the southern tip of Baja California and become nearly stationary through Friday night.

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. ISRAEL'S MAIN POLITICAL PARTIES DEADLOCKED AFTER ELECTION

Seeming kingmaker Avigdor Lieberman says he'll insist upon a secular unity government between the main Likud and Blue and White parties, and that could lead to Benjamin Netanyahu's ouster.

2. IRAN SAYS IT'S READY TO HIT BACK

Tehran warns Washington that any U.S. action taken against it following an attack on Saudi oil installations will "immediately" be met with a response.

3. FACEBOOK AUTO-GENERATING PAGES FOR ISLAMIC STATE GROUP, AL-QAIDA

The social networking company appears to have made little progress on the issue since the AP detailed how pages that Facebook auto-generates for businesses are aiding extremists.

4. SURVIVORS ON BAHAMAS ISLAND IN WAIT-AND-SEE MODE

A new community of survivors on Abaco island vows to rebuild after Hurricane Dorian, but remain in limbo as officials debate how they will help Bahamians rebuild their lives.

5. SCANDALS COMPLICATE DONATION POLICIES

The allegations surrounding wealthy donors such as the Sackler family raise questions for the museums they supported, including whether to keep the family's name on prominent galleries.

6. STEEP DECLINE SEEN IN ABORTION NUMBERS

The number and rate of abortions across the U.S. plunge to their lowest levels since the procedure became legal nationwide in 1973, according to new figures.

7. WHAT REMAINS 'VERY REAL'

The risk of Britain leaving the European Union without a divorce deal, European Commission chief Jean-Claude Juncker says.

8. IMELDA COULD BRING HEAVY RAINFALL, FLOODING TO HOUSTON AREA

The tropical storm is threatening to dump up to 18 inches of rain in parts of Southeast Texas and southwestern Louisiana over the next few days.

9. 'YOUR PET IS YOUR CHILD'

A nationwide program is providing aid to pet owners in low-income neighborhoods to reduce the number of animals sent to shelters.

10. FED LIKELY TO CUT RATES AS ECONOMIC THREATS LOOM

The central bank looks poised to help extend the economic expansion in the face of global weakness, Trump's trade war with China and geopolitical risks such as the attacks on Saudi Arabia's oil facilities.

House Democrats, Lewandowski spar at 1st impeachment hearing

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The first impeachment hearing held by House Democrats quickly turned hostile as their sole witness, former Trump campaign manager Corey Lewandowski, stonewalled many of their questions and declared they were "focusing on petty and personal politics."

Lewandowski, a devoted friend and supporter of President Donald Trump, followed White House orders not to discuss conversations with the Republican president beyond what was already public in the report by former special counsel Robert Mueller. Trump cheered Lewandowski along as he testified on Tuesday, tweeting that his opening statement was "beautiful."

The hearing underscores what has been a central dilemma for the House Judiciary Committee all year as they investigate — and potentially try to impeach — Trump. Many of the Democrats' base supporters want them to move quickly to try to remove Trump from office. But the White House has blocked their oversight

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requests at almost every turn, declining to provide new documents or allow aides and associates to testify.

On Tuesday, Lewandowski, who is considering a run for U.S. Senate in New Hampshire, defiantly made clear he wouldn't make life easy for the Democrats. He demanded that they provide him a copy of the Mueller report, sending Democratic staff scrambling to find one. He read directly from the report and asked Democrats to read passages to him, showing that he wouldn't say much beyond what Mueller wrote. Republicans on the panel forced a series of procedural votes, immediately sending the hearing into disarray.

"He's filibustering," said a frustrated House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler.

Lewandowski eventually began to answer some questions — he told the committee that he doesn't think Trump "asked me to do anything illegal" — but still stuck mostly to what was already in the report, giving Democrats little new information to go on. And he made clear his dislike for the House majority in the opening statement, calling them petty and asserting that investigations of the president were conducted by "Trump haters."

Lewandowski was a central figure in Mueller's report, which the committee is examining as part of its impeachment probe. The report, which said Trump could not be exonerated on obstruction of justice, detailed two episodes in which Trump asked Lewandowski to direct then-Attorney General Jeff Sessions to limit Mueller's investigation. Trump said that if Sessions would not meet with Lewandowski, then Lewandowski should tell Sessions he was fired.

Lewandowski never delivered the message but asked White House aide Rick Dearborn, a former Sessions aide, to do it. Dearborn said he was uncomfortable with the request and declined to deliver it, according to the report.

Under questioning by Rep. Hank Johnson, D-Ga., Lewandowski confirmed as "accurate" that Trump had asked him to deliver the message. At least two Democrats asked if he "chickened out." Lewandowski said no, that he took his kids to the beach instead.

And under questioning from a lawyer for the Democrats, Barry Berke, Lewandowski acknowledged that he had possibly lied in a cable interview about his interactions with Trump when he said he didn't remember the president asking him to get involved with Sessions. New rules approved by the committee last week for impeachment hearings allow staff questioning at the end of the hearing.

Democrats say the televised hearings are to educate the American people on the Mueller report and what they say is egregious behavior by the president. They argue that the blockade from the White House and stonewalling from witnesses like Lewandowski just gives them more fodder for lawsuits they have filed against the administration — and possible articles of impeachment on obstruction.

"You are also proving our point for the American people to see," Nadler said, noting that one of the articles of impeachment drafted against President Richard Nixon involved obstruction. He said Lewandowski's behavior is "completely unacceptable."

Two other witnesses who were subpoenaed alongside Lewandowski, Dearborn and former White House aide Rob Porter, did not show up at all, on orders from the White House. The White House says the former aides are "absolutely immune" from testifying — a principle that Democrats are currently challenging in court.

The committee's impeachment investigation faces major hurdles, and it's still unclear whether the panel will ever draft articles of impeachment or hold any impeachment votes. The Republican Senate is certain to rebuff any House efforts to bring charges against the president. Moderate Democrats have expressed nervousness that the impeachment push could crowd out their other accomplishments. And House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has said the public sentiment isn't yet there.

Still, the Judiciary panel is moving ahead, last week approving the rules, including the staff questioning, for what Nadler said will be an "aggressive series" of impeachment hearings this fall. Republicans declined to use their 30 minutes of staff questioning, arguing that the hearings aren't really impeachment because the House never voted to begin an inquiry.

Tuesday's hearing featured both combative exchanges between Lewandowski and Democrats and friendly questions from the Republican side of the dais. The witness took personal shots at some Democrats —

calling California Rep. Eric Swalwell, who dropped out of the Democratic presidential primary, "President Swalwell," for example. The Democrats taunted Lewandowski as well, with members occasionally reminding him that he was "not yet" a senator.

Republicans focused their ire on Nadler and the Democrats.

"They are going to bring back anybody, as much as they have to, to find something, anything to keep impeachment hopes alive," Rep. John Ratcliffe, R-Texas, told Lewandowski during his round of questioning.

Lewandowski's political future wound throughout the proceedings, which offered him a widely televised platform from which to defend Trump and publicly introduce himself on the congressional political stage. A poll last week showed Lewandowski would win the GOP nomination for Senate in New Hampshire. Trump has offered his support for any bid from the right to challenge Democrat Jeanne Shaheen.

For his part, Lewandowski on Tuesday did nothing to bat down cracks from Democrats about his ambitions. And during a break in the hearing, he tweeted a link to his new super PAC.

Jimmy Carter says he couldn't have managed presidency at 80

By **BILL BARROW** Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — Weeks shy of his 95th birthday, former President Jimmy Carter said he doesn't believe he could have managed the most powerful office in the world at 80 years old.

Carter, who earlier this year became the longest-lived chief executive in American history, didn't tie his comments to any of his fellow Democrats running for president in 2020, but two leading candidates, Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders, would turn 80 during their terms if elected.

Biden is 76. Sanders is 78.

"I hope there's an age limit," Carter said with a laugh as he answered audience questions on Tuesday during his annual report at the Carter Center in Atlanta. "If I were just 80 years old, if I was 15 years younger, I don't believe I could undertake the duties I experienced when I was president."

Carter's observation came in response to a jovial inquiry about whether he had considered running in 2020 since he's still constitutionally allowed another term. The 39th president left office in 1981 at the age of 56 after losing his reelection bid to Ronald Reagan, who served two terms and left office as the oldest sitting president in history, at 77.

Either Biden or Sanders would be older upon their inauguration than Reagan was on his final day in the Oval Office. At 73, President Donald Trump is a record setter, as well. He eclipsed Reagan's mark as the oldest newly elected president in history and would become the oldest president to be reelected. Age has been a flashpoint for some critics of Trump, Sanders and Biden.

Carter, who turns 95 on Oct. 1, said the Oval Office requires a president "to be very flexible with your mind," particularly on foreign affairs. He was speaking on the 41st anniversary of the Camp David Accords, a peace agreement he negotiated with Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin.

"You have to be able to go from one subject to another and concentrate on each one adequately and then put them together in a comprehensive way, like I did between Begin and Sadat with the peace agreement," Carter said.

"The things I faced in foreign affairs, I don't think I could undertake them at 80 years old," he continued, before adding with a smile: "At 95, it's out of the question. I'm having a hard time walking."

Carter said he remains undecided in the 2020 primary.

"I'm going to keep an open mind," he said, explaining that he wants to vote for a candidate who pledges to make the U.S. the world's leading champion for peace, human rights and equality. "One of the major factors I will have in my mind is who can beat Trump," he added, noting that he'll vote for the Democratic nominee in the general election regardless.

Still, Carter's assessments on age could leave him with few easy choices in the primary.

Carter repeated his previous disclosure that he voted for Sanders over Hillary Clinton in 2016, siding with the democratic socialist over the party establishment favorite. But Carter has since warned Democrats

not to go too far left, lest they risk alienating independents and moderate Republicans who can help the party defeat Trump.

He has specifically cited proposals like a single-payer health insurance system as potential deal-breakers for some voters inclined to vote against Trump. Sanders and another leading progressive candidate, Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, back single-payer health insurance run by the federal government. Warren is 70 years old.

Meanwhile, Biden is leading most national and early state primary polls in part because of his strength among more moderate Democrats. Other moderates in the field trail far behind Biden, Sanders and Warren.

When Carter ran and won in 1976, he was the outsider toppling establishment favorites. But the former Georgia governor also represented the more moderate wing of a party that had been dominated by Northeastern liberals.

Since his defeat, however, Republicans have used Carter as a liberal caricature. And Carter himself, through his work at the Carter Center, has embraced the role of an outspoken human rights advocate willing to criticize the world's establishment institutions and accepted world order.

He's long blasted Israel's treatment of Palestinians, even as both major U.S. parties more carefully navigated the U.S. alliance with Israel. As Israel tallies votes from its Tuesday elections, Carter lamented that returning hard-line Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to power could "end the peace process" altogether. Exit polls show that Netanyahu's party fell short of securing a parliamentary majority, potentially threatening his position.

Speaking about his post-presidency legacy, Carter said he wants the Carter Center, which has focused since 1982 on public health and election monitoring, to be more willing to criticize the U.S. government, advocate for policies to combat the climate crisis and explicitly take sides against war.

"The Carter Center has been basically mute on the subject of global warming," Carter said, putting blame on himself.

He also warned Americans against the consequences of perpetual military conflict. He noted that China, the major economic and geopolitical competitor to the U.S., has spent four decades at peace since Carter normalized relations with Beijing. In that time, China has spent trillions of dollars on infrastructure and education, Carter said, while the U.S. has spent corresponding amounts on military engagement.

"That just shows you the difference between peace and war," Carter said, later adding, "I just want to keep the world at peace."

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Iran warns US of response to any action over Saudi attack

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

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran warned the U.S. that any action taken against it following an attack on Saudi oil installations will "immediately" be met with a response from Tehran, its state-run news agency reported Wednesday, further raising Mideast tensions.

Iran's president and foreign minister also may skip next week's high-level meetings at the United Nations as the U.S. has yet to issue them visas, IRNA reported.

The U.N. meeting had been considered as an opportunity for direct talks between Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and President Donald Trump amid a summer of heightened tensions and attacks in the wake of America's unilateral withdraw from Iran's nuclear deal with world powers a year ago.

However, the recent attack in Saudi Arabia and hardening comments from Iran suggest such talks are increasingly unlikely.

Iran sent a note through Swiss diplomats in Tehran on Monday, reiterating that Tehran denies being involved in the Saudi attack, IRNA reported. The Swiss have looked after American interests in Tehran for decades.

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"If any action takes place against Iran, the action will be faced by Iran's answer immediately," IRNA quoted the note as saying. It added that Iran's response wouldn't be limited to the source of the threat, without elaborating.

IRNA separately reported Wednesday that Iran's first delegation for the annual U.N. event had not left Iran due to not having visas. Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif was to travel to New York on Friday, with Rouhani following behind Monday, according to the agency.

As the host of the U.N.'s headquarters, the U.S. is mandated to offer world leaders and diplomats visas to attend meetings there. But as tensions have risen, the U.S. has put increasing restrictions on Iranians like Zarif.

The U.S. State Department did not immediately respond to a request for comment Wednesday.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo is traveling to Saudi Arabia for meetings after Saturday's attack on a Saudi oil field and the world's largest crude oil processing plant. Saudi officials separately planned to share information about the weapons used in the attack they allege are Iranian.

Saudi Arabia also said on Wednesday that it joined a U.S.-led coalition to secure the Mideast's waterways amid threats from Iran after an attack targeting its crucial oil industry, while Rouhani told the kingdom it should see the attack as a warning to end its yearslong war in Yemen.

Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels have claimed the attack. The U.S. accuses Iran of being behind the assault, while Saudi Arabia already has said "Iranian weaponry" was used. Iran denies that.

"Almost certainly it's Iranian-backed," Prince Khalid bin Bandar, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to the United Kingdom, told the BBC. "We are trying not to react too quickly because the last thing we need is more conflict in the region."

The state-run Saudi Press Agency carried a statement Wednesday morning quoting an unnamed official saying the kingdom had joined the International Maritime Security Construct.

Australia, Bahrain and the United Kingdom already have joined the mission.

"The kingdom's accession to this international alliance comes in support of regional and international efforts to deter and counter threats to maritime navigation and global trade," the news agency said.

Cmdr. Joshua Frey, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy's 5th Fleet, declined to comment on the Saudi announcement, saying it "would be inappropriate to comment on the status of individual nations and the nature of any potential support."

The coalition aims to secure the broader Persian Gulf region. It includes surveillance of the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of the world's oil travels, and the Bab el-Mandeb, another narrow strait that connects the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden off Yemen and East Africa. Smaller patrol boats and other craft will be available for rapid response. The plan also allows for nations to escort their own ships through the region.

The U.S. blames Iran for the apparent limpet mine explosions on four vessels in May and another two in June sailing in the Gulf of Oman near the Strait of Hormuz, something Iran denies being behind. Iran also seized a British-flagged oil tanker and another based in the United Arab Emirates.

In Tehran, Rouhani told his Cabinet that Saudi Arabia should see the attack as a warning to end its war in Yemen, where it has fought the Houthi rebels since 2015 and sought to restore the internationally recognized government.

Rouhani said Yemenis "did not hit hospitals, they did not hit schools or the Sanaa bazaar," mentioning the Saudi-led coalition's widely criticized airstrikes.

He added that Iran does not want conflict in the region, but it was the Saudi-led coalition that "waged the war in the region and ruined Yemen."

"They attacked an industrial center to warn you. Learn the lesson from the warning," he said, portraying the Houthis as responsible for the drone strikes.

Wednesday's announcements comes after Saudi Arabia's energy minister said late Tuesday that more than half of the country's daily crude oil production that was knocked out by an attack had been recovered and that production capacity at its targeted plants would be fully restored by the end of the month.

Pompeo was due to land in the Red Sea city of Jiddah, where he was scheduled to meet with Saudi

Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. Pompeo later will travel to the United Arab Emirates on Thursday to meet with Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. Both nations are U.S. allies and have been fighting against the Houthis in Yemen since March 2015.

The Saudi military planned to speak to journalists Wednesday in Riyadh to discuss the investigation into Saturday's attack "and present material evidence and Iranian weapons proving the Iranian regime's involvement." It did not elaborate.

Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Tuesday that U.S. military experts were in Saudi Arabia working with their counterparts to "do the forensics on the attack" — gleaning evidence that could help build a convincing case for where the weapons originated.

On Wednesday, French President Emmanuel Macron's office announced experts from his nation would be traveling to Saudi Arabia to help the kingdom shed light "on the origin and methods" of the attacks. France has been trying to find a diplomatic solution to the tensions between Iran and the U.S., so any conclusion they draw could be used to show what a third-party assessed happened.

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Robert Burns in Washington and Angela Charlton in Paris contributed to this report.

Gamble pays off for Lieberman, who becomes Israeli kingmaker

By ARON HELLER Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — The veteran Israeli politician Avigdor Lieberman took the political gamble of his life when he spurned his mentor, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and forced an unprecedented repeat election. As results began rolling in from Tuesday's vote, it appeared to have paid off.

With neither Netanyahu's Likud nor former military chief Benny Gantz's centrist Blue and White party forecast to secure a majority in the 120-seat parliament without his support, Lieberman has emerged as the election's true winner — the one most likely to dictate the makeup of the next government.

Lieberman passed up the post of defense minister in Netanyahu's government following April's election and refused to join the new coalition because of what he said was the excessive influence it granted to ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties. His exit left the prime minister one seat short of a parliamentary majority. Instead of allowing an alternative candidate a chance to form a government, Netanyahu dissolved parliament and called another snap election — launching a scathing campaign aimed at ending the career of his former protégé.

But now it may turn out to be the other way around.

Initial exit polls gave Lieberman's hard-line Yisrael Beitenu party 8-10 seats in parliament, nearly doubling his previous tally. He campaigned on a promise to force a secular unity government between Likud and Blue and White that would leave out the ultra-Orthodox parties. The twist is that Gantz, whose party seems to have edged Likud, has ruled out sitting with a Netanyahu-led Likud at a time when the prime minister is expected to be indicted on corruption charges in the coming weeks. That could spell the end of Netanyahu's lengthy rule.

"Everything we said before the election, we are also saying after the election," Lieberman said to raucous applause at party headquarters. "We have only one option: a broad, liberal, national government made up of Yisrael Beitenu, Likud and Blue and White."

The focus now shifts to Israeli President Reuven Rivlin, who is tasked with choosing the candidate he believes has the best chance of forming a stable coalition. Rivlin is to consult with all the parties in the coming days to hear their recommendations before making his decision. The leader of the largest party typically gets the nod, but not always.

Either way, Lieberman looks to have the upper hand in forcing out the ultra-Orthodox, Netanyahu's long-time loyal partners.

The Moldovan-born Lieberman started out as a top aide to Netanyahu during his first term in office in the 1990s before embarking on a political career of his own as a nationalist hard-liner and champion of

immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Since then, he has known his ups and downs with his former boss, including as Netanyahu's foreign minister and defense minister. He eventually resigned last year because Netanyahu kept blocking his plans to strike hard against Gaza militants.

But his secular agenda and iconoclastic straight talk — delivered in a slow, Russian-accented monotone — has made him an unlikely savior for those tired of Netanyahu's corruption-tainted, decade-long grip on power. That's despite the fact that Lieberman survived a lengthy corruption scandal himself.

With his core constituency of Russian-speaking immigrants becoming fully integrated into Israeli society, Lieberman had seen his political fortunes dwindle in recent elections and he came precariously close to dropping below the electoral threshold in April's vote.

But then he changed tack, perhaps sensing that with Israelis largely united on security issues and largely uninterested in the conflict with the Palestinians, the most relevant divide was not between the left and right but between the secular and the religious. Once one of the most polarizing figures in Israeli politics, Lieberman has reinvented himself as a secular bridge builder, finding newfound support even among bastions of liberal Tel Aviv.

"We've always said that a unity government is only possible in emergency situations. And I tell you and I tell every citizen today watching us on television: the situation, both security-wise and economically, is an emergency," he said in his speech late Tuesday. "The country, therefore, requires a broad government, not a government that fights for survival from week to week, from one no-confidence motion to another."

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Netanyahu, rightist allies appear to fall short of majority

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu fell short of securing a parliamentary majority with his natural religious and nationalist allies in national elections Tuesday, partial results indicated, setting the stage for a period of coalition negotiations that could threaten his political future and even clear the way for him to be tried on corruption charges.

Initial partial results showed challenger Benny Gantz's centrist Blue and White party tied with Netanyahu's Likud. While the results do not guarantee that Gantz will be the next prime minister, they signaled that Netanyahu, who has led the country for over 10 years, could have trouble holding on to the job.

Addressing his supporters early Wednesday, Netanyahu refused to concede defeat and vowed to work to form a new government that excludes Arab parties. His campaign focused heavily on attacking and questioning the loyalty of the country's Arab minority — a strategy that drew accusations of racism and incitement from Arab leaders.

"In the coming days we will convene negotiations to assemble a strong Zionist government and to prevent a dangerous anti-Zionist government," he said. He claimed that Arab parties "negate the existence of Israel as a Jewish and democratic state" and "glorify bloodthirsty murderers."

The partial results released Wednesday by the Central Election Commission were based on 35 percent of the vote counted. The three Israeli TV channels reported the same outcome, based on more than 90 percent of the vote counted, but did not explain the discrepancy with the commission's percentage.

Final results are expected Wednesday and could still swing in Netanyahu's favor.

According to the partial results, the parties of Gantz and Netanyahu received 32 seats each in the 120-member parliament. Likud with its natural allies of religious and ultra-nationalist parties mustered 56 seats — or five short of the needed majority.

This means both Likud and Blue and White will have difficulty setting up a governing coalition without the support of Avigdor Lieberman's Yisrael Beitenu party. That put Lieberman, a former protege of Netanyahu's who has become one of the prime minister's fiercest rivals, in the position of kingmaker.

Arab parties, which have never before sat in an Israeli government, also finished strong, and exit polls predicted they would form the third-largest party in parliament.

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Addressing his supporters late Tuesday, a jubilant Lieberman said he saw only "one option": a broad, secular coalition with both Blue and White and Likud.

"We've always said that a unity government is only possible in emergency situations. And I tell you and I tell every citizen today watching us on television: the situation, both security-wise and economically, are emergency situations," he said. "The country, therefore, requires a broad government."

Early Wednesday, Gantz told a cheering rally of supporters that while it was too soon to declare victory, he had begun speaking to potential partners and hoped to form a unity government.

"Starting tonight we will work to form a broad unity government that will express the will of the people," he said.

Attention will now focus on Israel's president, Reuven Rivlin, who is to choose the candidate he believes has the best chance of forming a stable coalition. Rivlin is to consult with all parties in the coming days before making his decision.

After that, the prime minister designate would have up to six weeks to form a coalition. If that fails, Rivlin could give another candidate for prime minister 28 days to form a coalition. And if that doesn't work, new elections would be triggered yet again. Rivlin has said he will do everything possible to avoid such a scenario.

Lieberman called for an immediate start to negotiations and predicted it could be wrapped up quickly. But such a deal promises to be complicated.

Gantz, a former military chief who has presented himself as a unifying figure in a divided nation, has ruled out a partnership with Likud if Netanyahu remains at the helm at a time when he is expected to be indicted on criminal charges.

But in his speech, he made no such conditions. "I intend to speak with everyone," he said, without mentioning Netanyahu.

Lieberman, who leads a nationalist but secular party, is unlikely to sit with Arab parties on the left or ultra-Orthodox religious parties on the right.

That could limit both Gantz's and Netanyahu's ability to maneuver and could potentially put pressure on the longtime leader, who has ruled for over a decade, to step aside.

Likud members said they remained behind their leader.

"We have the basic principle of standing by the party leader who was elected in the party primary, which is why we won't take action against Netanyahu," said lawmaker Micky Zohar, a Netanyahu loyalist.

Netanyahu had sought an outright majority with his allies in hopes of passing legislation to give him immunity from the expected indictment.

Israel's attorney general has recommended charging Netanyahu with bribery, fraud and breach of trust in three scandals, pending a hearing scheduled next month. A formal indictment would increase the pressure on Netanyahu to step aside if he does not have immunity.

Netanyahu tried to portray himself as a seasoned statesman uniquely qualified to lead the country through challenging times during an alarmist campaign marked by mudslinging and slogans that were condemned as racist. Gantz tried to paint Netanyahu as divisive and scandal-plagued, offering himself as a calming influence and honest alternative.

Netanyahu's campaign promoted images of him jetting off to world capitals and boasting of warm relations with powerful leaders, most notably President Donald Trump.

At the same time, he issued repeated doomsday warnings that his opponents were scheming with politicians from the country's Arab minority to "steal" the election.

He tried, and failed, to pass legislation that would allow cameras in polling stations, a step he said was needed to crack down on alleged fraud in Arab towns. Facebook suspended his account for 24 hours last week after it published a post saying that "Arabs want to annihilate all of us."

Netanyahu also sought to appeal to his hard-line base with a number of election promises, including plans to annex all of Israel's settlements in the West Bank.

His proposal, which could extinguish any remaining hopes for a Palestinian state, were condemned by

much of the world, including important Arab countries like Jordan and Saudi Arabia. But the U.S. remained muted, suggesting he had coordinated with Washington ahead of time.

Netanyahu's frenetic warnings about Arabs appeared to backfire, turning off some Jewish voters and driving heavy turnout in the Arab sector.

Ayman Odeh, leader of the main Arab faction in parliament, said Netanyahu's repeated attacks had boosted turnout and hurt Netanyahu in the end.

"There's a heavy price to pay for incitement," he told Channel 13 TV.

The election was Israel's second of the year.

In April's vote, Netanyahu appeared to have the upper hand, with his traditional allies of nationalist and ultra-religious Jewish parties controlling a parliamentary majority.

But Lieberman, his mercurial ally-turned-rival, refused to join the new coalition, citing excessive influence it granted the ultra-Orthodox Jewish parties. Without a parliamentary majority, Netanyahu dissolved parliament and called a new election.

Lieberman's gamble paid off Tuesday, and partial results indicated his party had nearly doubled in strength, with nine seats.

Israel's election commission said 69.4% of all eligible voters cast ballots by the time polls closed on Tuesday evening, a slightly larger number than took part in April's vote. Turnout in April's elections was 68.5%.

Associated Press writer Ilan Ben Zion contributed to this report.

This story was amended to correct the turnout in April's election.

Sackler money complicates donation policies for museums

By HILLEL ITALIE AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Ask the CEO and president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art whether he's accepting money from the Sacklers, the billionaire dynasty notorious for its ties to the drug company Purdue Pharma, and the answer is somewhat complicated.

For one thing, it depends on which Sackler.

"There are people who have the name 'Sackler' who have nothing to do with the Purdue Pharma situation," Daniel H. Weiss says. "If it's someone tied up with the leadership at Purdue Pharma, we step away."

Purdue Pharma recently filed for bankruptcy as part of a plan by the maker of OxyContin to settle thousands of lawsuits from state and local governments over the nation's opioid crisis. The Sacklers, who own Purdue, were listed by Forbes magazine in 2016 as one of the 20 wealthiest families in the U.S. and have contributed money to cultural institutions around the world.

The family has pushed back against accusations that Purdue played a central role in the deadly epidemic, but the legal battles have led some to sever ties with the relatives. The allegations have also heightened a debate over how much museums should rely on the support of the rich and what, if any, conditions should be imposed on their gifts.

For museums in the U.S. especially, where private funding can account for more than three quarters of an annual budget, the decision to cut off a wealthy contributor such as the Sacklers or Jeffrey Epstein is sometimes a choice between upholding their stated values and being able to communicate those values through the art they champion.

"We live in populist times, with more awareness of economic and political inequality and more scrutiny of the wealthy," says David Callahan, author of "The Givers" and founder of the online site Inside Philanthropy. "This greater scrutiny is overdue, but it's creating lots of anxiety in nonprofit institutions with strong ties to America's far upper class."

Over the past year, the Tate museums in London and the Guggenheim in New York are among those that announced they would no longer accept money from the Sacklers. Other institutions have not entirely distanced themselves, citing legal reasons and other factors.

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Last spring, the Met announced it would no longer accept gifts from Sackler family members closely connected to Purdue Pharma, but would allow for donations from those not involved. (Various Sacklers have denounced Purdue Pharma and called for some form of atonement).

The Met is not renaming its Sackler Wing, because, Weiss says, it's contractually obligated. In Washington, the Smithsonian Institution rejected calls to remove the Sackler name from the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, which opened in 1987 after Arthur Sackler (who died the same year) donated more than 1,000 works of Asian art and millions of dollars for construction.

In a recent statement to The Associated Press, the Smithsonian said the gallery was named in "recognition of Sackler's generous gift" and that the donation agreement requires the Smithsonian to keep the name in "perpetuity."

The Smithsonian added that it is no longer "seeking" money from the Sacklers and that in 2011 it changed its gift policy so that a name could be changed after 20 years or when a space gets its next major renovation.

Smithsonian chief spokeswoman Linda St. Thomas said control over exhibitions "rests solely with the Smithsonian" and that all gifts over \$1 million are reviewed by leadership and approved by the Board of Regents.

Harvard University, where protesters have demanded the school rename the Arthur M. Sackler Museum, also cited contractual reasons for keeping the name and said that the Sacklers donated money before the development of OxyContin.

Philanthropy has a long history of conflict in the U.S., dating back to when steel magnate Andrew Carnegie spent vast amounts of money on libraries, schools and other educational facilities even as his workers protested their low wages.

More recent examples include the University of Southern California School of Cinematic Arts, which rejected \$5 million from Harvey Weinstein, and Chicago's Field Museum, which divested its financial portfolio from fossil fuels.

The definition of a toxic donor "is vague and keeps changing," Callahan says. He cited the resignation of Warren Kanders from the board of the Whitney Museum after protests about his company's sale of tear gas used at the U.S.-Mexico border and elsewhere. Previously, Kanders' business had not been grounds for being pushed off the board.

"But in this highly charged political climate, the way a wealthy individual is seen can change rapidly," Callahan said.

Weiss wonders if the Met would now accept money from Carnegie or fellow tycoon John D. Rockefeller, both infamous for their monopolistic business practices. The Met has received millions from controversial donors, notably David H. Koch, who died last month. Koch and his older brother Charles were leading right-wing benefactors reviled by environmentalists and others for casting doubt on man-made climate change and opposing efforts to fight global warming through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

David Koch was on the Met's board of trustees and contributed \$65 million to a renovation of the plaza in front, named David H. Koch Plaza by the Met in 2014. The museum at the time defended the decision, which led to protests, saying it was a fitting honor for Koch's "generosity and level of commitment."

The Met does not "administer a partisan test for our donors — rather we accept gifts from those who seek to join in advancing our mission," Weiss said.

"It's equally important," he added, "to recognize that gift acceptance administration requires continual review ... as the landscape of cultural values, laws and facts change, and a bright line is often an imprecise instrument."

Facebook auto-generating pages for Islamic State, al-Qaida

By **DESMOND BUTLER** and **BARBARA ORTUTAY** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In the face of criticism that Facebook is not doing enough to combat extremist messaging, the company likes to say that its automated systems remove the vast majority of prohibited content glorifying the Islamic State group and al-Qaida before it's reported.

But a whistleblower's complaint shows that Facebook itself has inadvertently provided the two extremist groups with a networking and recruitment tool by producing dozens of pages in their names.

The social networking company appears to have made little progress on the issue in the four months since The Associated Press detailed how pages that Facebook auto-generates for businesses are aiding Middle East extremists and white supremacists in the United States.

On Wednesday, U.S. senators on the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation will be questioning representatives from social media companies, including Monika Bickert, who heads Facebook's efforts to stem extremist messaging.

The new details come from an update of a complaint to the Securities and Exchange Commission that the National Whistleblower Center plans to file this week. The filing obtained by the AP identifies almost 200 auto-generated pages — some for businesses, others for schools or other categories — that directly reference the Islamic State group and dozens more representing al-Qaida and other known groups. One page listed as a "political ideology" is titled "I love Islamic state." It features an IS logo inside the outlines of Facebook's famous thumbs-up icon.

In response to a request for comment, a Facebook spokesperson told the AP: "Our priority is detecting and removing content posted by people that violates our policy against dangerous individuals and organizations to stay ahead of bad actors. Auto-generated pages are not like normal Facebook pages as people can't comment or post on them and we remove any that violate our policies. While we cannot catch every one, we remain vigilant in this effort."

Facebook has a number of functions that auto-generate pages from content posted by users. The updated complaint scrutinizes one function that is meant to help business networking. It scrapes employment information from users' pages to create pages for businesses. In this case, it may be helping the extremist groups because it allows users to like the pages, potentially providing a list of sympathizers for recruiters.

The new filing also found that users' pages promoting extremist groups remain easy to find with simple searches using their names. They uncovered one page for "Mohammed Atta" with an iconic photo of one of the al-Qaida adherents, who was a hijacker in the Sept. 11 attacks. The page lists the user's work as "Al Qaidah" and education as "University Master Bin Laden" and "School Terrorist Afghanistan."

Facebook has been working to limit the spread of extremist material on its service, so far with mixed success. In March, it expanded its definition of prohibited content to include U.S. white nationalist and white separatist material as well as that from international extremist groups. It says it has banned 200 white supremacist organizations and 26 million pieces of content related to global extremist groups like IS and al-Qaida.

It also expanded its definition of terrorism to include not just acts of violence attended to achieve a political or ideological aim, but also attempts at violence, especially when aimed at civilians with the intent to coerce and intimidate. It's unclear, though, how well enforcement works if the company is still having trouble ridding its platform of well-known extremist organizations' supporters.

But as the report shows, plenty of material gets through the cracks — and gets auto-generated.

The AP story in May highlighted the auto-generation problem, but the new content identified in the report suggests that Facebook has not solved it.

The report also says that researchers found that many of the pages referenced in the AP report were removed more than six weeks later on June 25, the day before Bickert was questioned for another congressional hearing.

The issue was flagged in the initial SEC complaint filed by the center's executive director, John Kostyack, that alleges the social media company has exaggerated its success combatting extremist messaging.

"Facebook would like us to believe that its magical algorithms are somehow scrubbing its website of extremist content," Kostyack said. "Yet those very same algorithms are auto-generating pages with titles like 'I Love Islamic State,' which are ideal for terrorists to use for networking and recruiting."

Ortutay reported from San Francisco.

Houston area preparing for heavy rain, flooding from Imelda

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Officials in the Houston area were preparing high-water vehicles and staging rescue boats Tuesday as Tropical Storm Imelda moved in from the Gulf of Mexico, threatening to dump up to 18 inches of rain in parts of Southeast Texas and southwestern Louisiana over the next few days.

The storm, which formed Tuesday, made landfall near Freeport, Texas, with maximum sustained winds of 40 mph.

Jeff Lindner, a meteorologist and director of flood operations for the Harris County Flood Control District in Houston, said the main threat from Imelda remained the potential for heavy rainfall and flooding.

"We have a few things in our favor. The ground is dry. It's been dry for a while here as we've come through summer," Lindner said. "The initial parts of this rainfall will go toward saturating the ground."

Ken Graham, director of the National Hurricane Center, said the Houston area, along with parts of the upper Texas coast and East Texas, could get "significant rainfall" through Thursday as the storm moves north. Imelda's rain bands were also stretching across into Louisiana.

Imelda was the first named storm to impact the Houston area since Hurricane Harvey, according to the National Weather Service. Harvey dumped nearly 50 inches (130 centimeters) of rain on parts of the flood-prone city in August 2017, flooding more than 150,000 homes in the Houston area and causing an estimated \$125 billion in damage in Texas.

Lindner says while there is the potential for some isolated structure flooding in the Houston area, widespread house flooding from Imelda "doesn't look likely at this point."

But Lindner said that residents who live in flood prone areas should still be mindful and take some extra precautions.

Some parts of Harris County and neighboring Galveston County had already received about 4 inches of rain through Tuesday afternoon.

The Galveston school district announced it was canceling classes on Wednesday.

In a tweet Tuesday, Houston Mayor Sylvester Turner asked residents to be "alert and weather aware."

Gov. Greg Abbott on Monday placed numerous resources on standby across Texas. The Texas Division of Emergency Management will be rostering four boat squads in coastal areas. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will be moving boats to support the Beaumont area and adjacent regions.

Meanwhile Tuesday, the National Hurricane Center said Hurricane Humberto in the Atlantic Ocean is posing a stronger threat to Bermuda, though it was more than 500 miles away. Meteorologists also said newly formed Tropical Storm Lorena in the Pacific Ocean could produce heavy rains and flooding in Mexico by Thursday.

Follow Juan A. Lozano on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/juanlozano70>

Knockoff pot vapes raise concerns for licensed companies

By MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A short walk from police headquarters in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, a cluster of bustling shops are openly selling packaging and hardware that can be used to produce counterfeit marijuana vapes that have infected California's cannabis market.

Bootleggers eager to profit off unsuspecting consumers are mimicking popular, legal vape brands, pair-

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ing replica packaging churned out in Chinese factories with untested, possibly dangerous cannabis oil produced in the state's vast underground market.

The result: Authentic-looking vape cartridges sold by unlicensed dispensaries and delivery services, along with rogue websites.

The deceptive rip-offs on the street could be linked to an emerging public health crisis. Hundreds of people across the U.S. have been sickened, mainly by vaping cannabis oil. Seven deaths have been reported, the latest on Monday in California's Tulare County.

Public health officials aren't sure what's causing the breathing issues, vomiting and other symptoms, but in California they say most patients reported purchasing vapes from pop-up shops or other illegal sellers that are a pipeline for counterfeit products.

The problem has gotten so pervasive that a major legal brand, Kingpen, is investing millions of dollars to redesign its packaging and product security, The Associated Press has learned.

The distributor for another major brand, Heavy Hitters, devotes a section of its website to report phonies and has hired a former federal prosecutor, Priya Sopori, to help the company deal with counterfeiting.

"The danger presented by counterfeit products is just a natural result of not having the money, the resources or the people power to enforce licensing," Sopori said. "Someone is buying this packaging, buying these cartridges and filling them with whatever. It's being sold as our brand."

VAPES: A HEALTHIER OPTION?

As marijuana has gone mainstream, versions of e-cigarettes that vaporize high-inducing cannabis oil are one of the hottest-selling items, popular for those who don't want the smoke that comes from lighting up a joint. In addition to quickly delivering a high, there's a perception not supported by science that vaping is a healthier alternative to smoking.

In California's legal market, the world's largest, the state requires cannabis oil to be tested before being placed on the shelf for sale. For example, safety checks are made for the presence of 66 pesticides, mercury, lead and other heavy metals, and 21 solvents that could be used in the extraction process, when oil is pulled from cannabis.

But it can be hard for consumers to tell whether a product they're buying is made by a legitimate company. The phony packaging is convincing to the untrained eye, some even carrying bogus labels that appear to carry state-required test results. Most consumers probably wouldn't know the difference — until they vape it. The taste and THC level could be significantly different from the authentic product.

To add to the confusion, consumers can have trouble distinguishing legal dispensaries from unlicensed shops, which in Los Angeles sometimes operate in the same neighborhoods and appear indistinguishable.

"My biggest fear of counterfeiting is people are getting an unsafe product, and illegal product, and think it's coming from our company, a legal company," says Bryce Berryessa, a board member of the California Cannabis Manufacturers Association whose company, Skunk Feather, produces concentrates and vape cartridges.

In another warning of consumer risk related to vaping, an Associated Press investigation Monday found that some operators are substituting illegal synthetic marijuana in vapes marketed as natural CBD, a chemical in cannabis that doesn't cause a high and promises mainly unproven health claims.

A SOPHISTICATED EFFORT

In storefronts along Los Angeles' Boyd Street, a narrow commercial strip that has become a de facto bazaar for all things cannabis, there are displays of fake packaging and ready-to-fill vape cartridges for sale for popular brands including Heavy Hitters and Kingpen.

At one shop, the knock-off Heavy Hitter packages were selling for \$225 for 100 empty cartridges and boxes; the Kingpen sets sell for \$200. Counterfeit packaging and vape cartridges can also be easily found with a few mouse clicks on Alibaba, China's largest online commerce company, and other websites. Once purchased, a counterfeiter would add cannabis oil that is widely available in the illicit market — one recent online ad was selling oil for \$6 a gram when purchased by the liter.

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It's not clear who's behind all the different sales, and California law enforcement agencies have been overmatched by the widespread illegal market. In LA, the police department's chief focus is shuttering an estimated 200 illegal dispensaries across the city, not pursuing the source of fake vapes that might be for sale inside them, Los Angeles Police Department spokesman Josh Rubenstein said.

The state Department of Public Health, which regulates vape companies and other cannabis manufacturers, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Thus far, the state's illegal market has been operating largely unchecked, providing a ready market for fakes.

One recent study estimated that consumers are spending roughly \$3 in the state's underground pot economy for every \$1 in the legal one. Last week, state regulators raided two unlicensed shops selling bogus marijuana vapes in Southern California, seizing nearly \$3 million in products. And in Wisconsin, authorities uncovered a 10-man operation that manufactured thousands of counterfeit vaping cartridges every day for almost two years loaded with oil containing THC, the high-producing ingredient in marijuana.

A likely link between copycat vapes and the stores that sell them was illustrated on Aug. 28. An illegal shop padlocked by police in Los Angeles had a display case prominently displaying Kingpen vapes. The company said it had no relationship with the shop, which was selling vapes at bargain-basement prices, meaning they were almost certainly fakes.

Kingpen has taken matters into its own hands, suing Chinese companies that produce fake packaging, sending scores of cease-and-desist letters to businesses that sell them and filing complaints with the state, only to see nothing change.

"There is no feedback. There is no action," said Danny Corral, Kingpen manufacturer Loudpack's vice president of sales.

Others have gone so far as to hire private investigators to locate illicit suppliers but find dead ends. That's led many in the industry to believe the counterfeit operations are an organized, sophisticated practice.

"We have every reason to believe that the same criminal gangs and cartels that dominate the global pharmaceutical counterfeit drug trade will similarly wrestle control of California's cannabis counterfeit drug trade," says a report compiled by Mammoth Distribution and submitted to state regulators. The company distributes Heavy Hitters.

TAKING MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS

With counterfeits leaching into California's illegal vape market, the threat for licensed companies is not just millions in lost revenue. They worry their highly valued brands could be forever tainted if people get a mouthful of foul-tasting vapor, or even become sick, from a bogus product carrying their name.

To fight off rampant counterfeiting, the parent company of Kingpen is preparing to shelve millions of dollars in packaging and hardware, then spend millions more launching a redesigned product.

Loudpack is partnering with a technology company and this month plans to roll out an anti-counterfeiting program that will allow customers to verify the authenticity of Kingpen products purchased from licensed dispensaries in the state.

The rectangular paper box will be gone, replaced with a square, metal container. The company's logo remains, a rendering of a bearded, bloodshot-eyed king, but his face is partially obscured, like he is peering around a corner. There is also a unique code so consumers can validate the product.

In a statement, the company said it hopes the makeover will give consumers "peace of mind in knowing that any Kingpen product purchased legally is in fact authentic."

Blood is a member of AP's marijuana beat team. Follow the AP's complete marijuana coverage: <https://apnews.com/Marijuana>

Coral gardeners bring back Jamaica's reefs, piece by piece

By CHRISTINA LARSON AP Science Writer

OCHO RIOS, Jamaica (AP) — Everton Simpson squints at the Caribbean from his motorboat, scanning the dazzling bands of color for hints of what lies beneath. Emerald green indicates sandy bottoms. Sapphire blue lies above seagrass meadows. And deep indigo marks coral reefs. That's where he's headed.

He steers the boat to an unmarked spot that he knows as the "coral nursery." "It's like a forest under the sea," he says, strapping on blue flippers and fastening his tank before tipping backward into the azure waters. He swims down 25 feet (7.6 meters) carrying a pair of metal shears, fishing line and a plastic crate.

On the ocean floor, small coral fragments dangle from suspended ropes, like socks hung on a laundry line. Simpson and other divers tend to this underwater nursery as gardeners mind a flower bed — slowly and painstakingly plucking off snails and fireworms that feast on immature coral.

When each stub grows to about the size of a human hand, Simpson collects them in his crate to individually "transplant" onto a reef, a process akin to planting each blade of grass in a lawn separately.

Even fast-growing coral species add just a few inches a year. And it's not possible to simply scatter seeds.

A few hours later, at a site called Dickie's Reef, Simpson dives again and uses bits of fishing line to tie clusters of staghorn coral onto rocky outcroppings — a temporary binding until the coral's limestone skeleton grows and fixes itself onto the rock. The goal is to jumpstart the natural growth of a coral reef. And so far, it's working.

Almost everyone in Jamaica depends on the sea, including Simpson, who lives in a modest house he built himself near the island's northern coast. The energetic 68-year-old has reinvented himself several times, but always made a living from the ocean.

Once a spear fisherman and later a scuba-diving instructor, Simpson started working as a "coral gardener" two years ago — part of grassroots efforts to bring Jamaica's coral reefs back from the brink.

Coral reefs are often called "rainforests of the sea" for the astonishing diversity of life they shelter.

Just 2% of the ocean floor is filled with coral, but the branching structures — shaped like everything from reindeer antlers to human brains — sustain a quarter of all marine species. Clown fish, parrotfish, groupers and snappers lay eggs and hide from predators in the reef's nooks and crannies, and their presence draws eels, sea snakes, octopuses and even sharks. In healthy reefs, jellyfish and sea turtles are regular visitors.

With fish and coral, it's a codependent relationship — the fish rely upon the reef structure to evade danger and lay eggs, and they also eat up the coral's rivals.

Life on the ocean floor is like a slow-motion competition for space, or an underwater game of musical chairs. Tropical fish and other marine animals, like black sea urchins, munch on fast-growing algae and seaweed that may otherwise outcompete the slow-growing coral for space. When too many fish disappear, the coral suffers — and vice-versa.

After a series of natural and man-made disasters in the 1980s and 1990s, Jamaica lost 85% of its once-bountiful coral reefs. Meanwhile, fish catches declined to a sixth of what they had been in the 1950s, pushing families that depend on seafood closer to poverty. Many scientists thought that most of Jamaica's coral reef had been permanently replaced by seaweed, like jungle overtaking a ruined cathedral.

But today, the corals and tropical fish are slowly reappearing, thanks in part to a series of careful interventions.

The delicate labor of the coral gardener is only one part of restoring a reef — and for all its intricacy, it's actually the most straightforward part. Convincing lifelong fishermen to curtail when and where they fish and controlling the surging waste dumped into the ocean are trickier endeavors.

Still, slowly, the comeback effort is gaining momentum.

"The coral are coming back; the fish are coming back," says Stuart Sandin, a marine biologist at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography in La Jolla, California. "It's probably some of the most vibrant coral reefs we've seen in Jamaica since the 1970s."

"When you give nature a chance, she can repair herself," he adds. "It's not too late."

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Sandin is studying the health of coral reefs around the world as part of a research project called the "100 Island Challenge." His starting assumption was that the most populated islands would have the most degraded habitats, but what he found instead is that humans can be either a blessing or a curse, depending on how they manage resources.

In Jamaica, more than a dozen grassroots-run coral nurseries and fish sanctuaries have sprung up in the past decade, supported by small grants from foundations, local businesses such as hotels and scuba clinics, and the Jamaican government.

At White River Fish Sanctuary, which is only about 2 years old and where Simpson works, the clearest proof of early success is the return of tropical fish that inhabit the reefs, as well as hungry pelicans, skimming the surface of the water to feed on them.

Jamaica's coral reefs were once among the world's most celebrated, with their golden branching structures and resident bright-colored fish drawing the attention of travelers from Christopher Columbus to Ian Fleming, who wrote most of his James Bond novels on the island nation's northern coast in the 1950s and '60s.

In 1965, the country became the site of the first global research hub for coral reefs, the Discovery Bay Marine Lab, now associated with the University of the West Indies. The pathbreaking marine biologist couple Thomas and Nora Goreau completed fundamental research here, including describing the symbiotic relationship between coral and algae and pioneering the use of scuba equipment for marine studies.

The same lab also provided a vantage point as the coral disappeared.

Peter Gayle has been a marine biologist at Discovery Bay since 1985. From the yard outside his office, he points toward the reef crest about 300 meters away — a thin brown line splashed with white waves. "Before 1980, Jamaica had healthy coral," he notes. Then several disasters struck.

The first calamity was 1980's Hurricane Allen, one of the most powerful cyclones in recorded history. "Its 40-foot waves crashed against the shore and basically chewed up the reef," Gayle says. Coral can grow back after natural disasters, but only when given a chance to recover — which it never got.

That same decade, a mysterious epidemic killed more than 95% of the black sea urchins in the Caribbean, while overfishing ravaged fish populations. And surging waste from the island's growing human population, which nearly doubled between 1960 and 2010, released chemicals and nutrients into the water that spur faster algae growth. The result: Seaweed and algae took over.

"There was a tipping point in the 1980s, when it switched from being a coral-dominated system to being an algae-dominated system," Gayle says. "Scientists call it a 'phase shift.'"

That seemed like the end of the story, until an unlikely alliance started to tip the ecosystem back in the other direction, with help from residents like Everton Simpson and his fellow fisherman Lipton Bailey.

The fishing community of White River revolves around a small boat-docking area about a quarter-mile from where the river flows into the Caribbean Sea. One early morning, as purple dawn light filters into the sky, Simpson and Bailey step onto a 28-foot motorboat called the Interceptor.

Both men have lived and fished their whole lives in the community. Recently, they have come to believe that they need to protect the coral reefs that attract tropical fish, while setting limits on fishing to ensure the sea isn't emptied too quickly.

In the White River area, the solution was to create a protected area — a "fish sanctuary" — for immature fish to grow and reach reproductive age before they are caught.

Two years ago, the fishermen joined with local businesses, including hotel owners, to form a marine association and negotiate the boundaries for a no-fishing zone stretching two miles along the coast. A simple line in the water is hardly a deterrent, however; to make the boundary meaningful, it must be enforced. Today, the local fishermen, including Simpson and Bailey, take turns patrolling the boundary in the Interceptor.

On this morning, the men steer the boat just outside a row of orange buoys marked "No Fishing." "We are looking for violators," Bailey says, his eyes trained on the rocky coast. "Sometimes you find spearmen. They think they're smart. We try to beat them at their game."

Most of the older and more established fishermen, who own boats and set out lines and wire cages, have come to accept the no-fishing zone. Besides, the risk of having their equipment confiscated is too

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great. But not everyone is on board. Some younger men hunt with lightweight spearguns, swimming out to sea and firing at close-range. These men — some of them poor and with few options — are the most likely trespassers.

The patrols carry no weapons, so they must master the art of persuasion. "Let them understand this. It's not a you thing or a me thing. This isn't personal," Bailey says of past encounters with violators.

These are sometimes risky efforts. Two years ago, Jerlene Layne, a manager at nearby Boscobel Fish Sanctuary, landed in the hospital with a bruised leg after being attacked by a man she had reprimanded for fishing illegally in the sanctuary. "He used a stick to hit my leg because I was doing my job, telling him he cannot fish in the protected area," she says.

Layne believes her work would be safer with more formal support from the police, but she isn't going to stop.

"Public mindsets can change," she says. "If I back down on this, what kind of message does that send? You have to stand for something."

She has pressed charges in court against repeat trespassers, typically resulting in a fine and equipment confiscation.

One such violator is Damian Brown, 33, who lives in a coastal neighborhood called Stewart Town. Sitting outside on a concrete staircase near his modest home, Brown says fishing is his only option for work — and he believes the sanctuary boundaries extend too far.

But others who once were skeptical say they've come to see limits as a good thing.

Back at the White River docking area, Rick Walker, a 35-year-old spearfisherman, is cleaning his motorboat. He remembers the early opposition to the fish sanctuary, with many people saying, "No, they're trying to stop our livelihood."

Two years later, Walker, who is not involved in running the sanctuary but supports its boundary, says he can see the benefits. "It's easier to catch snapper and barracuda," he says. "At least my great grandkids will get to see some fish."

When Columbus landed in Jamaica, he sailed into Oracabessa Bay, today a 20-minute drive from the mouth of the White River.

Oracabessa Bay Fish Sanctuary was the first of the grassroots-led efforts to revive Jamaica's coral reefs. Its sanctuary was legally incorporated in 2010, and its approach of enlisting local fishermen as patrols became a model for other regions.

"The fishermen are mostly on board and happy, that's the distinction. That's why it's working," sanctuary manager Inilek Wilmot says.

David Murray, head of the Oracabessa Fishers' Association, notes that Jamaica's 60,000 fishermen operate without a safety net. "Fishing is like gambling, it's a game. Sometimes you catch something, sometimes you don't," he says.

When fish populations began to collapse two decades ago, something had to change.

Murray now works as a warden in the Oracabessa sanctuary, while continuing to fish outside its boundary. He also spends time explaining the concept to neighbors.

"It's people work — it's a process to get people to agree on a sanctuary boundary," he says. "It's a tough job to tell a man who's been fishing all his life that he can't fish here."

But once it became clear that a no-fishing zone actually helped nearby fish populations rebound, it became easier to build support. The number of fish in the sanctuary has doubled between 2011 and 2017, and the individual fish have grown larger — nearly tripling in length on average — according to annual surveys by Jamaica's National Environment and Planning Agency. And that boosts catches in surrounding areas.

After word got out about Oracabessa, other regions wanted advice.

"We have the data to show success, but even more important than data is word of mouth," says Wilmot, who oversaw training to help start the fish sanctuary at White River.

Belinda Morrow, a lifelong water-sports enthusiast often seen paddle-boarding with her dog Shadow, runs the White River Marine Association. She attends fishers' meetings and raises small grants from the Jamaican government and other foundations to support equipment purchases and coral replanting campaigns.

"We all depend on the ocean," Morrow says, sitting in a small office decorated with nautical maps in the iconic 70-year-old Jamaica Inn. "If we don't have a good healthy reef and a good healthy marine environment, we will lose too much. Too much of the country relies on the sea."

This Associated Press series was produced in partnership with the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

Trump strains to balance diplomacy, military threat to Iran

By ROBERT BURNS AP National Security Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration tried to balance diplomacy with fresh talk of military action Tuesday in response to the fiery missile and drone attack on the heart of Saudi Arabia's oil industry — a strike marking the most explosive consequence yet of the "maximum pressure" U.S. economic campaign against Iran.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was headed to Jiddah in Saudi Arabia to discuss possible responses to what U.S. officials believe was an attack coming from Iranian soil. President Donald Trump said he'd "prefer not" to meet with Iranian President Hassan Rouhani at next week's U.N. session but "I never rule anything out."

Iran continued to deny involvement in last weekend's attack on Saudi Arabia's Abqaiq oil processing plant and its Khurais oil field, a strike that interrupted the equivalent of about 5% of the world's daily supply. Saudi Arabia's energy minister said Tuesday that more than half of the country's daily crude oil production that was knocked out by the attack had been recovered and production capacity at the targeted plants would be fully restored by the end of the month.

The Trump administration was moving cautiously as it navigated competing impulses — seeking to keep up a pressure campaign aimed at forcing Tehran to negotiate on broader issues with the U.S. while deterring any further Iranian attacks and avoiding another Middle East war. It all was occurring as the administration deals with a host of other foreign policy issues and has no national security adviser, following the recent ouster of John Bolton.

Echoing Trump's warning from earlier in the week, Vice President Mike Pence said American forces were "locked and loaded" for war if needed. But he also noted that Trump said he doesn't want war with Iran or anyone else.

"As the president said yesterday, it's 'certainly looking like' Iran was behind these attacks," Pence said. "And our intelligence community at this very hour is working diligently to review the evidence."

The analysts' task was to connect the dots provided by satellite data and other highly classified intelligence with physical evidence from the scene of the attack, which American-provided Saudi defenses had failed to stop.

Fourteen months before voters will decide on Trump's reelection, he is increasingly mindful of his 2016 campaign promises, including his pledge to bring American troops home after nearly two decades of continuous war.

But he also promised to apply fresh pressure on Iran, a pledge complicated by the latest apparent provocation. The at-times divergent messages from his administration, officials say, mirror internal staff divisions and even the president's own hesitations.

"You know, I'm not looking to get into new conflict," Trump said Monday, "but sometimes you have to."

Aides say he's taking a prudent pause.

"The president's being cautious, and if he were banging the gong today about Iran being the culprit, inevitably, without presenting the case to the American people, everyone would be saying he's a war-monger," said White House spokesman Hogan Gidley.

The crisis comes amid upheaval in Trump's national security team. His national security adviser, Bolton, departed earlier this month after policy clashes, including disagreements over how best to pressure Iran into returning to the negotiating table on its nuclear and missile programs.

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Iran's alleged involvement in a recent series of provocations in the Gulf coincides with key moments in the unraveling of the country's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, from which Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. in May of last year. That was followed by a U.S. economic sanctions campaign, dubbed "maximum pressure," that has cut off much of Iran's international oil exports.

Iran, in turn, has said that no one will be able to export oil from the region if Tehran can't. In effect, the country has answered Trump's economic warfare with its own version -- attacks on economic targets that have been audacious but thus far not caused casualties.

Marine Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said Tuesday that U.S. military experts were in Saudi Arabia working with counterparts to "do the forensics on the attack" — gleaning evidence that could help build a convincing case for where the weapons originated.

Speaking to reporters in London, Dunford noted — as Trump had on Monday — that the attack was not aimed at the United States or U.S. forces. Therefore, he said, no steps were being taken to beef up the U.S. military presence in the Gulf region, which includes air defense forces and support troops at Prince Sultan Air Base south of the Saudi capital of Riyadh. The U.S. Navy has an aircraft carrier battle group in the area and fighter and bomber aircraft elsewhere in the Gulf.

A senior administration official said the U.S. sees a role to play for the U.N. Security Council, which was created to address threats to international peace and security. The U.S. believes the attack meets that threshold, but the administration first needs to "gather the releasable" information and intelligence it has collected about the strike, according to the official, who was not authorized to publicly discuss the attacks and spoke only on condition of anonymity. The security council meets next week in New York.

Jon Alterman, director of the Middle East program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Trump must fashion a response to Iran that fits his administration's stated priority of shifting from decades of insurgency warfare in Afghanistan and the Middle East to better position the U.S. for more serious international conflict.

"The military's instinct is increasingly that you can continue to pour resources into confronting Iran, but you're never going to fix the problem and, most importantly, you're taking resources away from confronting the real threats to the United States, which are China and Russia," he said.

Trump also faces a skeptical Congress. A bipartisan group of House members on Monday called for new language in 2020 defense spending bills that would prevent the president from starting a war with Iran without congressional authorization.

Pence met behind closed doors on Capitol Hill with Senate Republicans, and lawmakers were reviewing classified intelligence about the attack. Some Republican senators said a three-page document shared with Congress is convincing that Iran was behind the attack.

Sen. Ron Johnson, a Wisconsin Republican, said he was "100 percent convinced" it was Iran.

Sen. Lindsey Graham of South Carolina, a Trump ally, said the president is trying to build a regional coalition before any action.

"I think the appropriate response would be to knock one of the refineries in Iran out of business," Graham told reporters. He has spoken to the president and expects more information at an "appropriate time."

Democratic Sen. Tim Kaine of Virginia, a member of the Armed Services Committee, acknowledged the intelligence is "pretty good" that there's an Iran connection, but he warned the Trump administration off a military response.

"The administration is lying to the American people when they say it was an unprovoked attack," Kaine said, arguing the U.S. imposed sanctions and other withdrawal from the Iran nuclear deal are provoking Iran's behavior.

"We should not go to war to protect Saudi oil, but we should not go to another war that's premised upon lying to the American public," Kaine said.

AP Writers Aya Batrawy and Jon Gambrell contributed from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Also contributing were Lolita C. Baldor in London and Lisa Mascaró, Zeke Miller, Sagar Meghani and Michael Biesecker in Washington.

Democrats push ahead with short-term bill to avoid shutdown

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Democrats controlling the House are steering clear of controversy in a short-term, government-wide spending measure that's needed to prevent a government shutdown at the end of September.

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi has agreed to a White House request to replenish funds for bailout payments to farmers absorbing heavy losses as a result of President Donald Trump's trade battles with China. She has also rejected suggestions from House liberals to try to use the must-pass stopgap measure to try to reverse the president's controversial moves to raid military base construction projects to pay for the border wall,

The temporary spending bill would keep the government running through Nov. 21 and is to be released Tuesday. House and Senate votes are expected well in advance of the Sept. 30 deadline to avert a shutdown, though its release remained held up over a relatively a relatively minor but complicated set of issues.

The Senate, meanwhile, remains wrapped around the axle in its efforts to advance the 12 annual spending bills that would fill in the blanks of this summer's bipartisan budget and debt deal.

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has set up a procedural vote for Wednesday on a huge measure to fund the Pentagon, foreign aid, and domestic agencies like the energy and education departments, but Democrats appear likely to filibuster the measure to protest what they say is a raid on health and education programs to pay for more border wall projects. Next steps are unclear at best, and fears are growing that most of the government, including the Defense Department, will have to run on autopilot at current funding levels.

"Of course Democrats oppose taking funds from Congress for our military to use on the president's border wall. Everyone knows that," Schumer said Tuesday. "McConnell has been accusing Democrats of threatening to block military funding because we don't want to pass a bill that steals money from the military."

The maneuvering highlights the precarious nature of the summer's bipartisan budget pact, which combined a two-year increase in the national debt with a set of new spending "caps" to prevent the return of automatic, across-the-board spending cuts to both the Pentagon and domestic federal agencies.

In that agreement, both sides promised to steer clear of controversial provisions that, if included in the bills, would be so politically nettlesome that they would derail the entire process. But Sen. Patty Murray, D-Wash., upset that education and health programs within her jurisdiction have been shortchanged and angry over a new Trump administration rule banning family planning providers that accept federal funds from counseling women about their abortion options, threatened an amendment to reverse the administration's abortion "gag rule."

McConnell said Murray's amendment — it would have likely passed the Appropriations Committee over opposition from GOP conservatives and the president — would violate the agreement to avoid politically toxic "poison pills," and the typically bipartisan appropriations process in the Senate ran aground.

A top Senate Democrat, Dick Durbin of Illinois, said that Democrats want allocations they consider to be fairer to social programs and agreements on plotting floor consideration of legislation so they are not at a disadvantage in fighting for their priorities. "We get those things and the poison pills start drifting away," Durbin said.

The Senate Appropriations Committee on Tuesday did approve three bipartisan bills funding transportation and housing, the IRS and the Treasury Department, and agriculture programs.

The stopgap measure to fund the government is aimed at buying time for action and negotiations on \$1.4 trillion in annual appropriations bills. Some items can't wait and will be included, like accelerated funding for the 2020 census and \$20 million to combat Ebola in Africa.

Since the temporary spending bill is the only must-do legislation on the immediate horizon, lawmakers are using it as a locomotive to haul other priorities into law. That bundle of provisions, negotiated behind closed doors, offers plenty of evidence of Capitol Hill's chronic dysfunction.

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It's not just that the Democratic-controlled House and GOP-held Senate can't agree on big issues like infrastructure, guns and health care. They also can't agree on lower-tier items that typically pass by wide margins, such as short-term extensions of the federal flood insurance program and the Export-Import Bank, which helps finance export deals important to large manufacturers such as The Boeing Co.

The House and Senate banking committees are responsible for legislation to reauthorize both the Export-Import Bank and the flood insurance program, which is particularly important to the real estate sector in coastal areas. But there's been no progress, so temporary extensions of the two programs have been attached to the interim spending bill.

Democrats are deferring a showdown over Trump's border wall, which sparked a 35-day partial government shutdown at the turn of the year. Democratic leaders opted against trying to use the bill as a way to take on Trump controversies like cutting military base projects to pay for his U.S.-Mexico border wall. But they're not granting Trump any favors, either, denying provisions such as the flexibility to build new border wall segments.

A new bipartisan report by the Senate's Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations released Tuesday found that this year's shutdown and a more widespread 2013 shuttering of federal agencies cost taxpayers about \$4 billion, mostly for back pay for workers who did not work during the shutdowns. Almost 57,000 years of worker productivity were lost, according to the report by Sens. Rob Portman, R-Ohio, and Tom Carper, D-Del., contributing to piled-high trash at national parks, a suspension of consumer product safety inspections at U.S. ports, and delayed certifications for new aircraft.

Progress reported in contract talks between GM, union

By TOM KRISHER and MIKE HOUSEHOLDER Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Faced with weakening sales, a deteriorating global economy and an unpredictable trade war, General Motors and striking auto workers appeared to be making progress Tuesday toward a four-year labor contract.

The two-day walkout by 49,000 workers brought to a standstill more than 50 factories and parts warehouses in the union's first strike against the No. 1 U.S. automaker in over a decade. Workers left factories and formed picket lines shortly after midnight Monday.

"They are talking, they've made progress," said Brian Rothenberg, spokesman for the United Auto Workers union.

Talks continued into the evening. Bargainers could take a break during the night, but they planned to resume work Wednesday, Rothenberg said.

GM and the union are negotiating at a time of troubling uncertainty for the U.S. auto industry.

Driven up by the longest economic expansion in American history, auto sales appear to have peaked and are heading down. Long-term challenges also loom: GM and other carmakers are struggling to make the transition to electric vehicles.

Meanwhile, President Donald Trump's trade war with China and his tariffs on imported steel and aluminum have raised costs for auto companies. A revamped North American free trade deal is stalled in Congress, raising doubts about the future of America's trade in autos and auto parts with Canada and Mexico, which last year came to \$257 billion.

"The trade picture has complicated things," said Jonathan Smoke, chief economist at Cox Automotive.

One of the main sticking points is health care. GM is looking to cut its costs, but workers say they shouldn't have to pay more because the company is making billions in profits. Union workers pay about 4% of their health care costs, but employees of large companies in the U.S. pay an average of 34%, according to the Kaiser Family Foundation.

Tina Black, who finishes up 10-speed automatic transmissions at a GM engine and transmission factory in the Detroit suburb of Romulus, said health insurance is the most important issue to her, and she doesn't want GM to change anything.

The factory workers, she said, work 10 to 12 hours doing the same repetitive tasks, which can cause

injuries.

"It breaks down your body," said Black, of Garden City, Michigan. "In order to take care of ourselves, we need that."

On Sunday, GM said it offered pay raises and \$7 billion worth of U.S. factory investments resulting in 5,400 new positions, a minority of which would be filled by existing employees. The company also said it offered higher profit sharing, "nationally leading" health benefits and an \$8,000 payment to each worker upon ratification.

In addition, GM pledged to build a new all-electric pickup truck at a factory in Detroit and open an electric vehicle battery plant in Lordstown, Ohio, according to a person who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity. The person was not authorized to disclose details of the negotiations.

The new factory would be in addition to a proposal to make electric vehicles for a company called Workhorse, the person said.

It's unclear how many workers the two plants would employ. The closures, especially of the Ohio plant, have become issues in the 2020 presidential campaign. President Donald Trump has consistently criticized the company and demanded that Lordstown be reopened.

Gary Chaison, professor emeritus of industrial relations at Clark University in Massachusetts, expects the strike to end within a week. He sees it as more of a message to show how effective the union is, especially for nonunion workers who might be asked to join the UAW.

GM's offers, he said, seem to be pretty good, so the strike is a mystery to him. "I can't see a prolonged strike coming out of this," he said. "I think there's too much to lose and not enough to gain."

Under the pressure of rising tariffs, manufacturers everywhere are struggling. J.P. Morgan found that global manufacturing shrank in August for the fourth straight month, the longest losing streak since 2012. The Institute for Supply Management, an association of purchasing managers, reported this month that American factory output fell in August for the first time in three years.

Jeff Schuster of LMC Automotive has forecast that U.S. auto sales will drop 1.7% this year from 2018 — though they will remain solid at 17 million cars and trucks sold.

The strike shut down 33 GM manufacturing plants in nine states across the U.S., as well as 22 parts-distribution warehouses. It's the first national strike by the union since a two-day walkout in 2007 that had little impact on the company.

Workers at Fiat Chrysler and Ford continued working under contract extensions. Any agreement reached with GM will serve as a template for talks with the other two companies.

GM shares recovered Tuesday after falling more than 4% Monday. GM closed Tuesday up 2.9% at \$38.29.

Associated Press writers John Seewer in Toledo, Ohio, and Paul Wiseman in Washington contributed to this report.

Migrants say they face danger before court in Texas tents

By MARIA VERZA and JOHN L. MONE Associated Press

NUEVO LAREDO, Mexico (AP) — Abel Oset was seized with panic. After an 11-country odyssey that began when he and his namesake son fled Cuba, and included a moment on U.S. soil, he was crossing back into America.

But he wasn't sure he'd be able to stay.

The two were going to plead their case in a court set up inside a tent in Laredo, Texas, beamed via video conference to a judge in another city — the latest attempt to clear a massive backlog of asylum cases.

They were among more than 100 migrants on Tuesday's docket — though only 38 had arrived. So much depended on this hearing; Oset dreaded the very real possibility that he and his 22-year-old son would be sent back over the international bridge, back to Nuevo Laredo, in Tamaulipas, and its cartels and violence.

Awaiting his hearing in the pre-dawn hours, Oset lay on the floor of a migration building. He spoke of the criminals who stalk the bridge, picking off migrants. He and his son were targeted by kidnappers twice

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but had no money and were turned loose with warnings not to return.

"Those who arrive are being taken, one by one," he said.

Some migrants awaiting hearings arrived at the bridge before sunset Monday from Monterrey, hundreds of miles from the border. Others left city hostels early to avoid moving at night.

At least 42,000 migrants have been forced back into Mexico after crossing the border, according to the U.S. government. Many of them say they fled violence or threats in their home countries and hope to get asylum.

The Department of Homeland Security has said it planned to spend \$155 million to build and operate the tent courts but expects the costs to be less. But critics have denounced the proceedings because they are closed to the public and difficult for attorneys to access.

President Donald Trump's top lieutenants on immigration and border enforcement toured the tent complex in Laredo on Tuesday, defending the "remain in Mexico" policy. The complex includes several rooms where court hearings are held, people wait and children can read storybooks in Spanish.

During the tour, there were 15 immigrants in a processing room and two dozen in a room where migrants await a decision on their case. With the temperature outside approaching 100 degrees, air conditioning units blasted cold air through the tents, creating a din that makes it difficult to hear.

Many of the migrants making court appearances complain of the dangers they face as they are forced to wait in crime-ridden Nuevo Laredo. The U.S. government has warned Americans not to travel to the area, citing safety concerns.

Acting Homeland Security Secretary Kevin McAleenan defended the "remain in Mexico" policy, calling it a reasonable alternative to separating and detaining families in the U.S.

"You are seeing a team effort across four agencies and two departments to run an expeditious lawful process so that families are staying together during their process so that they can wait in a non-detained setting for their hearing," he said.

"We're getting more integrity into the system to deter those who don't have valid claims from making the journey," McAleenan added.

For Trump, curbing immigration remains his signature issue, and his administration also is dealing with a massive increase in migrants, mostly Central American families, that has strained the immigration system. A major aim of these programs is to deter people from coming to the southern border.

Mexico has cracked down on migrants coming to its southern border, and the U.S. is working on diplomatic agreements with other Central American countries.

The U.S. Supreme Court last week made it vastly more difficult for people to win asylum, allowing the new rules into effect during litigation challenging them. The rules bar anyone who passed through another country from claiming asylum, though some other protections may still be available.

Oset hoped that because he came before July 16, when the regulations came into effect, he would pass. But he also had to convince the judge he was afraid not only to return to his home country, but to Mexico.

"I fall into the old law, and I think that can help us," he said.

He got lucky; he and his son were allowed into the U.S., but 10 other adults and three children in the group were returned.

The two arrived at the U.S.-Mexico border in April. They fled Cuba when a neighbor reported him to state security for watching a documentary about the Castro family's possessions, and he was beaten, Oset said. He was returned to Mexico to wait for his asylum hearing.

Immigrants and advocates trying to help in Mexican border cities have reported families sleeping in overcrowded shelters, boarding houses or outdoor camps. Many have been bused south by Mexico to cities considered safer, though there was no guarantee that they would be able to return.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Border Patrol's Rio Grande Valley chief recently testified that the agency was sending more than 1,000 migrants a week to Tamaulipas.

Margarita Arredondo, pastor of an evangelistic church, converted her home into a shelter and helps migrants make their hearings.

"You have to give them protection because Mexico is not a safe country, that is very clear," she said. According to data from Mexican Foreign Minister Marcelo Ebrard, nearly half of those who were sent to Mexico from the U.S. returned to their homes.

"They don't want us anywhere — Mexicans reject us, too," said a 29-year-old Honduran woman who spoke only on condition of anonymity because she was afraid.

She says she has just learned about the murder of a friend in Intibucá, where she fled, leaving two children behind with her mother because the gangs threatened her.

She has no documents, common among migrants who flee their homes quickly out of fear.

Her eyes fill with tears when asked what she will do if she is returned to Nuevo Laredo.

"God will see," she said.

Mone reported from Laredo, Texas. Associated Press Writer Colleen Long contributed to this report from Washington.

Trump outpaces Obama, Bush in naming ex-lobbyists to Cabinet

By RICHARD LARDNER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — In less than three years, President Donald Trump has named more former lobbyists to Cabinet-level posts than his most recent predecessors did in eight, putting a substantial amount of oversight in the hands of people with ties to the industries they're regulating.

The Cabinet choices are another sign that Trump's populist pledge to "drain the swamp" is a catchy campaign slogan but not a serious attempt to change the way Washington works. Instead of staring down "the unholy alliance of lobbyists and donors and special interests" as Trump recently declared, the influence industry has flourished during his administration.

The amount spent in 2019 on lobbying the U.S. government is on pace to match or exceed last year's total of \$3.4 billion, the most since 2010, according to the political money website Open Secrets. Trump also has pulled in hefty contributions from industries with business before his administration, and his hotel near the White House has been a magnet for lobbyists and foreign interests since he was elected.

"An administration staffed by former industry lobbyists will almost certainly favor industry over the general public, because that's the outlook they're bringing to the job," said Lee Drutman, a senior fellow in the political reform program at the think tank New America and author of the book "The Business of America is Lobbying."

Former lobbyists run the Defense and Interior departments, Environmental Protection Agency and office of the U.S. Trade Representative. The acting Labor secretary, Pat Pizzella, is a former lobbyist and Trump's pick to run the department, Eugene Scalia, also is an ex-lobbyist. Scalia's confirmation hearing before a GOP-controlled Senate committee is scheduled for Thursday and Democrats are expected to grill him on his long record of opposing federal regulations .

A seventh ex-lobbyist, Dan Coats, resigned as Trump's intelligence chief in August.

President Barack Obama had five former lobbyists in his Cabinet during two terms in office and President George W. Bush had three, also during eight years in the White House, according to lobbying and foreign agent disclosure records. The review was limited to the Trump, Obama and Bush administrations because prior to 1995 there was no central database of federal lobbying registrations and the law was hazy about who was supposed to register.

Shortly after taking office, Trump signed an executive order that revoked an Obama directive prohibiting lobbyists from being appointed to a post at a federal agency they'd lobbied within the last two years. While this "cooling off" period was cast aside, Trump's order continued to bar for two years lobbyists-turned-government-employees from participating in particular matters that they'd lobbied on during the two preceding years.

"Without the cooling off period, these Cabinet heads appear to be serving their former employers' and clients' special interests," said Virginia Canter, chief ethics counsel of the watchdog group Citizens for

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Responsibility and Ethics in Washington.

The White House did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Trump's Cabinet includes the heads of the 15 executive departments and seven other senior-level posts, such as EPA administrator and director of national intelligence. Obama's Cabinet had the same number of members and Bush's Cabinet had two fewer.

Scalia, the Labor Department nominee, has spent much of his career as a partner in the Washington office of the Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher firm, where he ran up a string of victories in court cases on behalf of business interests challenging labor and financial regulations. Scalia, the son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, served for a year as the Labor Department's top lawyer during the George W. Bush administration.

His financial disclosure report lists 49 clients who paid him \$5,000 or more for legal services, including e-cigarette giant Juul Labs, Facebook, Walmart and Bank of America. Disclosure records show Scalia was registered in 2010 and 2011 to lobby for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce.

Pizzella has been the acting secretary since Alexander Acosta resigned the post in July amid renewed criticism of how, as a federal prosecutor, he handled a 2008 secret plea deal with wealthy financier Jeffrey Epstein.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Pizzella lobbied for clients that ranged from Microsoft Corp. to the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. He also worked on several accounts with disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff, although Pizzella was never accused of any misconduct or wrongdoing.

Obama chose Pizzella for a GOP seat on the Federal Labor Relations Authority and he was an assistant labor secretary during the George W. Bush administration.

Two Trump Cabinet officials, Interior Secretary David Bernhardt and Environmental Protection Agency Administrator Andrew Wheeler, have been accused by congressional Democrats and public interest groups of failing to honor their ethics pledges.

Both Bernhardt and Wheeler, backed by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, have played leading roles in the administration's rollback of environmental regulations. They also both worked at the agency they now lead during prior administrations.

Interior's inspector general launched an investigation of Bernhardt earlier this year after receiving seven separate ethics allegations against him. A complaint filed by the nonprofit Campaign Legal Center alleged that shortly after joining the department in August 2017 Bernhardt became involved in matters that were the focus of his lobbying for California's Westlands Water District that lasted until mid-November 2016.

Westlands has federal contracts to provide irrigation water to 700 family-owned farms in the fertile San Joaquin Valley. The complaint said Bernhardt had "lobbied on discrete provisions of a law directing Interior to maximize water supplies to his clients, and to minimize Endangered Species Act protections in that region."

Then, after joining Interior, Bernhardt breached his ethics pledge by directing government officials under him "to advance the particular matters he had previously lobbied on," according to the complaint.

"It is very hard to tell where Bernhardt's lobbying career ended and where his public service begins," said Brendan Fischer, director of the Campaign Legal Center's federal reform program.

An Interior spokesman said in a statement, "Secretary Bernhardt is and always has been committed to upholding his ethical responsibilities, and he has fully complied with those obligations."

Thomas Birmingham, Westlands' general manager, said the agency is actually disadvantaged with Bernhardt as secretary because he's not been able to engage with him as he did past Interior secretaries, like Ken Salazar and Sally Jewell.

"I don't know what Mr. Bernhardt has done or has not done at Interior," Birmingham said.

Wheeler worked as a lobbyist for eight years and his more than 20 different clients included coal magnate Bob Murray, who pushed hard on the Trump administration to grant a series of breaks for the sagging domestic coal industry.

"I think he's doing a great job," Betsy Monseu, CEO of the American Coal Council, said of Wheeler. "We're

pleased to see the regulatory reform agenda moving forward.”

But Canter’s organization, known as CREW, urged the EPA inspector general earlier this year to investigate whether Wheeler broke his ethics pledge. Among the allegations, CREW said Wheeler had participated in the easing of standards for storing coal ash in 2018 even though he had lobbied on those regulations the year before for Murray Energy.

The inspector general’s office declined to say if it had open an investigation, directing a reporter to file a Freedom of Information Act request.

An EPA statement called CREW’s complaint “baseless and just flat out false.” It said Wheeler works closely with career EPA ethics officials and abides by all ethics requirements.

The Pentagon’s top official, Mark Esper, spent seven years lobbying for defense industry juggernaut Raytheon, a company that stands to gain handsomely from Trump’s push to boost military spending by billions of dollars. The company closed out 2018 by hitting a record \$27.1 billion in net sales, up nearly seven percent from the \$25.3 billion the year before.

Esper, who was secretary of the Army when Trump chose him to be defense secretary, faced opposition from only a handful of Democrats and he was confirmed in July by a 90-8 margin.

As Army secretary, Esper hasn’t participated in Raytheon-related matters under the terms of an ethics agreement that runs through this November. After that, Esper told Pentagon ethics officials that he will continue to avoid Raytheon issues unless his participation as defense secretary is determined to be essential.

Robert Lighthizer, the U.S. Trade Representative, lobbied primarily for steel companies between 1999 and 2003. Beginning in 2004, he represented just one company, U.S. Steel, which paid his firm, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom, \$3.2 million over a seven-year period.

Associated Press researcher Rhonda Shafner in New York contributed to this report.

‘Blood money’? Purdue settlement would rely on opioid sales

By GEOFF MULVIHILL and CLAIRE GALOFARO Associated Press

The tentative multibillion-dollar settlement with OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma would raise money to help clean up the opioid mess by ... selling more OxyContin.

That would amount to blood money, in the opinion of some critics. And it’s one reason two dozen states have rejected the deal.

“The settlement agreement basically requires the settlement payments to be made based on the future sales and profits of opioids. That doesn’t really feel to me like the right way to do this,” Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker said this week.

Massachusetts is among several states that have pledged to continue pushing back in court against the company and especially members of the Sackler family, which owns Purdue. On Tuesday, North Carolina became the latest state to sue the Sacklers.

Stamford, Connecticut-based Purdue, cast as a major villain in the opioid crisis in some 2,600 lawsuits brought by state, local and tribal governments, hospitals, unions and others, filed for bankruptcy Sunday in the first step toward putting the settlement into effect.

Under the deal, valued by Purdue at potentially more than \$10 billion over time, the Sacklers would give up ownership of the company, and it would be reconstituted as a “public benefit trust.” Its profits from opioids, as well as from overdose antidotes and addiction-treatment drugs, would go toward the settlement.

While OxyContin and other prescription drugs like it have what are widely accepted as legitimate medical uses — namely, relieving severe pain — activists and others are troubled by the prospect of the continued sale of Purdue’s opioids in the U.S. and overseas.

“It’s blood money paying for blood money,” said Lynn Wencus, of Wrentham, Massachusetts, whose son Jeff died at 33 of an overdose in 2017. “It’s ludicrous. The whole thing would be almost comical if we weren’t talking about human lives here.”

Opioids, including painkillers like OxyContin and street drugs like heroin and fentanyl, have been blamed

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for more than 400,000 deaths in the U.S. in the last two decades.

"It's disgraceful," said Ed Bisch, of Pennsauken, New Jersey, who was among the first parents to take on Purdue. His son died of an OxyContin overdose at 18 in 2001. "If they keep on selling OxyContin, there's going to be more and more accidental addicts."

Key lawyers for the local governments have agreed to the tentative deal, as have 24 states, which envision using the money for addiction treatment programs, among other purposes. Twenty-four other states have rejected the settlement. A federal bankruptcy judge can decide whether to approve it, reject it or ask for changes.

This wouldn't be the first time continuing sales of a troublesome product were used to fund a settlement over its toll. More than 20 years ago, the big tobacco companies settled with the states in a deal that partially based their payments on cigarette sales.

Those payments continue to this day. By last year, the master settlement with 46 states had resulted in a payout of \$126 billion, with continuing payments of \$9 billion a year. As part of the settlement, the tobacco companies agreed to tough restrictions on the use of cartoon characters, product giveaways and billboards.

Prescription opioids are often given to cancer patients in severe pain at the end of their lives and people who have been in accidents or undergone surgery.

If Purdue stopped selling opioids, it might not have a big effect on the supply of the drugs nationally. The company accounts for only a small slice of the market; the vast majority of the opioid pills sold are generics.

Ryan Hampton, who is a Los Angeles-based advocate for people with addiction and is in recovery himself for an opioid habit that he said began with prescriptions for OxyContin, is outraged over the settlement as a whole but said the continued sale of the drug is not the biggest problem.

"The medicine itself is not inherently evil," Hampton said. Besides, he said, "This money is going to have to come from somewhere or there's no money at all."

Like others, Hampton said the settlement doesn't do enough to hold the Sacklers and Purdue accountable and won't deliver enough guaranteed money. (The Sacklers have agreed to put in \$3 billion, plus up to \$1.5 billion from the sale of their Mundipharma business, which sells opioids around the world.)

If Purdue were to continue selling opioids, the new board running the company, he said, could have representatives from the public health and addiction-advocacy worlds, and restrictive policies on how the drugs would be promoted to doctors.

On the other hand, if the drugs were marketed more strictly, there would be less money for the governments suing Purdue.

Mulvihill reported from Cherry Hill, New Jersey; Galofaro reported from Louisville, Kentucky. Associated Press writers Steve LeBlanc in Boston and Michelle Price in Las Vegas contributed to this article.

Follow Mulvihill at <http://www.twitter.com/geoffmulvihill> and Galofaro at <http://www.twitter.com/claireregalo>

Cokie Roberts, longtime political journalist, dies at 75

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Cokie Roberts, the daughter of politicians and a pioneering journalist who chronicled Washington from Jimmy Carter to Donald Trump for NPR and ABC News, died Tuesday of complications from breast cancer. She was 75.

ABC broke into network programming to announce her death and politicians including former presidents George W. Bush and Barack Obama offered sympathy.

Roberts devoted most of her attention to covering Congress, where her father Hale Boggs was a House majority leader who died in 1972 when his plane went missing over Alaska. Her mother, Lindy Boggs, took over his Louisiana congressional seat and served until 1990, later becoming ambassador to the Vatican.

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Roberts co-anchored the ABC Sunday political show "This Week" with Sam Donaldson from 1996 to 2002. She was most proud professionally of a series of books about women in Washington. "We Are Our Mother's Daughters" was about the changing roles and relationships of women. She also wrote two books with her husband, Steven Roberts, about marriage and an interfaith family.

"Cokie Roberts was a trailblazer who forever transformed the role of women in the newsroom and in our history books," House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said. "Over five decades of celebrated journalism, Cokie shone a powerful light on the unsung women who built our nation, but whose stories had long gone untold."

Roberts, who earned her nickname because her brother couldn't pronounce "Corinne," grew up primarily in Bethesda, Maryland. She attended Wellesley College, and met her future husband at a conference for student leaders.

"Journalism just kind of happened to me," she said in a 2018 interview with the Television Academy. "It wasn't anything I had planned to do."

But she got her start at a newsletter, worked in local news and filed stories for CBS News from Greece when her husband was stationed there as a correspondent. She was bitten by the bug.

Settling back in Washington in the mid-1970s, she was hired to cover Congress for National Public Radio. Again, it wasn't in the game plan — politics felt like treading familiar ground in a way that didn't interest her — but her background enabled her to understand how Congress worked in a way few outsiders could. And it gave her time to spend with her mother outside of Sunday dinner.

In those days it wasn't unusual for a senator to lean in and put a hand on her knee.

"I would just sort of pick it up and put it on the table say, "I think this belongs to you,"" she recalled. "It's remarkable how long that went on."

Roberts "grew up instinctively understanding the ground she would cover as a journalist, and she used her insider knowledge for the public good," said veteran Rep. John Lewis of Georgia. "She asked tough questions and formed solid opinions that made journalists and newsmakers in Washington lean in whenever she shared her thoughts."

Obama said Roberts was a role model for women at a time the journalism profession was still dominated by men, and was a constant over 40 years of a shifting media landscape and changing world.

His predecessor, former President George W. Bush, and his wife, Laura, called Roberts a talented, tough and fair reporter.

"We respected her drive and appreciated her humor," the former president said. "She became a friend."

While staying at NPR, she started working at PBS on "NewsHour" and in 1988 joined ABC News. She may be the only reporter to file stories for "Morning Edition," "All Things Considered," "World News Tonight" and "Nightline" in a single day, said James Goldston, ABC News president.

After leaving as "This Week" host, she settled into a role as analyst and commentator at both news organizations. She co-wrote a syndicated column with her husband, which got her into some hot water with NPR in 2016 when they called for "the rational wing" of the Republican Party to reject Trump as their presidential candidate.

"I never met her," Trump told reporters Tuesday. "She never treated me nicely. But I would like to wish her family well. She was a professional and I respect professionals."

Roberts lamented in her television academy interview how the 24-hour news cycle meant journalists are under constant pressure to file stories and had less time to report. The only answer is to hire more reporters, and she didn't expect that to happen.

Despite her lifetime around politics, colleagues say she never became consumed by cynicism. She wanted government to work.

"She liked politics and covered it as someone who was not uncritical about it, but was an affectionate student of it," said columnist and former ABC colleague George Will. "As such, she is anthropologically anachronistic, reflective of Washington before tribalism swallowed everything."

Roberts, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2002, kept working nearly to the end. She appeared on "This Week" in August, drawing enough concern about her evident weight loss that she released a

statement saying "I am doing fine" and that she was looking forward to covering next year's election.

She was married to Steven Roberts for 53 years and they had two children, Lee and Rebecca, and six grandchildren.

Associated Press correspondents Hillel Italie in New York and Kevin Freking, aboard Air Force One, contributed to this report.

Giants bench Eli Manning, name Daniel Jones starting QB

By TOM CANAVAN AP Sports Writer

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J. (AP) — Eli Manning's long and distinguished reign as the New York Giants' starting quarterback is seemingly over. Let the Daniel Jones era begin.

Coach Pat Shurmur announced Tuesday that the No. 6 overall pick in the NFL draft is replacing the two-time Super Bowl MVP as the Giants' quarterback, beginning Sunday at Tampa Bay.

The move comes less than 24 hours after Shurmur refused to say Manning would remain the starter following two straight losses, the sixth time in seven years New York has gotten off to a 0-2 start.

The 38-year-old Manning has been the Giants' starter since replacing Kurt Warner after nine games in the 2004 season, the year Manning was traded to New York by San Diego after it took him with the No. 1 overall pick.

Manning led the Giants to Super Bowl titles following the 2007 and '11 seasons, beating Tom Brady and the Patriots both times.

"Eli and I spoke this morning," Shurmur said. "I told him that we are making a change and going with Daniel as the starter. I also talked to Daniel. Eli was obviously disappointed, as you would expect, but he said he would be what he has always been, a good teammate, and continue to prepare to help this team win games. Daniel understands the challenge at hand, and he will be ready to play on Sunday."

The Giants players had Tuesday off and Manning was not available for comment.

Manning is in the final year of a four-year, \$84 million contract that includes a no-trade clause. His salary cap hit this season is \$23.2 million.

In two games, Manning completed 56 of 89 passes for 556 yards, two touchdowns and two interceptions for a passer rating of 78.7. But the Giants have scored only four touchdowns, despite averaging 420 yards.

Veteran receiver Golden Tate missed the first two games serving a four-game suspension for using performance enhancers and go-to guy Sterling Shepard was out this past weekend with a concussion.

"Ultimately, this is a move that I felt was best for this team at this time," said Shurmur, who is in his second season with the Giants. "I have said it since I got here, I am very fond of Eli. His work ethic, his preparation, his football intelligence. All those attributes are as good as I have ever seen in a player. And Eli worked as hard as you could ask of anybody to get ready for this season. This move is more about Daniel moving forward than about Eli."

The question of when Jones would take over has been a constant topic since the Giants drafted him. It gained momentum when the 22-year-old Duke product completed 29 of 34 passes for 416 yards, two touchdowns, no interceptions in the preseason. His 137.2 quarterback rating was the best in the league.

Jones is much more mobile than Manning and will be able to extend plays with his legs. Manning has been a sitting target for opponents once they get past the O-line. Jones also has shown a good touch with his deep throws.

The hint of an impending change surfaced Monday and a day later, Shurmur benched the man who has been the face of the organization for the past 15-plus years.

Manning, who is playing in a team-record 16th season with the Giants, knew the change was a possibility.

"We're 0-2 and you are looking for answers," he said Monday. "I get it, we drafted a guy early and you are not winning games, these things are going to come up. I just have to keep working and do whatever my job is."

On Sunday, his job will be as Jones' backup.

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Some former teammates were upset with the move.

"So incredibly Disappointed & Frustrated with the @Giants Right now. Defense gives up 63 Points in 2 Games & WR Group is depleted but let's Change our QB??" said Shaun O'Hara, the center of the '07 champions.

"I'll take my QB six days a week and twice on Sundays!!" said tight end Kevin Boss, who also played in '07.

Earlier this season, general manager Dave Gettleman said he favored the 'Kansas City' model when asked about having a young quarterback. He was referring to Patrick Mahomes, who spent his first season as a backup to Alex Smith, and took over last year.

Giants co-owner John Mara said before the season his hope was Manning would play well enough to remain the starter the whole season.

That obviously didn't happen.

Jones will be the third of the 11 quarterbacks selected in this year's draft to both play and start a game. Kyler Murray, the first overall selection by Arizona, started the Cardinals' first two games. Gardner Minshew, a sixth-round selection by Jacksonville out of Washington State, started the Jaguars' loss Sunday in Houston as a replacement for the injured Nick Foles.

Manning has started 232 of the Giants' past 233 regular-season games. The loss Sunday to the Bills dropped his record to .500 at 116-116.

Manning started 210 consecutive regular-season games from Nov. 21, 2004 to Nov. 23, 2017, the second-longest streak by a quarterback in NFL history. Only Brett Favre (297) started more consecutive games. Manning did not play on Dec. 3, 2017, at Oakland when then-coach Ben McAdoo started Geno Smith instead.

McAdoo and general manager Jerry Reese were fired the next day and Manning returned to running the team, starting the past 22 games.

Manning holds all of the Giants' career passing records, including attempts (8,061, which places him sixth in NFL history), completions (4,860, sixth), passing yards (56,537, seventh) and touchdown passes (362, eighth).

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

US economy could shrug off oil prices if disruption is brief

By DAVID KOENIG Associated Press

DALLAS (AP) — The price of gasoline crept higher after a weekend attack devastated Saudi Arabian oil output, but if the disruption to global supplies is short-lived, the impact on the U.S. economy will probably be modest.

Prices spiked Monday by more than 14%, their biggest single-day jump in years, but retreated Tuesday, reversing some of the increase. U.S. oil fell nearly 5% to \$59.96 a barrel, while Brent, the international benchmark, dropped 5.3% to \$65.34.

A gallon of regular in the U.S. stood at \$2.59 on Tuesday, up 3 cents from the previous day, according to the AAA auto club. Analysts warned that pump prices could rise as much as 25 cents in the coming weeks, but it all depends on how quickly Saudi Arabia returns to normal production.

Tuesday's reversal in prices came as Saudi Arabia's energy minister reported that 50% of the production cut by the attack had been restored. Prince Abdulaziz bin Salman said full production would resume by the end of the month.

Even before Tuesday's reversal in prices, economists downplayed the prospect that the price spike could send the economy reeling. After all, Monday's surge only put prices back where they had been in May.

The attack knocked about 5% of the world crude supply offline. Oil prices have been trending mostly lower since spring because of concern about weak demand due to slowing economic growth.

Analysts say oil prices did not fully account for the risk posed by tension in the Middle East, but they will now. Iranian-backed Houthi rebels in Yemen claimed credit for the strike on Saudi oil facilities, but the Trump administration blamed Iran itself. The attack exposed the vulnerability of Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure.

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Higher oil prices mean more costly gasoline, and that will sap consumers' ability to spend on clothes, travel and restaurant meals. It will hit people who drive for a living.

Brian Alectine, a New York-based driver for the ride-hailing apps Lyft and Juno, said a 5- or 10-cent bump in the price of gasoline wouldn't be too bad, but an increase of 25 cents a gallon would make it hard to earn a profit after expenses, including the monthly rent on the car he drives for work.

"The more you drive, the more gas you use," Alectine said. "It will have a big impact."

AAA said the nationwide average price of gasoline could rise 25 cents this month. Patrick DeHaan, an analyst for price-tracking app GasBuddy, predicted an increase of 10 to 20 cents a gallon. He saw reports of price spikes and people rushing to top off their tanks.

"I'm not sure where this panic is coming from," DeHaan said. "There will be an increase, but prices will still remain over a dollar cheaper than they were earlier this decade."

Any drag on the economy from lower consumer spending would be at least partially offset by increased investment in oil and gas production, according to several leading economists.

Gregory Daco, chief economist at Oxford Economics, estimated that the net effect could be a decline of about one-tenth of a percentage point in U.S. economic growth, which was 2.0% in the second quarter.

"An oil price shock will weigh on consumer spending and will add a further strain on the global economy, but we're not talking about a major price shock at this level," he said, while acknowledging that the situation could escalate if tension increases between the U.S. and Iran — a major producer whose output has been greatly squeezed by Trump administration sanctions.

U.S. crude poked above \$100 a barrel in stretches between 2011 and mid-2014, yet the economy did not fall into recession. Brent peaked above \$140 a barrel in July 2008, which some economists believe was an overlooked contributor to the Great Recession, which is more often linked to a financial crisis and, in the U.S., a housing-market bubble. Brent more than doubled in a few months after Iraq invaded Kuwait, another large oil producer, in 1990.

The United States was far more dependent on imported oil in 1990. Saudi Arabia remains the world's biggest oil exporter, but the United States recently eclipsed both Saudi Arabia and Russia to become the world's largest producer.

That makes the impact of higher oil prices on the U.S. economy much more mixed. Even as consumers and certain industries pay more for fuel, higher oil prices will be good for the U.S. energy industry and states where oil is produced, including Texas, New Mexico and North Dakota.

The stock market has highlighted which sectors will be helped or hurt by higher oil prices. On Monday, shares of oil producers surged, naturally, while stocks in airline, cruise and retail companies generally fell. Delivery giants UPS and FedEx dipped. They consume lots of fuel, and their business will suffer if higher energy prices cause consumers to reduce their online shopping.

For airlines, fuel is their second biggest cost behind only labor. Airlines were surprisingly adept at adapting to the last big run-up in fuel prices, but it takes them time to raise fares high enough to cover the extra cost.

American Airlines burned more than 4.4 billion gallons of fuel last year at a cost of nearly \$10 billion, including taxes. On Monday, its shares fell 7.3%, more sharply than other carriers. Unlike most others, American doesn't buy derivative investments as a hedge against fuel spikes, and its relatively heavy debt load leaves it vulnerable if the economy slows for any reason, including a jump in energy prices.

American estimates that over a full year, each penny increase in the price of fuel costs it \$45 million. The price went up about 15 cents a gallon over the weekend.

If the fuel price increase persists for even a few weeks, analysts said, it could cause airlines to rethink their aggressive growth plans for 2020.

Ryan Sweet, an economist at Moody's Analytics, said U.S. consumers are in good shape to handle a temporary increase in gasoline prices — with some savings, a tight job market and accelerating wage growth. Consumer psychology, however, can be difficult to predict.

"I don't think this increase in oil prices ... would be enough to single-handedly tip us into a recession," he said. "The one cause for concern is that the consumer is carrying the economy. If the consumer starts

to pack it in, the recession odds increase quite significantly.”

Associated Press Business Writer Cathy Bussewitz in New York contributed to this report.

High drama at UK Supreme Court in Brexit challenge case

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government and its opponents faced off Tuesday at the U.K. Supreme Court in a high-stakes legal drama over Brexit that will determine whether new Prime Minister Boris Johnson broke the law by suspending Parliament at a crucial time ahead of Britain’s impending departure from the European Union.

As pro-EU and pro-Brexit protesters exchanged shouts outside the court building on London’s Parliament Square, the government’s opponents argued that Johnson illegally shut down Parliament just weeks before the country is due to leave the 28-nation bloc for the “improper purpose” of dodging lawmakers’ scrutiny of his Brexit plans. They also accused Johnson of misleading Queen Elizabeth II, whose formal approval was needed to suspend the legislature.

The government countered that, under Britain’s largely unwritten constitution, the suspension was a matter for politicians, not the courts.

Government lawyer Richard Keen said judges in a lower court had “nakedly entered the political arena” by ruling on the matter.

“The court is not equipped to decide what is a legitimate political consideration,” he said.

Johnson sent lawmakers home on Sept. 9 until Oct. 14, which is barely two weeks before the scheduled Oct. 31 Brexit day. A ruling against the government by the country’s top court could force him to recall Parliament.

Johnson hasn’t said what he will do if the judges rule the suspension illegal. He told the BBC on Monday he would “wait and see what they say.”

Keen promised that “the prime minister will take any necessary steps to comply with any declaration made by the court.” But he had no answer when judges asked if Johnson might recall Parliament on the court’s order, only to suspend it again.

“I’m not in a position to comment on that,” he said.

The prime minister says Britain must leave the EU at the end of next month with or without a divorce deal. But many U.K. lawmakers believe a no-deal Brexit would be economically devastating and socially destabilizing, and are determined to thwart him.

Lawyer David Pannick, who represents one of the campaigners challenging the government, told 11 Supreme Court judges that Johnson had improperly suspended the legislature “to silence Parliament ... because he sees Parliament as an obstacle to the furtherance of his political aims.”

Johnson says the suspension is routine, and will allow his government to launch its domestic agenda with a new session of Parliament. But the decision outraged many lawmakers, who say it’s designed to prevent them from challenging Johnson’s push for Brexit in October “do or die.”

The suspension sparked legal challenges, to which lower courts have given contradictory rulings. England’s High Court said the move was a political rather than legal matter, but Scottish court judges ruled last week that Johnson acted illegally “to avoid democratic scrutiny.”

The Supreme Court is being asked to decide who was right, in a case scheduled to last up to three days. It is considering two questions: Is this a matter for the courts; and, if so, did the government break the law?

The government denies misconduct. Its lawyers argued in a written submission that the issue is “intrinsically one of high policy and politics, not law.”

Keen, acting for the government, told the court that the Scottish judges “have simply gone where the court should not go.”

Keen insisted there was nothing improper in the government’s behavior. He said there were previous cases of British governments suspending Parliament “for political reasons” and for “extensive periods of time.”

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But Pannick, attorney for transparency advocate Gina Miller, told the court it was a fundamental constitutional principle that "Parliament is sovereign and the executive is accountable to Parliament."

He said the five-week suspension of Parliament was the longest for decades, and called it "remarkable" that the prime minister had not submitted a witness statement to the court outlining his reasons. He said, in the absence of a sworn statement, "we say the court should infer that there is no answer" to the allegation that Johnson acted improperly.

Pannick, however, stressed that he wasn't criticizing Britain's 93-year-old monarch in the case. "Her majesty acted on the advice of her prime minister," he said.

The case is the latest twist in a Brexit saga that has divided British politicians and the public for more than three years, since the country narrowly voted in 2016 to leave the EU.

Protesters with signs reading "reopen Parliament" and "defend our democracy" rallied outside the courthouse across from the Houses of Parliament, alongside a performer painted green and wearing a blond wig who called himself "The Incredible Sulk." Johnson told a newspaper over the weekend that the U.K. would break free of the EU "like the Hulk."

They were joined by a smaller group of pro-Brexit demonstrators, who shouted that their rivals were "traitors."

The brash prime minister insists Britain must leave the EU on Oct. 31 with or without a divorce agreement, though he says he believes he can strike a deal with the bloc in time for an orderly departure.

But the EU says Britain has yet to offer any "legally operational" solutions to the problem of keeping goods and people flowing freely across the Irish border, the main roadblock to a deal.

Despite Johnson's insistence Monday that U.K. and EU negotiators were set to meet daily, the EU said no talks were scheduled.

European Commission spokeswoman Mina Andreeva said "once there are meetings to announce we will do this."

And the leader of the European Parliament's biggest party group said Tuesday that "no progress" was being made in Brexit talks.

"There is no proposal from the British side on the table, "Manfred Weber, who heads the center-right European People's Party bloc, said in Strasbourg.

Associated Press writer Lorne Cook in Brussels contributed to this report.

Follow AP's full coverage of Brexit and British politics at: <https://www.apnews.com/Brexit>

Emmy Predictions: Amid newcomers, will 'Thrones' slay again?

By LYNN ELBER and MARK KENNEDY Associated Press

In the Way Too Much TV Era, it truly is an honor just to be nominated.

Imagine that you're working on a television series, one of the many actors, writers and others who give daily thanks for the rise of cable and streaming that has led to gazillions — at least — of shows and growing employment opportunities. Then, besides the possibility of at least your mom spotting you in the vast video sea, you learn that your peers watched and, hallelujah, decreed you Emmy worthy.

Who needs to win? Every nominee, of course, who would prefer to avoid being an also-ran smiling bravely for the cameras. There's also the producers of the Sept. 22 Emmy Awards ceremony and Fox, the network airing it, with an event to sell.

"Game of Thrones," "Veep" and "When They See Us" look like front-runners but the outcome is anyone's guess. AP Television Writer Lynn Elber and Entertainment Writer Mark Kennedy's offer theirs in the top categories.

DRAMA SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: "Pose." An opulent, clear-eyed embrace of the late-20th-century LGBTQ ballroom scene

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deserves its due.

Will win: "Game of Thrones." A landmark show that brought cinematic sweep to TV gets a big farewell, finale naysayers be damned.

KENNEDY:

Should win: Agreed on "Pose," a loving look at a world that has never been celebrated on TV before, starring the largest LGBTQ cast ever for a scripted series.

Will win: "Pose" is up against the behemoth "Game of Thrones," which triggered parodies and homages, memes and talk show publicity. Even the president tried to co-opt its tagline "Winter Is Coming." The Emmy is coming.

COMEDY SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: "Fleabag." Such shocking sexual abandon and emotional dysfunction is downright un-American. Three cheers for this British invasion!

Will win: "Veep." A three-for-three winner won't be defeated in its last hurrah, especially when politics are all the rage.

KENNEDY:

Should win: The second season of "Fleabag" — with a woman resisting her feelings for a priest — and the debut of "Russian Doll" — in which a New Yorker keeps reliving the night of her 36th birthday — were deeply worthy of wins for writing and originality.

Will win: "Veep," the safe and more popular choice. But Emmy voters may learn to regret this predictable decision.

ACTOR, DRAMA SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: Billy Porter, "Pose." The Tony-winning actor's performance, by turns brassy, tender and brave, anchors the sprawling drama.

Will win: Billy Porter. He found the TV role he deserved and gets the award he earned.

KENNEDY:

Should win: Yes, yes, yes. Porter is always the best thing in whatever he's in and he's truly fierce in "Pose." But did enough people watch?

Will win: Kit Harington, buffeted by the waves of "Game of Thrones" nostalgia, will give a knightly farewell to Jon Snow with a statuette.

ACTRESS, DRAMA SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: Sandra Oh, "Killing Eve." A tour-de-force performance of vulnerability and, to her character's dismay, brutality.

Will win: Sandra Oh. Deserved, history-making recognition as she becomes the first actress of Asian descent to win a lead actress trophy. Also makes up for her five "Grey's Anatomy" supporting nods without wins.

KENNEDY:

Should win: The mouse to Sandra Oh's cat — Jodie Comer. She has, criminally, not earned enough recognition for her special brand of killer.

Will win: Sandra Oh. Especially since there's no Claire Foy from "The Crown" to ruin her night.

ACTOR, COMEDY SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: Bill Hader, "Barry." His scarily winning portrayal of a hit man with a Hollywood dream was voted tops last year and remains deserving.

Will win: Michael Douglas, "The Kominsky Method." The movie star's inner comedian comes out and plays, wowing Emmy voters.

KENNEDY:

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Should win: Hader already has his Emmy. Douglas won a Golden Globe for "The Kominsky Method." The Emmy should go to Anthony Anderson, the beating heart of "black-ish," who makes lovingly exasperated completely hysterical but has been overlooked too long.

Will win: The award clearly will go to Eugene Levy, who is a comedic treasure and rightfully should be showered with awards. His last Emmy was in 1983. It's time, people.

ACTRESS, COMEDY SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: Catherine O'Hara, "Schitt's Creek." Consider it a lifetime achievement award, with her delectably self-absorbed, absurd Moira topping her inventive catalog of characters (and yes, I'm including the Christopher Guest films. Movies, TV — it's all the same now).

Will win: Julia Louis-Dreyfus, "Veep." The queen of TV comedy ("Seinfeld," "The New Adventures of Old Christine," this) will add a record-setting ninth Emmy to her haul, breaking a tie with Cloris Leachman for most-honored performer ever.

KENNEDY:

Should win: Phoebe Waller-Bridge, who in "Fleabag" needs only to look over her shoulder at us, lower her eyes and convey everything that's churning in her complex mind.

Will win: Julia Louis-Dreyfus. Who is silly enough to vote against her?

LIMITED SERIES

ELBER:

Should win: "When They See Us." The superb cast, the unsparing writing, the dismaying currency of a 20-year-old case's implications for American justice and racial inequality demand an Emmy.

Will win: "When They See Us." "Chernobyl" is a deeply worthy competitor, but Emmy voters put domestic concerns first.

KENNEDY:

Should win: In many ways, this category represented the best of TV this season — "Chernobyl," "Escape at Dannemora," "Fosse/Verdon," "When They See Us" and "Sharp Objects." Any is a worthy winner.

Will win: "When They See Us," perhaps the best of this exciting category. It had searing acting, harrowing circumstances and brilliant writing.

Online:

<http://www.emmys.com>

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AP Analysis: Saudi oil attack part of dangerous new pattern

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — The assault on the beating heart of Saudi Arabia's vast oil empire follows a new and dangerous pattern that's emerged across the Persian Gulf this summer of precise attacks that leave few obvious clues as to who launched them.

Beginning in May with the still-unclaimed explosions that damaged oil tankers near the Strait of Hormuz, the region has seen its energy infrastructure repeatedly targeted. Those attacks culminated with Saturday's assault on the world's biggest oil processor in eastern Saudi Arabia, which halved the oil-rich kingdom's production and caused energy prices to spike.

Some strikes have been claimed by Yemen's Houthi rebels, who have been battling a Saudi-led coalition in the Arab world's poorest country since 2015. Their rapidly increasing sophistication fuels suspicion among experts and analysts however that Iran may be orchestrating them — or perhaps even carrying them out itself as the U.S. alleges in the case of Saturday's attack.

"Iran can count on public skepticism to afford it some deniability under any circumstances, but an at-

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tack of this magnitude stands a much greater chance of provoking very severe diplomatic and military consequences," warned Michael Knights, a senior fellow at The Washington Institute for Near East Policy.

For its part, Iran only claimed one attack during this period, the shutdown of a U.S. military surveillance drone it alleges entered its airspace on June 20. It publicly gave medals to the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard members who manned the anti-aircraft battery that downed the drone. It separately has acknowledged seizing oil tankers, the most-prominent one the British-flagged Stena Impero on July 19.

However, the attacks on the oil tankers and the Houthi-claimed assaults on Saudi Arabia's oil infrastructure would match up with previous incidents blamed on Tehran. Experts describe Iran as relying on so-called nonattributable attacks, when blame is difficult to assign given the circumstances.

The reasons for this are severalfold. Since its 1979 Islamic Revolution, Iran has been unable to purchase sophisticated weapons from the West like its Gulf Arab neighbors. Its air force remains replete with pre-revolution, American-made F-4s, F-5s and F-14s, as well as Soviet fighter jets. The U.S. Navy sank half of Iran's operational fleet in a one-day naval battle in 1988 amid the so-called "Tanker War."

While it has built its own missile arsenal, experts say Iran's armed forces would suffer in a head-to-head military confrontation. Launching attacks that can't be easily linked back to Tehran limits the chance of direct retaliation.

Separately, Tehran has worked to grow a network of proxy forces in the Mideast. Iran backs the Lebanese militant group and political party Hezbollah, which offers it a way to pressure Israel, a longtime foe in the region. Iran has worked to do the same with the Houthis, members of a Shiite Zaydi sect who seized the capital, Sanaa, in September 2014. Attacks claimed or attributed to these groups may have involved Tehran directly or indirectly, analysts say.

Those who allege Iran's involvement point to the timing of the attacks coinciding with key moments in the unraveling of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, which President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from on May 8, 2018. That sparked a U.S. sanctions campaign that has cut off much of its oil exports from the international market, amid promises by Iranian officials that no one would be able to export oil from the region if Tehran couldn't.

A year to the day Trump withdrew from the nuclear deal, Iran warned it would begin enriching its uranium closer to weapons-grade levels. Four days later, on May 12, the first mysterious attacks struck oil tankers off the Strait of Hormuz. Two days after that, the Houthis said they struck Saudi Arabia's crucial East-West Pipeline in a drone attack.

As Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei met Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe who carried a message from Trump on June 13, a Japanese oil tanker and another vessel came under attack. A video later released by the U.S. military appeared to show Iranian forces removing a magnetic bomb, known as a limpet mine, from the Japanese vessel, something never explained by Iran. The Guard shot down the U.S. drone on June 20.

Saturday's attack on Saudi Arabia came after Iran further stepped away from the nuclear deal and ahead of the United Nations General Assembly later this month amid speculation of a possible meeting there between Trump and Iranian President Hassan Rouhani. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei on Tuesday squashed the idea of any Trump-Rouhani talks.

Satellite images of the attacked Saudi sites released by the U.S. afterward show damage done largely in a northern direction at the sites. If any attack had come from Yemen, the southern sides the structures would have been damaged, U.S. officials say. To the north across the Persian Gulf lies Iran and Iraq, where Iranian-backed Shiite militias operate. Iraq has denied that the attack came from there. Kuwait, which sits between Iraq and Saudi Arabia and is close to western Iran, separately has acknowledged investigating reports of a drone or low-flying object speeding over the oil-rich country early Saturday just before the Saudi attack.

U.N. investigators have said the Houthis' new UAV-X drone likely has a range of up to 1,500 kilometers (930 miles). That in theory could put the plant and the oil field struck Saturday in range. The U.N., Gulf Arab nations and the U.S. accuse Iran of supplying arms to the Houthis, something Tehran denies.

But Houthi drones typically detonate in the air or when they slam into a target, spraying out shrapnel like buckshot. The Houthis have used their drones in attacks this way in the past, with one captured on video in January exploding over a crowd at a military parade.

The images from Saturday's attack, however, show precise, deeply penetrating hits on structures at the oil processing facility.

"Previous Houthi drone strikes against oil facilities tended to result in quite limited damage which could be an indication that a different weapons system was used this time," said Fabian Hinz, a researcher at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, California.

As authorities probe the Saudi attack, they'll rely on forensic examination of the weapons used to determine what actually struck the site. That, coupled with specifics on damage, may allow investigators to more firmly assign blame in just the latest murky attack in the region.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Jon Gambrell, the news director for the Gulf and Iran for The Associated Press, has reported from each of the Gulf Cooperation Council countries, Iran and other locations across the world since joining the AP in 2006. Follow him on Twitter at www.twitter.com/jongambrellAP.

Biden's abortion shift tests the politics of his faith

By ELANA SCHOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — It was one of the first stress tests of Joe Biden's presidential campaign: A sudden reversal of his decades-long support for restricting federal funding of abortions.

The move seemed sure to hurt the former vice president with Catholics, particularly those in the Midwest, whose support will be critical to winning the Democratic primary and the general election. But so far, Biden has faced little criticism over his shift on abortion funding relative to other aspects of his record, and polls show that he remains Catholic Democrats' overwhelming favorite in the presidential field.

Since the days of John F. Kennedy, Catholic Democrats have wrestled to reconcile their church's teachings with their party's politics. That tension has been especially acute when it comes to abortion, with some bishops threatening to deny communion to then-Sen. John Kerry over his support for abortion rights during his 2004 presidential bid. But the church has faced significant upheaval in the 15 years since then, raising questions about whether Biden's leftward step on abortion is a liability with some voters of faith — or a more minor hurdle at a time when Catholics, like the electorate nationwide, are becoming more politically polarized in the age of President Donald Trump.

Steven Krueger, president of the nonprofit Catholic Democrats, warned that "the far left wing of the party has had influence on a number of issues, particularly on the issue of abortion, that is not going to serve candidates well once they're in the general election."

"And the problem is," Krueger said in an interview, "it's very difficult to kind of tack back to the middle once you take a stand on something as black and white as whether or not you want to repeal" the restrictions on federal abortion funding that Biden abruptly came out against in June.

Biden called for ending those four-decade-old limits on government health care spending on abortion, often referred to as the Hyde Amendment, under heavy fire from his Democratic rivals. He made the move with a subtle nod to the devout Catholicism that had initially informed his pursuit of a "middle ground" on the matter.

"Just as I've never attempted to impose my views on anyone else as to when life begins, I have never attempted to impose my view on who should pay for it," Biden said as he shifted from supporter to opponent of Hyde, which bars federal funds from use on abortion services except cases of rape, incest, or risk to a woman's life.

Biden has demonstrated a deep public connection to his faith, dating to the earliest days of his political career. He regularly attends Mass, has met with both Pope Francis and his predecessor Pope Benedict, and credited Catholicism with helping him heal after his son Beau's death in 2015. Twice last week, during the

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third Democratic debate and while speaking at a historic black church in Birmingham, Biden cited Danish philosopher and theologian Soren Kierkegaard's observation that "faith sees best in the dark."

Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., a friend and ally of Biden's, described the candidate's faith as "deeply personal," adding: "It's sustained him through times as hard as anyone's."

Biden went deeper on the connection between his Catholicism and his stance on abortion during a recent campaign stop at Limestone College in South Carolina, peppering his theological aside with some Latin references.

"I'm prepared to accept for me, personally, doctrine of my church" about when life begins, Biden said, "but I'm not prepared to impose that on every other person." He reiterated his support for codifying *Roe v. Wade* into federal law, if elected.

Abortion is not the only issue on which Biden has split from his church's official stance. He is a longtime backer of LGBTQ rights, including same-sex marriage. And the same phrase he used to describe his new opposition to *Hyde* — "circumstances have changed" — could also apply to the calculus for Catholic voters heading into 2020.

According to AP VoteCast, which surveyed voters in the 2018 midterm elections, a majority of Catholics — 57% — said abortion should be legal in most or all cases, while Protestants and other Christians were about evenly divided.

Yet there's significant regional variation in views on abortion. That variability is notable among Catholic voters in the Midwest, where Biden is campaigning as a potential Democratic nominee who's uniquely positioned to win back the less liberal working-class voters Trump appealed to in 2016.

In the East, West and South, Catholic voters were nearly as likely as voters in those regions overall to believe abortion should usually or always be legal. But Midwestern Catholics, whom Democrats need to perform well with to stay competitive in a general election, were significantly less likely than regional voters overall to hold those more permissive views on abortion, 47% versus 58%.

The truest test of Biden's ability to stay dominant with Catholic voters, often viewed as one of the few remaining swing demographics in a polarized electorate, isn't likely to come unless he makes it to a general election against Trump. In the event of a Biden-Trump matchup, when Catholic voters in the upper Midwest would be key, conservatives are likely to try to use the Democrat's shift on abortion against him.

The Republican National Committee lambasted Biden as overly beholden to his party's liberal base in the immediate aftermath of his shift on abortion funding, which he announced amid an outcry from the left over new state laws limiting women's ability to end pregnancies. Ralph Reed, the well-known conservative evangelical strategist working to help reelect Trump, lashed out at Biden for showing that "for him, politics trumps principle" and later predicted to reporters that Biden would pay a price with Catholic bishops for his move.

To be sure, leaders of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops remain stalwart supporters of the restriction on federal funding of abortions, which is a fixture in the law with bipartisan backing.

"Whether you like it or not, the consensus in America is abortion is legal and available, and no one has to pay for anyone else's abortion or participate in anyone else's abortion," John Carr, a former longtime adviser to the bishops, said in a recent interview.

"When Republicans go after the first, I think they scare people," added Carr, founder of Georgetown University's Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life. "When Democrats go after the second, which is 'you're going to have to pay for or maybe participate in an abortion,' they scare off other people."

But as the bishops' broader political influence wanes somewhat, and Trump's immigration policy stokes religious progressives' interest in applying a "pro-life" ethos to other issues, abortion may not hold as much sway over Catholic voters in 2020 as it did in previous elections.

Sister Simone Campbell, executive director of the NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, lamented that her faith's ethic of protecting life is often "reduced" to the question of whether to "criminalize abortion."

"Our faith teaches us the dignity of all life. We have to look at that broader spectrum," said Campbell.

Sister Carol Keehan, who recently retired as head of the Catholic Health Association, described herself

as "extraordinarily pro-life" and supportive of the Hyde Amendment, but she also contended that Biden is "pro-life" on many fronts reflected in his policy decisions, including his support for an assault weapons ban and for federal support of children's health insurance.

Both Keehan's and Campbell's groups notably broke with the bishops during Biden's time as vice president in a dispute over the Affordable Care Act's treatment of abortion funding.

As religious activists on the left urge voters of faith to look beyond single-issue voting on abortion to a more expansive definition of "pro-life," Trump himself may hold the key to Biden escaping significant peril with Catholic Democrats. A Quinnipiac University poll released in May found 55% of Catholic voters saying they would definitely not support Trump's reelection, versus 41% of Protestants and 70% of those with no religious affiliation.

"To the degree Vice President Biden may have given pause to persuadable Catholic voters" with his shift on abortion, Krueger said, "there remains a countervailing imperative for Catholics to replace our nation's 45th president."

Associated Press Polling Editor Emily Swanson in Washington and writer Bill Barrow in Gaffney, South Carolina, contributed to this report.

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APNewsBreak: Army revamps recruiting, hits enlistment goal

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A year after failing to meet its enlistment goal for the first time in 13 years, the U.S. Army is now on track to meet a lower 2019 target after revamping its recruitment effort.

Army leaders tell The Associated Press that they expect to sign up more than 68,000 active duty soldiers for the fiscal year that ends Sept. 30, as the largest branch of the U.S. military increasingly turns to social media and other new online methods to find potential recruits.

Last year, the Army brought in about 70,000 new active duty recruits, well below the 76,500 it needed amid low unemployment and tough competition from higher-paying civilian companies. Meeting the lower 2019 figure is considered a victory for a service that has struggled to compete for young people who are less familiar with the military and that was criticized last year for using more bad conduct waivers and other waivers to meet enlistment goals.

"We're smoothing out the Army's growth," Gen. James McConville, chief of staff of the Army, said in an AP interview. "What we want to do is have modest growth over the next couple of years. And we're trying to make sure that the end strength we have is high quality."

Army leaders dispute the idea that they lowered the goal to help meet expectations. Instead, they said they plan to gradually grow the Army from 476,000 members last year to about 490,000 by 2024, seeking more high-quality recruits who will be less likely to fail or get injured in early training.

McConville and Army acting Secretary Ryan McCarthy said that it took time to institute changes in the recruiting over the past year but that the shifts have started to show promise. Already recruiters have an additional 13,000 recruits under contract to join the service in the fiscal year that begins Oct. 1, giving them a jump on next year's totals.

They said the recruiting goal for next year will be between 68,000 and 69,000.

After a massive buildup to fight the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, the Army in recent years slashed more than 50,000 soldiers as those conflicts scaled back. Now, to meet military demands, the Army needs to grow again.

But in the effort to enlist more soldiers, Army leaders faced criticism, including from Congress, over the expanded use of waivers for recruits with previous marijuana use, bad conduct and health problems.

The use of waivers triggered worries that the service would repeat mistakes made during the war buildup when recruiters brought in more youth with histories of misconduct, drugs and crime, which led

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to discipline and behavior problems in the units.

Now Army leaders say they have reduced waivers and improved the quality of recruits.

Maj. Gen. Frank Muth, head of Army Recruiting Command, said there were 3.4% fewer waivers this year and that includes the lowest percentage of conduct waivers in two decades. He said that about 12% of the recruits in 2019 needed a waiver to get in, and less than 9 percent this year needed one.

To meet the recruiting goal while limiting waivers and raising standards, the Army increased the number of recruiters and targeted 22 cities that had historically been challenging areas. And, Muth said, "we have changed from the industrial age into the digital age in how we're recruiting."

Historically, the top method of getting recruits has been in person. But young people are now more interested in connecting online than face to face.

As a result, Muth said, "the numbers point to the fact that for the first time the paradigm shift is about to occur and our No. 1 prospecting and lead generation for next year is going to be the in the virtual recruiting station."

For example, he said, a traditionally top recruiting event like the Houston rodeo would generate about 350 leads for recruiters to follow up. At the Salt Lake City gaming tournament last July recruiters got about 1,400 leads over one weekend, he said.

Two years ago, McCarthy said, the Army spent half of its marketing budget on television ads and half on digital ads. Now, he said, 90 percent is on digital.

"We're embracing the digital age," he said, adding that officials are learning as they go along. "You need to touch the same set of eyeballs about six times before they have a conversation with a recruiter."

The Army also beefed up enlistment efforts in 22 targeted cities this year and improved in 16 of them, including New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, McCarthy's hometown of Chicago and McConville's hometown of Boston. Recruiters fell short in six others, including Seattle, Miami and Orlando, Florida. But McCarthy said Army leaders plan to keep visiting those cities until the goals are met.

Army officials are hopeful that the Army National Guard and Army Reserves, which also fell far short of their recruiting goals last year, will meet their targets but may not know until the end of the month.

Asian stocks mixed after oil falls, Wall Street advances

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stock prices were mixed Wednesday after oil prices fell back and Wall Street advanced.

Benchmarks in Shanghai and Seoul advanced while Tokyo and Hong Kong slipped.

Markets steadied following a decline Tuesday in crude prices that spiked after a weekend attack on a Saudi oil facility. The Saudi oil minister said half of production that was cut already had been restored.

"Concerns surrounding elevated oil prices have eased," said Mizuho Bank in a report.

The Shanghai Composite Index advanced 0.3% to 2,985.66 and the Kospi in South Korea picked up 0.4% to 2,070.73. Tokyo's Nikkei 225 declined 0.2% to 21,960.71. Hong Kong's Hang Seng gave up 0.2% to 26,774.99 and Australia's S&P ASX 200 shed 0.2% to 6,681.60.

Investors were looking ahead to a possible decision Wednesday by the U.S. Federal Reserve to cut its benchmark interest rate by another quarter point following a reduction in July that was its first in a decade.

Wall Street gained after the Federal Reserve Bank of New York took the unusual step of injecting \$53 billion into markets to ease tight credit conditions that were pushing interest rates higher.

"The underlying issue is the growing scarcity of excess reserves in the system," Chris Weston of Perpetstone Group said in a report.

Elsewhere in Asia, India's Sensex added 0.4% to 36,622.26. Taiwan advanced while New Zealand retreated.

On Wall Street, the benchmark Standard & Poor's 500 index rose 0.3% to 3,005.70. It is back to within 0.7% of its record set in late July.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 0.1% to 27,110.80. The Nasdaq composite gained 0.4% to 8,186.02. Energy stocks slumped to give back nearly half of their huge gains from a day earlier. Rising prices for

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technology stocks and companies that sell to consumers made up for those losses.

Investor worries about the U.S.-Chinese tariff war were temporarily overshadowed by the weekend attack on oil producer Saudi Aramco's facility in Abqaiq. Yemeni rebels claimed responsibility, but U.S. officials said they suspected Iran.

Crude surged more than 14% on Monday, about as much as it did when Iraq invaded Kuwait before the 1991 Gulf War. The attack forced Abqaiq to cut production equivalent to 5% of the global total, but Saudi oil minister said it would be completely restored by the end of the month.

On Wednesday, Japan's government reported exports fell for a ninth month in August, declining 8.2% in August from a year earlier.

"Exports are likely to remain weak over the coming year," Marcel Thieliant of Capital Economics said in a report.

The Chinese government announced it will release pork from stockpiles to rein in surging prices ahead of the Oct. 1 celebrations of the ruling Communist Party's 70th anniversary in power.

Pork prices have soared almost 50% from a year ago due to a devastating outbreak of African swine fever, which has killed or prompted authorities to destroy more than 1 million pigs.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude lost 42 cents to \$58.92 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract plunged \$3.56 on Tuesday to close at \$59.34. Brent crude, used to price international oils, fell 27 cents to \$64.28 per barrel in London. It fell \$4.47 the previous session to \$64.55.

CURRENCY: The dollar gained to 108.21 yen from 108.12 yen on Monday. The euro declined to \$1.1054 from \$1.1072.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Sept. 18, the 261st day of 2019. There are 104 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 18, 1793, President George Washington laid the cornerstone of the U.S. Capitol.

On this date:

In 1850, Congress passed the Fugitive Slave Act, which created a force of federal commissioners charged with returning escaped slaves to their owners.

In 1940, Harper and Brothers published "You Can't Go Home Again" by Thomas Wolfe, two years after the author's death.

In 1947, the National Security Act, which created a National Military Establishment and the position of Secretary of Defense, went into effect.

In 1959, during his U.S. tour, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev visited Wall Street, the Empire State Building and the grave of President Franklin D. Roosevelt; in a speech to the U.N. General Assembly, Khrushchev called on all countries to disarm.

In 1961, United Nations Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjold (dahg HAWM'-ahr-shoold) was killed in a plane crash in northern Rhodesia.

In 1964, the situation comedy "The Addams Family," inspired by the Charles Addams cartoons, premiered on ABC-TV.

In 1970, rock star Jimi Hendrix died in London at age 27.

In 1975, newspaper heiress Patricia Hearst was captured by the FBI in San Francisco, 19 months after being kidnapped by the Symbionese Liberation Army.

In 1990, The organized crime drama "GoodFellas," directed by Martin Scorsese, had its U.S. premiere in New York.

In 1994, tennis star Vitas Gerulaitis (VEE'-tuhs gehr-uh-LY'-tihs), 40, was found dead in the guest cottage of a friend's home in Southampton, New York, of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning.

In 2001, a week after the Sept. 11 attack, President George W. Bush said he hoped to "rally the world"

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in the battle against terrorism and predicted that all "people who love freedom" would join. Letters postmarked Trenton, N.J., that later tested positive for anthrax were sent to the New York Post and NBC anchorman Tom Brokaw.

In 2007, O.J. Simpson was charged with seven felonies, including kidnapping, in the alleged armed robbery of sports memorabilia collectors in a Las Vegas casino-hotel room. (Simpson, sentenced to nine to 33 years in prison, was released on parole in October 2017.)

Ten years ago: Tens of thousands of protesters rallied in defiance of Iran's Islamic leadership, clashing with police and confronting state-run anti-Israel rallies. Writer-editor Irving Kristol, known as the godfather of neoconservatism, died at 89. The final episode of "Guiding Light" aired on CBS, ending a 72-year run on radio and television.

Five years ago: In a show of solidarity with Ukraine, President Barack Obama welcomed the new president of the embattled former Soviet republic, Petro Poroshenko, to the White House. Congress cleared the way for the U.S. military to train and equip Syrian rebels for a war against Islamic Group militants. Home Depot said a data breach that lasted for months at its stores in the U.S. and Canada had affected 56 million debit and credit cards. Voters in Scotland rejected independence, opting to remain part of the United Kingdom in a historic referendum. The Royal and Ancient Golf Club at St. Andrews, Scotland, ended years of male-only exclusivity as its members voted overwhelmingly in favor of inviting women to join.

One year ago: The death toll from Hurricane Florence rose to at least 37 in three states; the victims include two female detainees being taken to a mental health facility in a van that was overtaken by water in South Carolina. China announced tax increases on \$60 billion worth of U.S. imports, a day after the U.S. announcement of new tariffs on \$200 billion worth of Chinese-made goods. Russia said a Russian reconnaissance aircraft was shot down by a Syrian missile over the Mediterranean Sea, killing all 15 people on board; the Russians blamed Israel, saying the plane was caught in the crossfire as four Israeli fighters attacked targets in Syria.

Today's Birthdays: Singer Jimmie Rodgers is 86. Actor Robert Blake is 86. Actor Fred Willard is 86. Gospel singer Bobby Jones is 81. Singer Frankie Avalon is 79. Actress Beth Grant is 70. Rock musician Kerry Livgren is 70. Actress Anna Deavere Smith is 69. The U.S. Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, Ben Carson, is 68. Basketball Hall of Fame coach Rick Pitino is 67. College Football Hall of Famer and retired NFL player Billy Sims is 64. Movie director Mark Romanek is 60. Baseball Hall of Famer Ryne Sandberg is 60. Alt-country-rock musician Mark Olson is 58. Singer Joanne Catherall (Human League) is 57. Actress Holly Robinson Peete is 55. Rhythm-and-blues singer Ricky Bell (Bell Biv DeVoe and New Edition) is 52. Actress Aisha Tyler is 49. Former racing cyclist Lance Armstrong is 48. Opera singer Anna Netrebko is 48. Actress Jada Pinkett Smith is 48. Actor James Marsden is 46. Actress Emily Rutherford is 45. Actor Travis Schuldt is 45. Rapper Xzibit is 45. Comedian-actor Jason Sudeikis is 44. Actress Sophina Brown is 43. Actor Barrett Foa is 42. Talk show host Sara Haines (TV: "GMA3: Strahan, Sara & Keke") is 42. Actor/comedian Billy Eichner is 41. Actress Alison Lohman is 40. Designer Brandon Maxwell is 35. Congressman and former NFL player Anthony Gonzalez, R-Ohio, is 35. Actors Brandon and Taylor Porter are 26. Actor Patrick Schwarzenegger is 26. Country singer Tae Dye (Maddie and Tae) is 24. Actor C.J. Sanders is 23.

Thought for Today: "Make your mistakes, take your chances, look silly, but keep on going. Don't freeze up." — From "You Can't Go Home Again" by Thomas Wolfe (1900-1938).

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