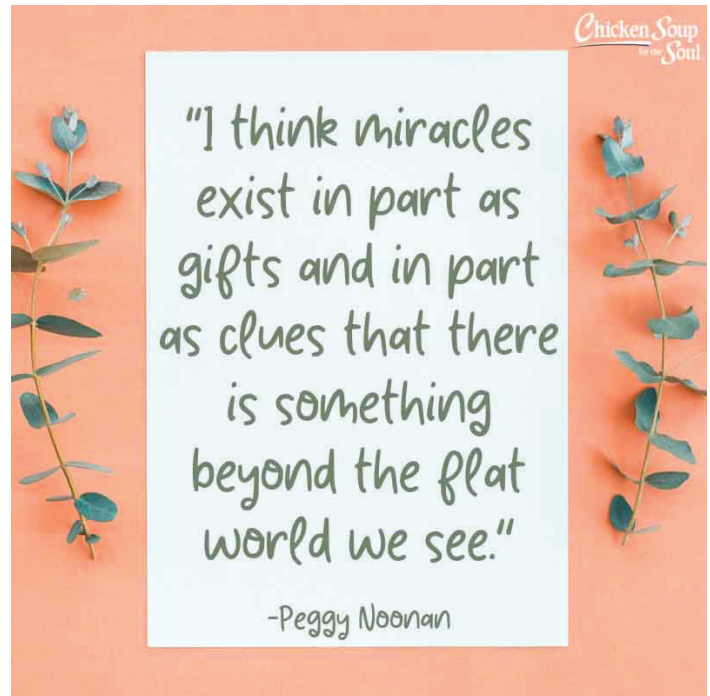


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- [2- Netters beat Sisseton in three sets and go to 7-0](#)
- [4- Today on GDILIVE.COM](#)
- [5- Avantara Royalty Crowned](#)
- [6- GDI Living Heart Fitness Ad](#)
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- [7- Groton School Board Agenda](#)
- [8- Governor Noem's External Review of South Dakota's Wildlife Damage Management and Animal Damage Control Programs Seeks Public Input](#)
- [9- GHS Class of 50 Ad](#)
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- [9- Roberts County Democratic Party Dinner Ad](#)
- [9- Front Porch Help Wanted Ad](#)
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Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

20- Friday

- 1 p.m.: Homecoming Parade
- 3:30 p.m.: American Legion 100th Celebration at the Groton Legion
- 7 p.m.: Football hosts Milbank
- Jungle Day Bazaar at Presbyterian Church, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.
- C&MA: Men's Bible Study at Dairy Queen, 6:30 a.m.
- Breakfast: Waffles
- Lunch: Homecoming Tailgate Party- Brats and Hot Dogs, Chips
- Senior Menu: Ham and bean soup, egg salad sandwich, tomato spoon salad, fresh fruit, cookie.
- Dress-up Day: Black & Gold Spirit Day

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

21 - Saturday

- 1 p.m.: Girls Soccer at Garretson
- 3 p.m.: Boys Soccer at Free- man Academy
- Emmanuel worship at Rose- wood Court, 10 a.m.
- SEAS Service, 4:30 p.m.

22 - Sunday

- St. John's: Bible Study, 8 a.m.; Worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10 a.m.
- Emmanuel: worship, 9 a.m.; Sunday school, 10 a.m.
- SEAS Catholic: service, 9 a.m.
- C&MA: Sunday School, 9:15 a.m.; Worship, 10:45 a.m.
- UMC: Fellowship, 10 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.
- Presbyterian: Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.; Worship, 11 a.m.

Netters beat Sisseton in three sets and go to 7-0

Groton Area had a three game sweep of Sisseton Thursday evening in volleyball action played in Groton. The Lady Tigers are now 7-0 on the season.

The game was broadcast 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, Professional Management Services.

Nicole Marzahn had four kills and three ace serves as the Tigers won the first game, 25-8. Eliza Wanner added three kills while Indigo Rogers had two ace serves and a kill, Stella Meier had one kill and one block and Madeline Flihs had one kill. Groton Area earned 64 percent of its points, earning 16 of 25, while Sisseton earned 50 percent, making four of eight.

Marzahn and Meier teamed with four kills each as Groton Area won the second game, 25-15. Payton Colestock had three ace serves, Wanner had two kills and an ace serve, Kaylin Kucker had an ace serve and a kill and Rogers had one kill. Groton Area made 17 of 25 points for 68 percent while Sisseton was two of 15 for 13 percent.

Colestock had four ace serves and Meier had three kills and a block to lead Groton Area to a 25-12 win in the third game. Wanner and Kucker each had two ace serves and a kill, Rogers had two kills while Marzahn and Flihs had one kill. Groton Area made 18 of 25 points for 72 percent while Sisseton was five of 12 for 42 percent.

Marzahn finished the game with 10 kills, three ace serves and a block, Meier had eight kills and two solo and one assisted block, Colestock had seven ace serves, Wanner had six kills, five ace serves and seven digs, Rogers had 11 digs, four kills and two ace serves and Kucker had 24 assists, three ace serves and two kills.

Kellie Karst led Sisseton with two kills and two blocks while Taryn Yammerino had three kills, Martina Weyand and Kierra Silk each had a kill, Avery Despiegler had a block and Alexis Metz had an ace serve.

Groton Area won the junior varsity match, 2-0. That match was also broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by junior and sophomore parents of the team.

The first game was tied five times and the lead changed hands three times before Groton Area surged ahead, 15-8, en route to a 25-12 win. Grace Wambach had the game winning kill. Groton Area jumped out to a 9-0 lead in the second game and went on to win, 25-11. Wambach led the Tigers with five ace serves and four kills, Allyssa Locke had five ace serves and two kills, Megan Flihs added three kills and an ace serve, Brooklyn Gilbert had three kills, Jasmine Gengerke had two kills, Alyssa Thaler had two ace serves and Gracie Traphagen had an ace serve and a kill.

Groton Area won the C match, 25-18 and 25-21. Aspen Johnson and Macine McGannon each had the game winning kills in those games.

Sisseton won the eighth grade match, 25-19, 25-9 and 25-15. Sisseton also won the seventh grade match, 25-17, 25-22 and Groton Area led in the third game before time ran out, 23-18.

- Paul Kosel

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Indigo Rogers
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Nicole Marzahn
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Eliza Wanner
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)



Payton Colestock
(Photo by Jeslyn Kosel)

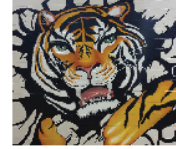
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It's Football Action on GDILIVE.COM



Milbank VS



Bulldogs
Groton Area Tigers

Friday, Sept. 20, 2019

7 p.m. at Groton

Broadcast Sponsors

Abeln Seed

Aberdeen Chrysler Center

Allied Climate Professionals

Bahr Spray Foam

BaseKamp Lodge

DeHoet Trucking

Groton Auto Works

Hanlon Brothers

John Sieh Agency

Milbrandt Enterprises

Mike-N-Jo's

Olson Development

Professional Management Services

Touchdown Sponsor - Patios Plus

Homecoming Parade

Friday, Sept. 20

1:00 p.m.



Avantara Royalty Crowned

GHS Royalty Queen Eliza Wanner and King Anthony Schinkel crowned the new royalty at the Avantata Groton on Thursday. They are Queen Doris Adler and King Brad Ronning. (Photo

by Tina Kosel)

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GDI Living Heart Fitness
is a
Proud Partner with:

NIHCA

National Independent Health Club Association

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota

Blue Cross Blue Shield of North Dakota

PreferredOne

Sanford Health Plan

Avera

Medica

Get Started Today
with Fitness Incentives

GDI Living Heart Fitness
13 North Main Street
Groton SD 57445

Call/Text Paul: 605/397-7460

NIHCA

National Independent Health Club Association

Tax collections at 2019 South Dakota State Fair exceed \$217,000

PIERRE, S.D. — Tax collections at the 2019 South Dakota State Fair have increased by 5.79 percent compared to last year.

The latest figures from the five-day fair in Huron, S.D., show \$217,923 in total tax collections, which is an increase from last year's total of \$206,000. The 2019 fair featured 435 vendors—an increase from 2018's vendor count of 424.

Of the tax collected, \$115,080 was state sales tax, \$37,511 was state tourism tax and \$65,332 was Huron's municipal sales tax.

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting

September 23, 2019 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

1. Call to Order with members present. Approve agenda as proposed or amended.

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Program Overview Presentations
Grades 4 and 5...J. Guthmiller, S. Fjeldheim, J. Lone, S. Hendrickson
3. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Approve FY2020 district budgets with amendments and authorize Business Manager to file tax request with county auditor.
2. Acknowledge receipt of public school exemption #20-12
3. Appoint 2019-2020 ASBSD Delegate.
4. Approve hiring Kristi Peterson as Yearbook Advisor for 2019-2020 school year at 8% of base salary.
5. Approve hiring Joni Groeblichhoff as co-DI coordinator for 2019-2020 school year at 2.5% of base salary.
6. Executive session pursuant SDCL 1-25-2(6) to review District Emergency Response Guide.

ADJOURN

Governor Noem's External Review of South Dakota's Wildlife Damage Management and Animal Damage Control Programs Seeks Public Input

In May, Governor Noem announced that the Wildlife Management Institute (WMI) would conduct an external review of South Dakota's Wildlife Damage Management and Animal Damage Control programs.

As part of the review process, WMI will be conducting two surveys in the weeks ahead. The process requires a random sample of South Dakota landowners and producers, as well as a random sample of landowners and producers who received Wildlife Damage Management or Animal Damage Control services within the past two years. People who receive these surveys from WMI are asked to complete the survey and share their experiences.

For landowners and producers who do not receive a survey but still wish to provide feedback, Governor Noem has asked that they share their comments through the online survey, which will be open through October 4:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Wildlife_Damage_Public_Input

"South Dakota landowners and producers are a critical component to this review process," said Noem. "I want to know what they have experienced when it comes to livestock loss, damage to stored-feed supplies and hay, damage to growing crops as well as personal property damage. Game, Fish and Parks (GFP) has programs in place to help alleviate or reduce wildlife damage, and we need to ensure that the programs are delivered in a timely manner and that our landowners and producers are aware of how the programs work. This review will help document any necessary changes so improvements to services can be made."

Landowners and producers play a critical role in South Dakota's economy and routinely deal with impacts from wildlife on their operations.

"GFP welcomes the review process with WMI," said Kelly Hepler, GFP Secretary. "The landowners and producers in our state are important partners in wildlife management in South Dakota. We want to ensure the programs and services offered through GFP for animal damage control and wildlife damage management are effective in alleviating negative impacts from wildlife whenever possible."

The review process will cover the past 10 years of both the Wildlife Damage Management and Animal Damage Control programs, and conduct several surveys of South Dakota landowners and producers. The final report will be provided and presented to the governor and GFP Commission in December.

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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


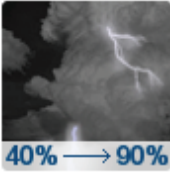



Local performers singing songs from the following periods

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	Saturday	Saturday Night	Sunday
				
Partly Sunny then Slight Chance T-storms and Breezy	Chance T-storms then T-storms	Chance Showers then Mostly Sunny and Breezy	Mostly Clear	Sunny
High: 85 °F	Low: 64 °F	High: 74 °F	Low: 49 °F	High: 70 °F

Slight Risk

of severe thunderstorms

1 2 3 4 5

Hazards

Thunderstorms expected. Scattered strong to severe storms will have the potential to produce large hail over the size of quarters, and wind gusts over 60 mph. While highly unlikely, an isolated tornado will also be possible over mainly W to central SD later this evening.

Timing

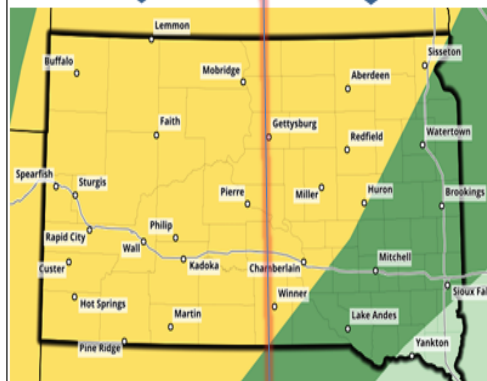
W half of SD: Around 3pm–midnight. Strongest late this evening.

E half of SD & WMN: Tonight. Strongest overnight.

Action

Monitor the weather, and be prepared to seek shelter if necessary.

Timing
Around 3pm–midnight. Strongest late evening. Tonight. Strongest overnight.



Severe Weather Potential



Hazards

Lightning

Frequent.

Damaging Wind

Likely. Highest threat over W & central SD.

Hail

Likely. Highest threat over W & central SD.

Flooding

Localized. Highest threat over central SD.

Tornado

Isolated. Highest risk over W to central SD.

ISSUED: 4:49 AM - Friday, September 20, 2019

Published on: 09/20/2019 at 12:53AM

Thunderstorms over western South Dakota may shift to central South Dakota later this afternoon. These storms may become strong or severe later this evening. Frequent lightning, damaging winds, and large hail are all possible, along with localized heavy rain. At this point, we expect these storms to cross into the eastern half of South Dakota overnight, and exit into Minnesota around daybreak Saturday. Stay up to date on the latest forecast for your area!

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Today in Weather History

September 20, 1970: During the late afternoon, golfball hail fell in and around Redfield with a tornado reported just north of Doland. No damage was reported with the hail or the tornado.

September 20, 1972: About 430 pm, in southeast South Dakota, a tornado caused an estimated \$95,000 damage to property and 50,000 damage to crops in Utica and nearby rural areas. Buildings were damaged; trees and power lines were downed.

1909: A large and deadly Category 3 hurricane made landfall near Grand Isle, Louisiana during the late evening hours. The states of Louisiana and Mississippi showed catastrophic damage resulting in 371 deaths and \$265 million in damage (2010 USD).

1961: On September 10th, the Television Infrared Observation Satellite observed an area of thunderstorms west-southwest of the Cape Verde Islands, suggesting a possible tropical cyclone. This storm is the first large tropical cyclone to be discovered on satellite imagery and would eventually become Hurricane Esther. On September 20th, Hurricane Esther, a Category 4 storm off of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina began to slow down as it moved north-northeast well off the Jersey shore. The storm continued to weaken as it made a five-day loop south of Cape Cod, Massachusetts, then moved to Cape Cod and into Maine on the 26th.

2002: A glacial avalanche buries the village of Karmadon in Russia, killing more than 100 people.

1845 - A tornado traveled 275 miles across Lake Ontario, New York and Lake Champlain. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1926 - A hurricane which hit Miami, FL, on the 18th, pounded Pensacola with wind gusts to 152 mph. Winds raged in excess of 100 mph for four hours, and above 75 mph for 20 hours. (The Weather Channel)

1967 - Hurricane Beulah moved into South Texas, and torrential rains from the hurricane turned the rich agricultural areas of South Texas into a large lake. Hurricane Beulah also spawned a record 115 tornadoes. (David Ludlum)

1983 - The temperature at West Yellowstone MT plunged to six degrees below zero, while the temperature at San Francisco CA soared to 94 degrees. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Afternoon and evening thunderstorms produced severe weather in Oklahoma and west Texas. In Oklahoma, a thunderstorm at Seiling produced three inches of rain in one hour, golf ball size hail, and wind gusts to 60 mph which collapsed a tent at the state fair injuring nine persons. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Showers and thunderstorms produced locally heavy rains in central Wyoming, and snow in some of the higher elevations. Casper WY reported 1.75 inches of rain in 24 hours, and a thunderstorm north of the Wild Horse Reservoir produced 1.90 inches of rain in just forty minutes.

1989 - Hugo jilted Iris. Hurricane Hugo churned toward the South Atlantic Coast, gradually regaining strength along the way. Tropical Storm Iris got too close to Hugo, and began to weaken. A cold front brought strong and gusty winds to the Great Basin and the Southern Plateau Region, with wind gusts to 44 mph reported at Kingman AZ. (The National Weather Summary)

2005 - Hurricane Rita tracked through the Florida Straits and just south of the Florida Keys. Winds were sustained at tropical storm force at Key West, where peak winds gusted to 76 mph.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 82 °F at 3:56 PM

Low Temp: 56 °F at 7:28 AM

Wind: 15 mph at 12:53 PM

Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 94° in 1937

Record Low: 20° in 1901

Average High: 70°F

Average Low: 44°F

Average Precip in Sept.: 1.41

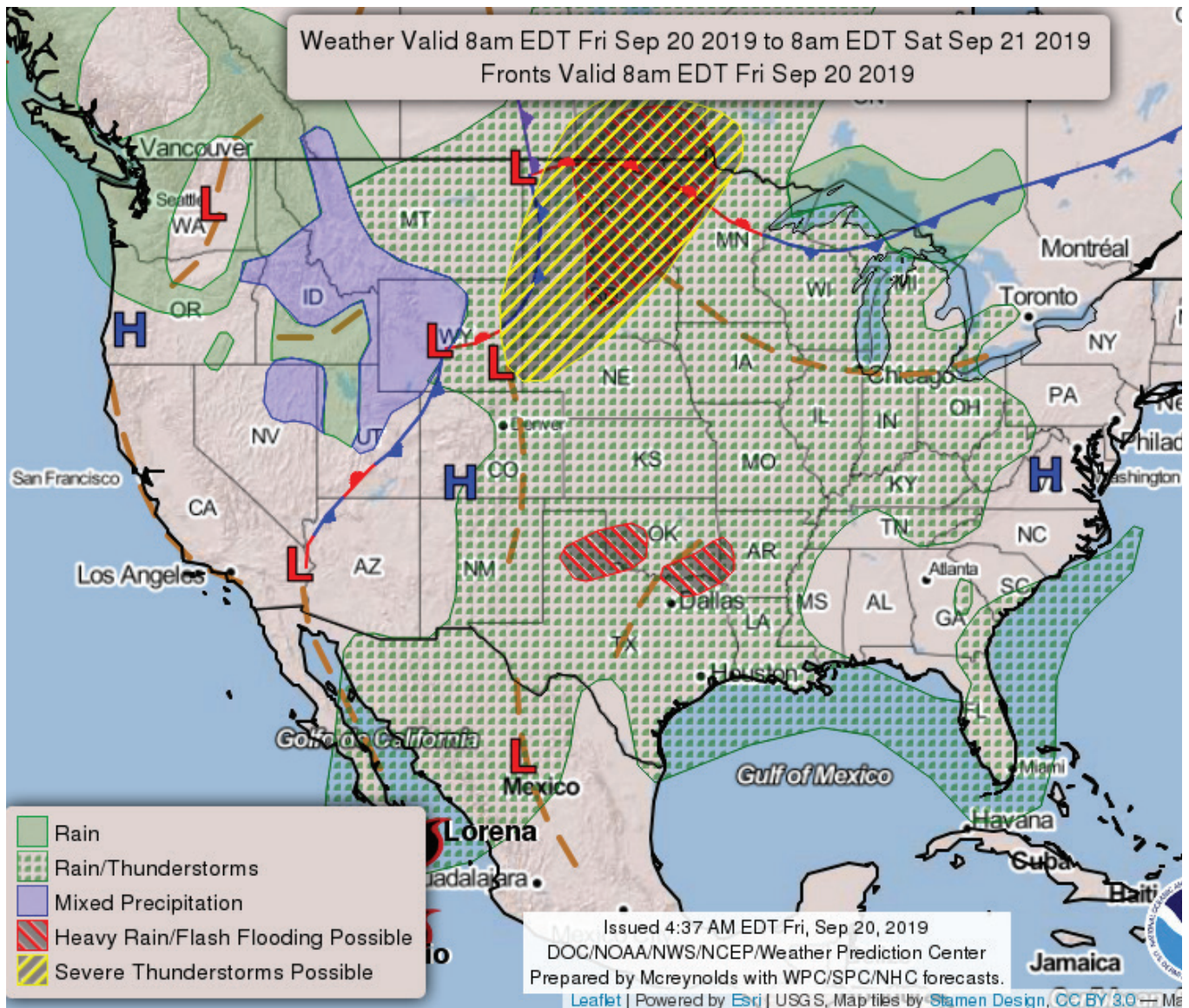
Precip to date in Sept.: 5.14

Average Precip to date: 17.70

Precip Year to Date: 24.90

Sunset Tonight: 7:35 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:19 a.m.



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STEPS IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION

Our feet contain 26 bones and more than 100 muscles, tendons and ligaments. Most of us will walk 65,000 miles and take 125 million steps in our lifetime. That's enough "footwork" to make anyone tired before considering to begin such a journey.

Everyone's journey is different. All of us have different paths. When we awaken in the morning, we have no guarantee of what might happen or where we will be when night falls.

The writer of the first Psalm declared, "Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand with sinners or join in with scoffers." Clearly he urges us to avoid friendships or to even associate with those who do not honor God. Why? Because they may influence us to abandon the plans He has for us. Friends who do not encourage us in our walk with God may bring about an indifference to the plan and purpose He has for our lives. Often the ones we associate with have an enormous influence on our attitudes. And we must always be aware of the fact that our attitudes shape our behavior and can be manipulated by others.

The author also describes the benefit of those who walk a godly path: the Lord will watch over them. What a comforting thought for the believer to realize that every one of those steps in each of the many miles will have "the Lord watching over them." When we walk with Him, we have the promise of His presence and His power to protect us and provide for our every need.

Prayer: Help us, Father, to know and obey Your Word so that we may count on Your strength for our journey. Keep our feet on Your path as we follow in Your steps! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Psalm 1 Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or stand with sinners or join in with scoffers.

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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

Thursday's Scores By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Aberdeen Roncalli def. Tiospa Zina Tribal, 25-15, 25-13, 25-12
Arlington def. Lake Preston, 25-10, 25-16, 25-13
Bridgewater-Emery def. Viborg-Hurley, 25-21, 25-18, 25-10
Chester def. Howard, 25-12, 25-11, 25-13
Dakota Valley def. Canton, 25-11, 25-7, 25-20
Elk Point-Jefferson def. Tea Area, 25-9, 20-25, 25-19, 25-19
Elkton-Lake Benton def. Deubrook, 25-20, 25-17, 25-20
Estelline/Hendricks def. Dell Rapids St. Mary, 25-21, 25-16, 25-20
Ethan def. Corsica/Stickney, 25-17, 25-20, 25-18
Faith def. Kadoka Area, 27-25, 19-25, 25-20, 25-19
Flandreau def. Flandreau Indian, 25-9, 25-16, 25-11
Freeman def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-22, 25-10, 25-23
Great Plains Lutheran def. Waubay/Summit, 25-21, 20-25, 25-13, 25-17
Groton Area def. Sisseton, 25-8, 25-15, 25-12
Harrisburg def. Pierre, 25-21, 15-25, 25-19, 25-18
Herreid/Selby Area def. Leola/Frederick, 23-25, 25-23, 28-26, 25-11
Hill City def. Sturgis Brown, 25-22, 25-19, 25-20
Hitchcock-Tulare def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-19, 25-16, 25-17
Irene-Wakonda def. Bon Homme, 24-26, 22-25, 25-16, 26-24, 15-13
Lennox def. Parkston, 19-25, 25-23, 25-20, 18-25, 17-15
Little Wound def. Todd County, 25-21, 18-25, 25-18, 25-15
Madison def. Vermillion, 25-21, 25-20, 25-12
Marshall, Minn. def. Brookings, 25-17, 25-15, 25-16
McCook Central/Montrose def. Beresford, 25-14, 25-16, 25-13
Milbank Area def. Clark/Willow Lake, 18-25, 25-17, 25-21, 25-20
Miller def. Faulkton, 25-20, 26-24, 25-17
Mt. Vernon def. Hanson, 25-10, 25-13, 25-18
Northwestern def. Ipswich, 25-14, 25-11, 25-16
Oelrichs def. Crazy Horse, 25-22, 22-25, 25-20, 25-19
Oldham-Ramona/Rutland def. DeSmet, 25-17, 25-27, 25-21, 16-25, 15-11
Parker def. Alcester-Hudson, 25-18, 25-18, 25-16
Potter County def. McLaughlin, 25-6, 25-2, 25-10
Rapid City Christian def. White River, 25-16, 25-14, 25-10
Redfield def. Deuel, 25-18, 25-15, 25-18
Sioux Falls Christian def. Jackson County Central, Minn., 24-26, 25-19, 26-24, 25-21
Sioux Falls Lincoln def. Mitchell, 25-11, 25-12, 25-22
Spearfish def. Douglas, 25-20, 26-24, 26-28, 25-27, 15-3
St. Thomas More def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-17, 25-23, 25-20
Tri-Valley def. Dell Rapids, 25-14, 25-20, 25-16
Webster def. Britton-Hecla, 25-13, 25-12, 25-8
Wessington Springs def. Crow Creek, 25-14, 21-25, 14-25, 25-21, 15-7
Winner def. Kimball/White Lake, 25-12, 25-20, 25-18

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Wolsey-Wessington def. Aberdeen Christian, 25-19, 13-25, 25-21, 25-17
Centerville Triangular

Centerville def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-19, 25-15, 23-25, 18-25, 16-14
Gayville-Volin def. Centerville, 25-4, 25-8, 25-4

Joint funeral held in Woonsocket for 3 boys killed in crash

WOONSOCKET, S.D. (AP) — A joint funeral has been held for the three boys killed in a crash near Woonsocket last weekend.

Fifteen-year-old Jordan Klich, his 14-year-old brother, Dylan Klich, and 14-year-old Kristian Kesary died when their car collided with an SUV and another vehicle last Saturday night on Highway 37.

A joint service was held on Thursday morning at Woonsocket High School.

The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the teens who were killed were passengers in a car driven by 14-year-old Coen Harvey, who survived the crash. All four boys are from Woonsocket.

The patrol says Harvey was trying to turn onto the highway when he struck the SUV, spun around and hit the third vehicle. The driver of the SUV was seriously injured. Two people in the third vehicle were not hurt.

This story has been changed to correct the name of the city to Woonsocket, not Woodsocket.

Dakotas duck hunters seeing positive trends in conditions

By DAVE KOLPACK Associated Press

FARGO, N.D. (AP) — After weathering poor wetland conditions in North Dakota and South Dakota over the last few years, duck hunters in the two states known for abundant waterfowl are seeing positive trends, wildlife officials said Thursday.

The North Dakota Game and Fish Department released its annual fall survey which shows that duck hunting wetlands have increased about 65% statewide from a year ago. Andy Dinges, the agency's migratory bird biologist, cites record fall wetland conditions in the south central and southeastern parts of the state, where the marshes, swamps and ponds grew by about 300%.

Dinges said wetland conditions had been declining for a few years, but adequate snowmelt and abundant rainfall throughout the spring and summer have dramatically improved the outlook.

"However, the north central and northeast regions of the state are still recovering from drought conditions experienced over the last few years," said Dinges, noting that wetlands in those regions remain slightly below average.

Bruce Toay, manager of conservation programs for Ducks Unlimited in South Dakota, said "it's shaping up to be a pretty good fall" for duck hunters in that state. He said the majority of the wetlands are at above capacity, especially in the southeastern part of the state which has seen torrential rainfall in the last month.

"From a duck standpoint you certainly want to have water on the landscape," Toay said. "Of course you don't want to see the levels of near-destruction with the flooding we've had. There's some give and take there."

Eastern North Dakota and South Dakota saw increases in both ponds and breeding waterfowl, according to Tom Moorman, chief scientist for Ducks Unlimited, which is a nonprofit group dedicated to conserving habitat. In addition, conditions are dry in southern Alberta and Saskatchewan and that typically drives some species into the Dakotas, he said.

Numbers are especially good for mallards, blue-winged teal, gadwalls, northern shovelers and northern pintail, Moorman said. Ultimately, he said, hunting success and numbers of birds will vary with the arrival of winter conditions that force birds to migrate south from Canada.

The regular duck hunting season opens Saturday in North Dakota. In South Dakota, it opens on Sept. 28 in some areas and Oct. 12 in others.

Bankers expect slow economic growth amid trade war

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Bankers in rural parts of 10 Plains and Western states expect slow growth in the months ahead, but the ongoing trade war between the U.S. and China is weighing on the economy.

The Rural Mainstreet survey's overall index climbed into positive territory at 50.1 in September from August's 46.5. Any score above 50 suggests a growing economy, while a score below 50 indicates a shrinking economy.

Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey, says bankers are less confident because of the ongoing trade disputes and the lack of approval for a new North American trade agreement.

The confidence index remained low at 42.9 in September — up slightly from August's 42.

Bankers from Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wyoming were surveyed.

Attorney general to investigate absent county prosecutor

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's attorney general will investigate Minnehaha County's top prosecutor over his absence from work.

Gov. Kristi Noem sent a letter Wednesday to Attorney General Jason Ravnsborg requesting an investigation of State's Attorney Aaron McGowan.

McGowan was out of his office starting in mid-July. He returned to work Sept. 9, telling the Argus Leader he was out for medical reasons.

Ravnsborg tells KELO-TV he won't prejudge the situation, but see where the facts lead.

In her letter to Ravnsborg, Noem cited the prosecutor's "extended absence" and said "an investigation is necessary to determine if grounds for removal exist or not."

McGowan said he welcomes the investigation and "looks forward to an accurate and credible determination of the facts."

McGowan was first elected in 2008. Minnehaha is South Dakota's most populous county

Information from: KELO-TV, <http://www.keloland.com>

US military to present Trump with several options on Iran

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Pentagon will present a broad range of military options to President Donald Trump on Friday as he considers how to respond to what administration officials say was an unprecedented Iranian attack on Saudi Arabia's oil industry.

In a White House meeting, the Republican president will be presented with a list of potential airstrike targets inside Iran, among other possible responses, and he will be warned that military action against the Islamic Republic could escalate into war, according to U.S. officials familiar with the discussions who spoke on the condition of anonymity.

The national security meeting will likely be the first opportunity for a decision on how the U.S. should respond to the attack on a key Middle East ally. Any decision may depend on what kind of evidence the U.S. and Saudi investigators are able to provide proving that the cruise missile and drone strike was launched by Iran, as a number of officials, including Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, have asserted.

Iran has denied involvement and warned the U.S. that any attack will spark an "all-out war" with immediate retaliation from Tehran.

Pompeo and Vice President Mike Pence have condemned the attack on Saudi oil facilities as "an act of war." Pence said Trump will "review the facts, and he'll make a decision about next steps. But the American people can be confident that the United States of America is going to defend our interest in the region, and we're going to stand with our allies."

The U.S. response could involve military, political and economic actions, and the military options could

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range from no action at all to airstrikes or less visible moves such as cyberattacks. One likely move would be for the U.S. to provide additional military support to help Saudi Arabia defend itself from attacks from the north, since most of its defenses have focused on threats from Houthis in Yemen to the south.

Gen. Joseph Dunford, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, emphasized to a small number of journalists traveling with him Monday that the question of whether the U.S. responds is a "political judgment" and not for the military.

"It is my job to provide military options to the president should he decide to respond with military force," Dunford said.

Trump will want "a full range of options," he said. "In the Middle East, of course, we have military forces there and we do a lot of planning and we have a lot of options."

U.S. Rep. Elissa Slotkin, D-Mich., said in an interview Thursday that if Trump "chooses an option that involves a significant military strike on Iran that, given the current climate between the U.S. and Iran, there is a possibility that it could escalate into a medium to large-scale war, I believe the president should come to Congress."

Slotkin, a former top Middle East policy adviser for the Pentagon, said she hopes Trump considers a broad range of options, including the most basic choice, which would be to place more forces and defensive military equipment in and around Saudi Arabia to help increase security.

A forensic team from U.S. Central Command is pouring over evidence from cruise missile and drone debris, but the Pentagon said the assessment is not finished. Officials are trying to determine if they can get navigational information from the debris that could provide hard evidence that the strikes came from Iran.

Pentagon spokesman Jonathan Hoffman said Thursday that the U.S. has a high level of confidence that officials will be able to accurately determine exactly who launched the attacks last weekend.

U.S. officials were unwilling to predict what kind of response Trump will choose. In June, after Iran shot down an American surveillance drone, Trump initially endorsed a retaliatory military strike then abruptly called it off because he said it would have killed dozens of Iranians. The decision underscores the president's long-held reluctance to embroil the country in another war in the Middle East.

Instead, Trump opted to have U.S. military cyber forces carry out a strike against military computer systems used by Iran's Revolutionary Guard to control rocket and missile launchers, according to U.S. officials.

The Pentagon said the U.S. military is working with Saudi Arabia to find ways to provide more protection for the northern part of the country.

Air Force Col. Pat Ryder, spokesman for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told Pentagon reporters Wednesday that U.S. Central Command is talking with the Saudis about ways to mitigate future attacks. He would not speculate on what types of support could be provided.

Other U.S. officials have said adding Patriot missile batteries and enhanced radar systems could be options, but no decisions have been made.

Imelda leaves 2 dead in Texas, others stranded and trapped

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

CHINA, Texas (AP) — The slow-churning remnants of Tropical Storm Imelda that flooded parts of Texas left at least two people dead and rescue crews with boats scrambling to reach stranded drivers and families trapped in their homes during a relentless downpour that drew comparisons to Hurricane Harvey two years ago.

By Thursday night, floodwaters had started receding in most of the Houston area, said the city's mayor, Sylvester Turner. Law enforcement officers planned to work well into the night to clear freeways of vehicles stalled and abandoned because of flooding, Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo said.

Officials in Harris County, which includes Houston, said there had been a combination of at least 1,700 high-water rescues and evacuations to get people to shelter as the longevity and intensity of the rain quickly came to surprise even those who had been bracing for floods. The storm also flooded parts of southwestern Louisiana.

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More than 900 flights were canceled or delayed in Houston. Further along the Texas Gulf Coast, authorities at one point warned that a levee could break near Beaumont in Jefferson County. During Harvey, Beaumont's only pump station was swamped by floodwaters, leaving residents without water service for more than a week.

Imelda's remnants on Thursday led to the deaths of two men. A 19-year-old man drowned and was electrocuted while trying to move his horse to safety, according to a message from his family shared by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Crystal Holmes, a spokeswoman for the department, said the death occurred during a lightning storm.

A man in his 40s or 50s drowned when he tried to drive a van through 8-foot-deep floodwaters near Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston during the Thursday afternoon rush hour, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said.

The National Weather Service said preliminary estimates suggested that Jefferson County was deluged with more than 40 inches (102 centimeters) of rain in a span of just 72 hours, which would make it the seventh wettest tropical cyclone in U.S. history.

Even when Houston was finally rid of the worst, downtown highways remained littered with abandoned cars submerged in water. Thousands of other drivers were at a practical standstill on narrowed lanes near flooded banks.

"The water kept rising. It kept rising. I couldn't believe it," said Ruby Trahan Robinson, 63. She uses a wheelchair and had a portable oxygen tank while getting settled into a shelter at City Hall in the small town of China, just outside Beaumont.

"It rolled in like a river," she said.

Turner, the Houston mayor, evoked the memory of Harvey — which dumped more than 50 inches (127 centimeters) of rain on the nation's fourth-largest city in 2017 — while pleading with residents to stay put. City officials said they had received more than 1,500 high-water rescue calls to 911, most from drivers stuck on flooded roads, but authorities described a number of them as people who were inconvenienced and not in immediate danger.

Ahead of the evening rush hour, Houston officials urged commuters to stay in their offices for an extra three to four hours rather than embark on flooded and already jammed highways. Turner made a similar appeal to parents of schoolchildren as the Houston Independent School District — Texas' largest with more than 200,000 students — did not cancel classes or shorten the day unlike neighboring districts in the path of the storm. The district canceled Friday classes.

Imelda is the first named storm to impact the Houston area since Harvey hovered for days and inundated the flood-prone Gulf Coast. That storm dumped more than 5 feet (1.5 meters) of water near the Louisiana border, and two years later, it looked in some places like Harvey was playing out all over again.

A massive Houston furniture store became a shelter for evacuees. Live television footage showed firefighters rescuing stranded truckers on major highways. On social media, people posted that water was quickly seeping into their home and asked for help.

In Winnie, a town of about 3,200 people 60 miles (95 kilometers) east of Houston, a hospital was evacuated.

Even as the intensity of the storm weakened, Harris County officials warned that some of their 4.7 million residents might not see high waters recede in their neighborhoods until the weekend.

Following Harvey, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott ordered a report warning that punishing storms would become more frequent because of a changing climate. Scientists say climate change is responsible for more intense and more frequent extreme weather such as storms, droughts, floods and fires, but without extensive study they cannot directly link a single weather event to the changing climate.

Climate change skepticism runs deep among Republican leaders in Texas, and Abbott has said it's "impossible" for him to say whether he believes manmade global warming is causing the kind of disasters the state is telling residents to get used to. Earlier this year, Abbott approved billions of new dollars to fortify the Texas coast and reduce catastrophic flooding.

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The flooding from Imelda came as Hurricane Humberto blew off rooftops and toppled trees in the British Atlantic island of Bermuda, and Hurricane Jerry was expected to move to the northern Leeward Islands on Friday and north of Puerto Rico on Saturday.

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

Associated Press writers Diana Heidgerd, Terry Wallace and Jamie Stengle in Dallas; Clarice Silber and Paul J. Weber in Austin; and Jill Bleed in Little Rock, Arkansas, contributed to this report.

From Australia to Europe, climate protesters hit the streets

By **ROD McGUIRK and FRANK JORDANS** Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of protesters in Australia, many of them children who skipped school, kicked off a day of demonstrations around the world against climate change in the run-up to a U.N. summit in New York.

Rallies to open the "Global Climate Strike" took place on Friday in 110 towns and cities across Australia, including Sydney and the national capital, Canberra. Demonstrators called for their country, the world's largest exporter of coal and liquid natural gas, to take more drastic action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

"Even though we ourselves aren't sick, the planet which we live on is, and we are protesting and fighting for it," said Siobhan Sutton, a 15-year-old student at Perth Modern School.

Organizers estimate more than 300,000 protesters took to Australian streets in what would be the country's biggest demonstration since the Iraq War in 2003.

Smaller protests took place in Asia, from the Philippines to Hong Kong and India.

"We need to reclaim our constitutional right to clean air and water," said Aman Sharma, a 16-year-old protester in India's capital New Delhi.

Rallies were also planned in Europe, Africa and the United States, where organizers say more than 800 events are expected Friday.

In Germany, which has seen large-scale climate rallies for over a year, police said 17,000 people had gathered in the southwestern city of Freiburg, one of 500 cities across the country where protests were planned.

In the capital Berlin and Germany's financial hub of Frankfurt some protesters staged brief road blockades to highlight their demands for a drastic reduction in the country's greenhouse gas emissions, to which transport is a major contributor.

Under pressure from sustained protests over the past months, the government of Chancellor Angela Merkel is planning to announce a package of measures to reduce Germany's greenhouse gas emissions later Friday.

Rallies were also held in Kenya's capital Nairobi, Johannesburg and the South African capital, Pretoria.

Experts say Africa is the most vulnerable continent to climate change and the least equipped to deal with it. Governments have pleaded for more support from the international community.

The protests are partly inspired by the activism of Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg, who has staged weekly demonstrations under the heading "Fridays for Future" over the past year, calling on world leaders to step up their efforts against climate change. Thunberg is expected to speak at the U.N. Climate Action Summit on Monday.

Australian universities have said they will not penalize students for attending Friday's rallies, while Australian schools vary on what action, if any, they take against children who skip classes to attend demonstrations.

Perth student Sutton said she would fail a math exam by attending a protest in the west coast city of Perth.

"I have basically been told that because it is not a valid reason to be missing school — it is not a medical reason or anything — I am going to get a zero on the test if I don't actually sit it," she said.

She said her math teacher had given her the option to sit the exam before Friday, but she was unable to do so because of her commitments as one of the protest organizers.

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Acting Prime Minister Michael McCormack said students should be in school.

"These sorts of rallies should be held on a weekend where it doesn't actually disrupt business, it doesn't disrupt schools, it doesn't disrupt universities," McCormack told reporters in Melbourne.

"I think it is just a disruption," he added.

Some companies are encouraging their employees to join the climate strike.

Australian Council of Trade Unions, which represents labor unions, said it supported employees taking time off work to protest.

The council said in a statement that it "must take a stand for our future when our government will not."

McGuirk reported from Canberra, Australia.

Administration blocks 'urgent' whistleblower disclosure

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration plunged into an extraordinary showdown with Congress over access to a whistleblower's complaint about reported incidents including a private conversation between President Donald Trump and a foreign leader. The blocked complaint is "serious" and "urgent," the government's intelligence watchdog said.

The administration is keeping Congress from even learning what exactly the whistleblower is alleging, but the intelligence community's inspector general said the matter involves the "most significant" responsibilities of intelligence leadership. A lawmaker said the complaint was "based on a series of events."

The Washington Post and The New York Times reported Thursday that at least part of the complaint involves Ukraine. The newspapers cited anonymous sources familiar with the matter. The Associated Press has not confirmed the reports.

The inspector general appeared before the House intelligence committee behind closed doors Thursday but declined, under administration orders, to reveal to members the substance of the complaint.

The standoff raises fresh questions about the extent to which Trump's allies are protecting the Republican president from oversight and, specifically, if his new acting director of national intelligence, Joseph Maguire, is working with the Justice Department to shield the president from the reach of Congress.

Trump, though giving no details about any incident, denied Thursday that he would ever "say something inappropriate" on such a call.

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., the chairman of the House Intelligence Committee, said he was prepared to go to court to try to force the Trump administration to open up about the complaint.

"The inspector general has said this cannot wait," said Schiff, describing the administration's blockade as an unprecedented departure from law. "There's an urgency here that I think the courts will recognize."

Schiff said he, too, could not confirm whether newspaper reports were accurate because the administration was claiming executive privilege in withholding the complaint. But letters from the inspector general to the committee released Thursday said it was an "urgent" matter of "serious or flagrant abuse" that must be shared with lawmakers.

The letters also made it clear that Maguire consulted with the Justice Department in deciding not to transmit the complaint to Congress in a further departure from standard procedure. It's unclear whether the White House was also involved, Schiff said.

Because the administration is claiming the information is privileged, Schiff said he believes the whistleblower's complaint "likely involves the president or people around him."

Trump dismissed it all.

"Another Fake News story out there - It never ends!" Trump tweeted. "Virtually anytime I speak on the phone to a foreign leader, I understand that there may be many people listening from various U.S. agencies, not to mention those from the other country itself. No problem!"

He asked, "Is anybody dumb enough to believe that I would say something inappropriate with a foreign leader while on such a potentially 'heavily populated' call."

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House Democrats are fighting the administration separately for access to witnesses and documents in impeachment probes. Democrats are also looking into whether Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani traveled to Ukraine to pressure the government to aid the president's reelection effort by investigating the activities of potential rival Joe Biden's son Hunter, who worked for a Ukrainian gas company.

During an interview Thursday on CNN, Giuliani was asked whether he had asked Ukraine to look into Biden. Giuliani initially said, "No, actually I didn't," but seconds later he said, "Of course I did."

Later, Giuliani tweeted, "A President telling a Pres-elect of a well known corrupt country he better investigate corruption that affects US is doing his job."

Among the materials Democrats have sought in that investigation is the transcript of a phone call Trump had with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy on July 25.

This new situation, stemming from the whistleblower's Aug. 12 complaint, has led to their public concerns that government intelligence agencies and the recently named acting director might be under pressure to withhold information from Congress.

Trump tapped Maguire, a former Navy official, as acting intelligence director in August, after the departure of Director Dan Coats, a former Republican senator who often clashed with the president, and the retirement of Sue Gordon, a career professional in the No. 2 position.

Maguire has refused to discuss details of the whistleblower complaint, but he has been subpoenaed by the House panel and is expected to testify publicly Sept. 26. Maguire and the inspector general, Michael Atkinson, also are expected next week at the Senate intelligence committee.

Atkinson wrote in letters that Schiff released Thursday that he and Maguire had hit an "impasse" over the acting director's decision not to share the complaint with Congress.

While Atkinson wrote that he believed Maguire's position was in "good faith" it did not appear to be consistent with past practice. Atkinson said he was told by the legal counsel for the intelligence director that the complaint did not actually meet the definition of an "urgent concern." And he said the Justice Department said it did not fall under the director's jurisdiction because it did not involve an intelligence professional.

Atkinson said he disagreed with that Justice Department view. The complaint "not only falls under DNI's jurisdiction," Atkinson wrote, "but relates to one of the most significant and important of DNI's responsibilities to the American people."

The inspector general went on to say he requested authorization to at the very least disclose the "general subject matter" to the committee but had not been allowed to do so. He said the information was "being kept" from Congress. These decisions, the inspector general said, are affecting his execution of his duties and responsibilities.

Illinois Rep. Mike Quigley, a member of the panel, said Atkinson said that the complaint was "based on a series of events."

In calling the inspector general to testify, Schiff said Atkinson determined the whistleblower complaint was "credible and urgent" and should be "transmitted to Congress."

The inspector general's testimony was described by three people with knowledge of the proceedings. They were not authorized to discuss the meeting by name and were granted anonymity.

Several lawmakers suggested the failure to disclose the complaint's contents amounted to a failure to protect the whistleblower, another violation. However, the general counsel for the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Jason Klitenic, wrote in a letter Tuesday to the committee that the agency was indeed protecting the whistleblower.

Andrew Bakaj, a former intelligence officer and an attorney specializing in whistleblower reprisal investigations, confirmed that he was representing the whistleblower but declined further comment.

Rep. Jim Himes, D-Conn., said on MSNBC that the acting director "broke the law when he decided to basically intercept the inspector general's report to Congress."

That's "never been done before in the history of inspector general reports to the Congress," Himes said. "And the American people should be worried about that."

Himes said, "We don't know exactly what is in the substance of this complaint. It could be nothing. It

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could be something very, very serious.”

Associated Press writers Jonathan Lemire, Eric Tucker and Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to show the Ukraine president’s surname is Zelenskiy, not Zelenskyy.

Mexico’s Los Cabos braces for approaching storm Lorena

By **IGNACIO MARTÍNEZ DE JESUS** Associated Press

CABO SAN LUCAS, Mexico (AP) — Owners pulled boats from the water and hauled them away on trailers, while shopkeepers put plywood over windows and doors as Hurricane Lorena bore down on Mexico’s resort-studded Los Cabos area.

Lorena was forecast to pass over or near the southern tip of the Baja California Peninsula Friday with heavy winds and soaking rains, and locals who have been through past hurricanes were taking no chances.

“If we don’t get the yacht out, the waves can damage it,” said Juan Hernández, who rents his craft to foreign visitors. It’s “a preventative measure for when a cyclone threatens.”

The U.S. National Hurricane Center in Miami upgraded Lorena to a Category 1 hurricane early Friday, with maximum sustained winds of 75 mph (120 kph). It was still about 100 miles (160 kilometers) away, but moving toward Cabo San Lucas at 9 mph (15 kph). Forecasters predicted damaging winds, flash flooding and life threatening surf along the peninsula.

With preparations going on around them Thursday, visitors strolled along Cabo San Lucas’ main drag buying souvenirs, though also keeping a wary eye on the nearing storm.

“We arrived on Monday and we hope to leave Sunday. ... We hope there aren’t big problems,” said Mierva Smith, a traveler from California.

A second tropical storm, Mario, was about 365 miles (590 kilometers) south of the southern tip of the Baja peninsula early Friday and had sustained winds of 65 mph (100 kilometers). But it wasn’t expected to hit land.

Authorities suspended classes for Friday and prepared to use schools as shelters if necessary. The port of Cabo San Lucas was closed to navigation.

“We are taking preventive measures,” said Baja California Sur state government secretary-general Álvaro de la Peña. “Rations, gasoline, all supplies are guaranteed. There is no need for panic buying.”

A total of 177 properties were available as potential shelters in five municipalities of the state. The region was in a state of yellow alert and anticipating heavy rains.

“Lorena is going to dump a lot of water,” said Carlos Alfredo Godínez, deputy secretary for civil defense in the state.

Lorena came onshore a day earlier as a hurricane in the western Mexican state of Colima, whipping palm trees about with its strong winds and lashing the area with sheets of rain. It flooded streets, washed out roads and touched off minor slides in 10 municipalities. Dozens of trees were downed, and power was knocked out in some areas.

Colima state Gov. José Ignacio Peralta said nearly 8 inches (2 centimeters) of rain had fallen in a little under 24 hours, and more than 7,400 acres (3,000 hectares) of crops such as bananas and papayas were damaged statewide.

But there were no deaths or significant damage to infrastructure, he said.

“There are no losses of human lives to lament,” Peralta said.

Lorena’s brush with land caused it to lose strength and become a tropical storm, but it was forecast to regain its punch as it headed toward Los Cabos.

In the Atlantic, Hurricane Jerry was gaining strength on a track that was predicted to carry it near the northern Leeward Islands on Friday and well north of Puerto Rico on Saturday before veering well east-northeast of the Bahamas, away from any land.

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Its maximum sustained winds stood at 105 mph (165 kph) early Friday. It was centered about 290 miles (465 kilometers) east of the northern Leeward Islands and was moving to the west-northwest at 16 mph (26 kph).

Elsewhere in the Atlantic, Hurricane Humberto became a post-tropical cyclone out at sea after tearing off rooftops, toppling trees and knocking out power in Bermuda while blowing past the British territory Wednesday night. Officials said the storm caused no reported deaths.

"We've made it through and everyone is safe," Premier David Burt said. "That's what is most important."

Officials said power had been restored to most customers by midday Thursday and emergency crews were clearing roads of power lines. Government offices were to reopen Friday, though schools would remain closed.

In Texas and Louisiana, heavy rains from the remnants of Tropical Depression Imelda flooded low-lying areas and caused at least two deaths.

The National Weather Service said preliminary estimates suggested that Jefferson County in Texas got more than 40 inches of rain in a span of just 72 hours. That would make it the seventh wettest tropical cyclone in U.S. history.

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. WHAT WHISTLEBLOWER COMPLAINT FOCUSES ON

The Trump administration is in a showdown with Congress over a whistleblower's "urgent" and "serious" complaint, which at least partly involves Ukraine, newspaper reports say.

2. PENTAGON TO PRESENT SEVERAL OPTIONS TO TRUMP ON IRAN

As the president considers how to respond to the attack on Saudi Arabia's oil industry, he will be presented with a list of potential airstrike targets inside the Islamic Republic. He also will be warned that military action against Tehran could escalate into war.

3. GULF TENSIONS LEAD TO REGIONAL INSTABILITY

Pro-Iranian militias across Lebanon, Syria and Iraq are being pounded militarily and monetarily, putting the governments that host them in the crosshairs of confrontation.

4. WHERE SECULAR-RELIGIOUS DIVIDE IS BEING FELT

In Israel's secular heartland, the role of religion in daily life played a central role in this week's deadlocked election — and may have contributed to Benjamin Netanyahu's second-place finish.

5. 'STOP THE POLLUTION'

Protesters gather at rallies around the world for demonstrations calling for action to guard against climate change ahead of a U.N. summit in New York.

6. DEADLY IMELDA DELUGES TEXAS

The slow-churning remnants of the tropical storm that flooded parts of Texas leaves rescue crews scrambling to reach stranded drivers and families trapped in homes.

7. EXPERTS OPINE ON BROWNFACE SCANDAL

The uproar surrounding Canadian leader Justin Trudeau brings attention to a practice that scholars say white people have been using for years to demean minorities.

8. CENTRAL AMERICA BATTLES DENGUE EPIDEMIC

Honduras has by far the highest death rate from the mosquito-borne viral infection in Latin America this year with nearly two-thirds of the infected children.

9. 'SEE THEM ALIENS'

The music starts for revelers braving a long drive to a dusty festival ground in the remote Nevada desert near the once-secret Area 51 military base.

10. JAGUARS THUMP TITANS IN AFC SOUTH TILT

Gardner Minshew throws two touchdown passes and Calais Campbell spearheads a defensive gem as

Jacksonville beat Tennessee 20-7.

Tens of thousands join climate protests before UN summit

By ROD McGUIRK Associated Press

CANBERRA, Australia (AP) — Tens of thousands of protesters joined rallies on Friday as a day of world-wide demonstrations calling for action against climate change began ahead of a U.N. summit in New York.

Some of the first rallies in what is being billed as a "global climate strike" were held in Australia's largest city, Sydney, and the national capital, Canberra. Australian demonstrators called for their nation, which is the world's largest exporter of coal and liquid natural gas, to take more drastic action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Organizers estimate more than 300,000 protesters took to Australian streets in what would be the largest demonstrations in the country since the Iraq War began in 2003.

Similar rallies were planned Friday in cities around the globe. In the United States more than 800 events were planned, while in Germany more than 400 rallies were expected.

In New Delhi, one of the world's most polluted cities, dozens of students and environmental activists chanted "We want climate action" and "I want to breathe clean" at a rally outside the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

They carried banners with some displaying messages like "There is no Earth B."

Hundreds of people marched in Thailand's capital and staged a "die-in" outside the Ministry of Natural Resources to demand the government declare a climate emergency, ban coal energy by 2025 and completely replace fossil fuel energy with renewable energy by 2040.

In Hong Kong, where near-daily protests all summer have demanded greater democracy, about 50 people found a different reason to demonstrate: climate change.

Carrying banners and posters, they chanted "Stop the pollution" as they marched along the harbor front under a blazing sun.

The protests are partly inspired by the activism of Swedish teenager Greta Thunberg, who has staged weekly demonstrations under the heading "Fridays for Future" over the past year, calling on world leaders to step up their efforts against climate change. Many who have followed her lead are students, but the movement has since spread to civil society groups.

Similar coordinated protests in March drew crowds around the world.

Protests were staged in 110 towns and cities across Australia on Friday, with organizers demanding government and business commit to a target of net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

Australian universities said they would not penalize students for attending Friday's rallies, while Australian schools varied on what action, if any, they would take against children who skipped classes to attend demonstrations.

Siobhan Sutton, a 15-year-old student at Perth Modern School, said she would fail a math exam by attending a protest in the west coast city of Perth.

"I have basically been told that because it is not a valid reason to be missing school — it is not a medical reason or anything — I am going to get a zero on the test if I don't actually sit it," she said.

"Even though we ourselves aren't sick, the planet which we live on is, and we are protesting and fighting for it," she added.

Siobhan said her math teacher had given her the option to sit the exam before Friday, but she was unable to do so because of her commitments as one of the protest organizers.

Acting Prime Minister Michael McCormack said students should be in school.

"These sorts of rallies should be held on a weekend where it doesn't actually disrupt business, it doesn't disrupt schools, it doesn't disrupt universities," McCormack told reporters in Melbourne.

"I think it is just a disruption," he added.

School Strike 4 Climate said 265,000 protesters turned out at demonstrations in seven Australian cities alone. The largest crowd was an estimated 100,000 in Melbourne, followed by 80,000 in Sydney.

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Most police services declined to release their own crowd estimates. Organizers put the crowd in Brisbane at 30,000, while police estimated 12,000. Organizers said 15,000 rallied in Canberra, but police said 7,000. Australian police have a reputation for underestimating by half crowd numbers at protests.

The demonstrations come as Australia's center-left opposition mulls abandoning its policy, rejected at May elections, of reducing Australia's greenhouse gas emissions by 45% below 2005 levels by 2030. Prime Minister Scott Morrison's conservative coalition won a surprise third term with a commitment to reduce emissions by a more modest 26% to 28% in the same time frame.

Morrison is in the U.S. for a state dinner with President Donald Trump on Friday and has been criticized for failing to include in his New York itinerary the U.N. climate summit on Monday, when leaders will present their long-term plans for curbing greenhouse gas emissions.

Some companies are encouraging their employees to join the climate strike.

Australian Council of Trade Unions, which represents labor unions, said it supported employees taking time off work to protest.

The council said in a statement that it "must take a stand for our future when our government will not."

The demonstrations in 2003 that protested Australia sending combat troops to the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq were the largest since the Vietnam War.

Music starts for Earthlings around Area 51 events in Nevada

By KEN RITTER Associated Press

HIKO, Nev. (AP) — Sound checks echoed from a distant main stage while Daniel Martinez whirled and danced at dusty makeshift festival grounds just after sunset in Rachel, the Nevada town closest to the once-secret Area 51 military base.

Martinez's muse was the thumping beat from a satellite set-up pumping a techno tune into the chilly desert night Thursday.

Warm beneath a wolf "spirit hood" and matching faux fur jacket, the 31-year-old in Pokemon collectible cards dealer said people, not the military base, drew him drive more than six hours from Pomona, California, alone.

"Here's a big open space for people to be," he said. "One person starts something and it infects everybody with positivity. Anything can happen if you give people a place to be."

Minutes later, the music group Wily Savage started, and campers began migrating toward main stage light near the Little A'Le'Inn.

The music kicked off weekend events — inspired by an internet hoax to "see them aliens" — that Lincoln County Sheriff Kerry Lee said had drawn perhaps 1,500 people to two tiny desert towns.

Lee said late Thursday that more than 150 people also made the rugged trip on washboard dirt roads to get within selfie distance of two gates to the Area 51 U.S. Air Force installation that has long fueled speculation about government studies of space aliens and UFOs.

The Air Force has issued stern warnings for people not to try to enter the Nevada Test and Training Range, where Area 51 is located.

Lee said no arrests were made.

"It's public land," the sheriff said. "They're allowed to go to the gate, as long as they don't cross the boundary."

Authorities reported no serious incidents related to festivals scheduled until Sunday in Rachel and Hiko, the two towns closest to Area 51. They're about a 45-minute drive apart on a state road dubbed the Extraterrestrial Highway, and a two-hour drive from Las Vegas.

Earlier, as Wily Savage band members helped erect the wooden frame for a stage shade in Rachel, guitarist Alon Burton said he saw a chance to perform for people who, like Martinez, were looking for a scene in which to be seen.

"It started as a joke, but it's not a joke for us," he said. "We know people will come out. We just don't know how many."

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Michael Ian Borer, a University of Nevada, Las Vegas, sociologist who researches pop culture and paranormal activity, called the festivities sparked by the internet joke "a perfect blend of interest in aliens and the supernatural, government conspiracies, and the desire to know what we don't know."

The result, Borer said, was "hope and fear" for events that include the "Area 51 Basecamp" featuring music, speakers and movies in Hiko, and festivals in Rachel and Las Vegas competing for the name "Alienstock."

"People desire to be part of something, to be ahead of the curve," Borer said. "Area 51 is a place where normal, ordinary citizens can't go. When you tell people they can't do something, they just want to do it more."

Eric Holt, the Lincoln County emergency manager overseeing preparations, said he believed authorities could handle 30,000 visitors at the two events in Rachel and Hiko.

Still, neighbors braced for trouble after millions of people responded to the "Storm Area 51" Facebook post weeks ago.

"Those that know what to expect camping in the desert are going to have a good time," said Joerg Arnu, a Rachel resident who can see the festival grounds from his home.

Those who show up in shorts and flip-flops will find no protection against "critters, snakes and scorpions."

"It will get cold at night. They're not going to find what they're looking for, and they are going to get angry," Arnu said.

Some cellphones didn't work Thursday in Rachel, and officials expect what service there was to eventually be overwhelmed.

The Federal Aviation Administration closed nearby airspace, although Air Force jets could be heard in the sun-drenched skies, along with an occasional sonic boom.

George Harris, owner of the Alien Research Center souvenir store in Hiko, said Friday and Saturday's "Area 51 Basecamp" will focus on music, movies and talks about extraterrestrial lore.

Electronic dance music DJ and recording artist Paul Oakenfold is Friday's headliner in Hiko.

The event also promises food trucks and vendors, trash and electric service, and a robust security and medical staff.

Harris said he was prepared for as many as 15,000 people and expected they would appreciate taking selfies with a replica of the Area 51 back gate without having to travel several miles to the real thing.

Sharon Wehrly, sheriff in adjacent Nye County, home to a conspicuously green establishment called the Area 51 Alien Center, said messages discouraging Earthlings from trying to find extraterrestrials in Amargosa Valley appeared to work.

She reported no arrests or incidents Thursday.

Her deputies last week arrested two Dutch tourists attracted by "Storm Area 51." The men pleaded guilty to trespassing at a secure U.S. site nowhere near Area 51 and were sentenced to three days in jail after promising to pay nearly \$2,300 each in fines.

AP Explains: Brownface part of racist face makeup history

By RUSSELL CONTRERAS Associated Press

ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. (AP) — The scandal surrounding Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau after a yearbook photo showing him in brownface at a 2001 costume party was published is bringing attention to a practice that scholars say white people have been using for years to demean minorities.

In the picture, the then-29-year-old Trudeau is at an "Arabian Nights" party wearing a turban and robe, with dark brown makeup on his hands, face and neck. Like U.S. governors in Virginia and Alabama who have apologized for wearing blackface years before entering politics, Trudeau, who also has said he's sorry, is facing the political crisis of his career.

The practice of members of a dominant population darkening their skin with makeup reinforces racial stereotypes and reduces Native Americans, Latinos, African Americans and other people of color based on skin tones and exaggerated physical features, social scientists say.

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A look at how white people have used makeup to darken their complexion throughout history and in recent times to portray or mock members of racial minority groups:

IN ART

William Shakespeare's plays featured several minority characters but in the early days of their adaptations — and in the modern era — they were played by white male actors. These performers wore blackface or brownface to portray Othello, a Moor, in "Othello" and dark face makeup to depict the indigenous Caliban in "The Tempest."

In 19th century U.S., performer Thomas Dartmouth Rice popularized minstrel shows by wearing blackface and adopting what he thought was African American vernacular. Other performers mimicked Rice and used blackface and stereotypes of African Americans to create one of the most popular forms of art in the nation's history despite protests from black intellectuals and activists. Blackface would influence how white people would depict other ethnic groups in the U.S.

Hollywood would continue to allow white actors to wear racist makeup to portray black, Latino and Asian American characters through the 20th century instead of using actors of color. In the 1951 film adaptation of "Othello," white actor-director Orson Welles donned bronze makeup in his portrayal of Othello. Charlton Heston wore brownface to portray Mexican law enforcement officer Ramon Vargas in the 1958 movie "Touch of Evil."

IN MEDIA

In 2012, an advertisement for Popchips starring Ashton Kutcher in brownface and using an exaggerated Indian accent was pulled following an outcry from Indian Americans. But blackface and brownface images aren't only found in the U.S. and have shown up in media around the world.

The producer of a British documentary about Muslims came under criticism in 2017 for putting a white woman in brownface to immerse her into the life of a Pakistani Muslim family in Manchester, England. The documentary "My Week as a Muslim" required Katie Freeman to darken her skin, wear fake teeth and don brown contact lenses.

Earlier this year, Italian airline Alitalia pulled an advertisement promoting flights to Washington, D.C., in which an actor in blackface portrayed former President Barack Obama.

In Singapore, a recent e-payment advertisement featuring a Chinese comedian in brownface sparked criticism among some ethnic Indians and Malays. The company and the creative agency later apologized.

IN COMEDY

A leading television station in Peru was fined \$26,000 for airing the popular comedy character Negro Mama on an entertainment show in 2013. The character is played by Jorge Benavides, who dons blackface, exaggerated lips and a flaring nose.

Earlier this year, a television personality for the Mexican-based Televisa network faced sharp criticism after dressing up in brownface and wearing a prosthetic nose to make fun of indigenous Mexican actress Yalitza Aparicio. Televisa later deleted a tweet of a video of the television personality in brownface mimicking Aparicio, who attended the Oscars after being nominated for best actress.

The New York Times reported in August that a private channel in Libya came under fire earlier this year following a comedy skit in which an actress in blackface tells elevator passengers to "Watch my babies!" When passengers pull back a carriage cover, monkeys jump out. Activists say the skit was an example of racist stereotypes regularly seen in Arab comedy.

IN SPORTS, OTHER EVENTS

Every year, confrontations break out in the Netherlands over the helper of the Dutch version of Santa Claus. Known as Black Pete, the character is played by white people in blackface at children's events. The tensions come as Dutch children anticipate the arrival of their country's version of Santa Claus, which feature Black Pete. White people often daub their faces with black paint when they dress up to play the character. Opponents say the annual recreations of Black Pete promote racist stereotypes.

Throughout America's history, white people have donned redface, worn fringe and feathers, and spoken in broken English as they "played" or portrayed Native Americans. But almost every week during football season, fans paint themselves "red" in honor of their Native American mascot names like the Washington

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Redskins. Native American activists have responded with protest and a #notyourmascot social media campaign.

In 2014, then-University of Louisville President James Ramsey issued an apology after the Courier-Journal published a photo of him and staff wearing fake mustaches, mantilla veils and sombreros. It was unclear if the photo was related to the annual Hispanic Heritage Month on campus.

This story has been corrected to show a U.S. governor in Alabama apologized for wearing blackface years before entering politics, not a governor in Mississippi.

Russell Contreras reported from Albuquerque, New Mexico. He is a member of The Associated Press' race and ethnicity team.

Follow him on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/russcontreras>

Minshew, defense shine as Jaguars thump Titans 20-7

By MARK LONG AP Sports Writer

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP) — Minshew Mania is gaining momentum.

Gardner Minshew threw two touchdown passes and should have had a third, Calais Campbell spearheaded another defensive gem and the Jacksonville Jaguars handled the Tennessee Titans 20-7 in sloppy conditions Thursday night.

Jacksonville (1-2) ended a four-game losing streak in the AFC South series and avoided the franchise's second 0-3 start in four years.

"This felt good," defensive tackle Abry Jones said. "We needed this."

With all eyes on star cornerback Jalen Ramsey, who may have played his final game for Jacksonville, Minshew and a second stellar defensive outing in five days captured the spotlight.

A sixth-round draft pick starting his second consecutive game in place of injured Nick Foles (broken collarbone), Minshew completed 20 of 30 passes for 204 yards. He found James O'Shaughnessy wide open for a 7-yard score, which came one play after Adoree' Jackson's muffed punt. Minshew was more precise with a 22-yard touchdown pass to DJ Chark, who was blanketed by Malcolm Butler.

Fans chanted Minshew's name each time the offense took the field, and fans everywhere adorned fake mustaches and bandanas to mimic his signature look.

Marcus Mariota got no style points in this one. Jacksonville sacked Mariota a whopping nine times, including three by Campbell.

"You seen what the D-line did," Ramsey said, declining to talk about his potential trade. "Today was their day. Everybody got a piece of it. I was excited to see those guys have a huge game."

The Jaguars played well enough to win at Houston last week, especially on the defensive side, but came up inches short on a 2-point conversion and lost 13-12.

Ramsey then gut-punched a franchise already reeling from the loss of Foles by requesting a trade hours after the loss to the Texans. He asked to get out following his sideline confrontation with coach Doug Marrone.

Ramsey later insisted he didn't want to be a distraction. He wasn't, at least not on the field.

The Jaguars enjoyed a 14-point lead in the first quarter for the first time since Week 2 of last season against New England and just the third time in the last five seasons.

Ramsey hugged several teammates after the game, but didn't say any goodbyes in the locker room.

"He didn't have to say anything," Jones said. "He may be going to another team, but no one's going to be hurt by that. It's a business decision."

The Titans (1-2) struggled to play from behind.

With his team trailing 14-0 early in the third, coach Mike Vrabel passed on a short field goal and went for it on fourth-and-6 at the 11. Campbell abused backup guard Jamil Douglas, and Mariota had no time to get rid of the ball.

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"That's not how you want to play that football team, from behind," Vrabel said. "We talked about that. This football team, you don't want to play from behind. They can really rush the passer."

Tennessee finally got on the scoreboard with Derrick Henry's 1-yard plunge early in the fourth. Henry finished with 44 yards on 17 carries, a far cry from his last game against Jacksonville. Henry ran for a franchise-record 238 yards and four touchdowns, including the second 99-yard run in NFL history (Tony Dorsett, 1983), in December.

Jacksonville wasn't going to let it happen again, stacking the box and doing a much better job tackling the 247-pound back.

Even Ramsey got in a couple of shots on the 2015 Heisman Trophy winner.

QUESTIONABLE CALLS

The officiating was roundly ripped — in the stands and around the country. The most head-scratching flags: Titans linebacker Kamalei Correa was called for roughing the passer in the second quarter, and Tennessee cornerback Logan Ryan was penalized for pass interference after barely touching Dede Westbrook.

Patriots quarterback Tom Brady tweeted, "Too many penalties. Just let us play!!!!" He followed that tweet without another one a few minutes later, saying "I'm turning off this game I can't watch these ridiculous penalties anymore."

Suspended Titans left tackle Taylor Lewan later added, "Wow, who would have thought that the refs would mess up so many calls?"

INJURIES

Jaguars linebacker Myles Jack took a knee to the helmet in the third quarter, was later ruled out and placed in the concussion protocol. ... Jaguars receiver Chris Conley sprained his left ankle while blocking in the second, but later returned. ... Titans linebacker Rashaan Evans injured his left shoulder just before halftime, returned in the second half and then left the field again in the fourth. ... Titans linebacker Sharif Finch injured his right ankle in the third.

DEDE DROPS

Jaguars receiver Dede Westbrook dropped a would-be touchdown in the third quarter, and Jacksonville had to settle for a 40-yard field goal and a 17-0 lead. It was Westbrook's third drop of the night.

UP NEXT

The Titans play at Atlanta. Tennessee has dropped the last two meetings.

The Jaguars play at Denver. Jacksonville has dropped the last two meetings.

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

2 dead as Imelda strands drivers, floods homes in Texas

By JUAN A. LOZANO Associated Press

CHINA, Texas (AP) — The slow-churning remnants of Tropical Storm Imelda flooded parts of Texas on Thursday, leaving at least two people dead and rescue crews with boats scrambling to reach stranded drivers and families trapped in their homes during a relentless downpour that drew comparisons to Hurricane Harvey two years ago.

By Thursday night, floodwaters had started receding in most of the Houston area, said the city's mayor, Sylvester Turner. Law enforcement officers planned to work well into the night to clear freeways of vehicles stalled and abandoned because of flooding, Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo said.

Officials in Harris County, which includes Houston, said there had been a combination of at least 1,700 high-water rescues and evacuations to get people to shelter as the longevity and intensity of the rain quickly came to surprise even those who had been bracing for floods. The storm also flooded parts of southwestern Louisiana.

More than 900 flights were canceled or delayed in Houston. Further along the Texas Gulf Coast, authorities at one point warned that a levee could break near Beaumont in Jefferson County. During Harvey, Beaumont's only pump station was swamped by floodwaters, leaving residents without water service for

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more than a week.

Imelda's remnants Thursday led to the deaths of two men. A 19-year-old man drowned and was electrocuted while trying to move his horse to safety, according to a message from his family shared by the Jefferson County Sheriff's Office. Crystal Holmes, a spokeswoman for the department, said the death occurred during a lightning storm.

A man in his 40s or 50s drowned when he tried to drive a van through 8-foot-deep floodwaters near Bush Intercontinental Airport in Houston during the Thursday afternoon rush hour, Harris County Sheriff Ed Gonzalez said.

The National Weather Service said preliminary estimates suggested that Jefferson County was deluged with more than 40 inches (102 centimeters) of rain in a span of just 72 hours, which would make it the seventh wettest tropical cyclone in U.S. history.

Even when Houston was finally rid of the worst, downtown highways remained littered with abandoned cars submerged in water. Thousands of other drivers were at a practical standstill on narrowed lanes near flooded banks.

"The water kept rising. It kept rising. I couldn't believe it," said Ruby Trahan Robinson, 63. She uses a wheelchair and had a portable oxygen tank while getting settled into a shelter at City Hall in the small town of China, just outside Beaumont.

"It rolled in like a river," she said.

Turner evoked the memory of Harvey — which dumped more than 50 inches (127 centimeters) of rain on the nation's fourth-largest city in 2017 — while pleading with residents to stay put. City officials said they had received more than 1,500 high-water rescue calls to 911, most from drivers stuck on flooded roads, but authorities described a number of them as people who were inconvenienced and not in immediate danger.

Ahead of the evening rush hour, Houston officials urged commuters to stay in their offices for an extra three to four hours rather than embark on flooded and already jammed highways. Turner made a similar appeal to parents of schoolchildren as the Houston Independent School District — Texas' largest with more than 200,000 students — did not cancel classes or shorten the day unlike neighboring districts in the path of the storm. The district canceled Friday classes.

Imelda is the first named storm to impact the Houston area since Harvey hovered for days and inundated the flood-prone Gulf Coast. That storm dumped more than 5 feet (1.5 meters) of water near the Louisiana border, and two years later, it looked in some places like Harvey was playing out all over again.

A massive Houston furniture store became a shelter for evacuees. Live television footage showed firefighters rescuing stranded truckers on major highways. On social media, people posted that water was quickly seeping into their home and asked for help.

Even as the intensity of the storm weakened, Harris County officials warned that some of their 4.7 million residents might not see high waters recede in their neighborhoods until the weekend.

In Winnie, a town of about 3,200 people 60 miles (95 kilometers) east of Houston, a hospital was evacuated. Chambers County Sheriff Brian Hawthorne said emergency workers completed more than 300 rescues overnight and some residents were up on their roofs because of rising floodwaters.

Albert Livings, 73, was rescued from his apartment and said at least half of the 116 units in his complex were flooded. Water started seeping into his place before sunrise.

"It came from the front door and it didn't stop rolling until it hit the back wall," Livings said.

Following Harvey, Texas Gov. Greg Abbott ordered a report warning that punishing storms would become more frequent because of a changing climate. Scientists say climate change is responsible for more intense and more frequent extreme weather such as storms, droughts, floods and fires, but without extensive study they cannot directly link a single weather event to the changing climate.

Climate change skepticism runs deep among Republican leaders in Texas, and Abbott has said it's "impossible" for him to say whether he believes manmade global warming is causing the kind of disasters the state is telling residents to get used to. Earlier this year, Abbott approved billions of new dollars to fortify the Texas coast and reduce catastrophic flooding.

The flooding from Imelda came as Hurricane Humberto blew off rooftops and toppled trees in the British

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Atlantic island of Bermuda, and Hurricane Jerry was expected to move to the northern Leeward Islands on Friday and north of Puerto Rico on Saturday.

This story has been corrected to show that Gonzalez is Harris County sheriff, not judge.

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

Associated Press writers Diana Heidgerd, Terry Wallace and Jamie Stengle in Dallas; Clarice Silber and Paul J. Weber in Austin; and Jill Bleed in Little Rock, Arkansas, contributed to this report.

Hurricane rips roofs, cuts power in Bermuda, but no deaths

MIAMI (AP) — Hurricane Humberto blew off rooftops, toppled trees and knocked out power as it blew past the British Atlantic island of Bermuda. But officials said Thursday that the Category 3 storm caused no reported deaths.

"We've made it through and everyone is safe," Premier David Burt said. "That's what is most important."

Security Minister Wayne Caines said power had been restored to most customers by midday Thursday and emergency crews were clearing roads of power lines damaged by the hurricane, which had winds of about 120 mph (195 kph) at its nearest approach to the island Wednesday night.

Caines said government offices would reopen Friday, though schools would remain closed.

"The country is getting back on its feet and the good news is there was no loss of life," he said.

The U.S. National Hurricane Center said Humberto had become a post-tropical cyclone out in the Atlantic, but would still kick up high surf at Bermuda and on the U.S. coast for a few days.

The storm had maximum sustained winds of 100 mph (155 kph) late Thursday, with tropical storm-force winds extending outward for 380 miles (610 kilometers). The storm was centered about 525 miles (845 kilometers) south-southwest of Cape Race, Newfoundland, and moving to the northeast at 20 mph (31 kph).

Meanwhile, a brush with land near Puerto Vallarta knocked newly formed Hurricane Lorena back down to tropical storm force, though forecasters said it would soon become a hurricane again on a track that would carry it close to the Los Cabos resorts at the tip of the Baja California Peninsula by midday Friday.

The storm's center came onshore in darkness in the western state of Colima, whipping palm trees about with its strong winds and lashing the area with sheets of rain.

Lorena flooded streets, washed out roads and touched off minor slides in 10 municipalities. Dozens of trees were downed, and there were power outages in some areas.

Water topped the banks of an arroyo and swamped some homes in the port city of Manzanillo, where 21 people sought refuge at a temporary shelter at a school, state Gov. José Ignacio Peralta said Thursday.

At an afternoon news conference, Peralta said nearly 8 inches (2 centimeters) of rain had fallen in a little under 24 hours, and more than 7,400 acres (3,000 hectares) of crops such as bananas and papayas were damaged statewide.

But there were no deaths or significant damage to infrastructure, he said.

"There are no losses of human lives to lament," Peralta said.

Lorena had maximum sustained winds of 70 mph (110 kph) late Thursday and it was centered about 145 miles (235 kilometers) east-southeast of Cabo San Lucas. It was moving to the northwest at 12 mph (19 kph).

Forecasters said the storm could bring 5 to 10 inches (12.5 to 25 centimeters) of rain to parts of the region. Mexican officials voiced concern that some parts of southern Mexico, which have seen a lack of rainfall, could suffer dangerous flash floods and landslides unleashed by torrential rain.

Authorities in Los Cabos said schools would be closed Friday.

Another tropical storm, Mario, was also moving north across the Pacific farther out to sea. It was about 365 miles (590 kilometers) south of the southern tip of the Baja California Peninsula and had sustained winds of 65 mph (100 kilometers). It wasn't expected to hit land, however.

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In Texas and Louisiana, heavy rains from the remains of Tropical Depression Imelda flooded low-lying areas and caused at least two deaths.

The National Weather Service said preliminary estimates suggested that Jefferson County in Texas got more than 40 inches of rain in a span of just 72 hours. That would make it the seventh wettest tropical cyclone in U.S. history.

Elsewhere in the Atlantic region, Jerry strengthened into a hurricane on a track that would carry it near the northern Leeward Islands on Friday and north of Puerto Rico on Saturday.

Its maximum sustained winds continued to strengthen, reaching 105 mph (165 kph) by late Thursday. It was centered about 385 miles (625 kilometers) east of the northern Leeward Islands and was moving to the west-northwest at 16 mph (26 kph).

Who are the Sacklers, the family behind maker of OxyContin?

By GEOFF MULVIHILL Associated Press

For a family with its name on a wing of one of the world's most famous museums and a school at a prestigious university, members of the Sackler clan have done a remarkable job of vanishing from public life.

The family owns OxyContin maker Purdue Pharma, which filed for bankruptcy this week as part of an effort to settle some 2,600 lawsuits accusing it of helping spark the national opioid crisis that has killed more than 400,000 people in the U.S. in the last two decades.

Any settlement deal is likely to take a cut of their future income, and some states have sought to go after the Sacklers' wealth, much of which has moved through a complex chain of companies and trusts in offshore tax havens. In a filing Wednesday, Purdue asked a bankruptcy court to halt all litigation against family members as well as the company.

The relatives have rarely spoken publicly in recent years and did not show up to the first bankruptcy hearing this week, in White Plains, New York. Here are some basic facts about the family:

THE COMPANY OWNERSHIP

Brothers Mortimer, Raymond and Arthur Sackler — all physicians — bought the drug company known as Purdue Frederick in 1952. They are all dead, but the widows, children and grandchildren of Mortimer and Raymond now own the company, along with an international drug company, Mundipharma.

Purdue is privately held, and its board has been mainly controlled by Sackler heirs over the years, until legal issues began piling up in the last year. No family members are currently on the board.

In court filings, lawyers for family members have argued that their clients, serving as company directors, were not heavily involved in day-to-day decisions at the company.

THE FAMILY BRANCHES: ARTHUR SACKLER

Arthur Sackler became a force in the drug industry separate from Purdue. In addition to his medical background, he worked in advertising and designed campaigns aimed at doctors for blockbuster drugs such as Valium.

In 1997, Sackler was posthumously placed in the Medical Advertising Hall of Fame, where the citation about him says that he "helped shape pharmaceutical promotion as we know it today."

But Arthur Sackler died years before OxyContin hit the market. And states that have filed lawsuits against members of the family have not named his heirs. Arthur Sackler's widow, Jillian Sackler, a major donor, has told institutions that her husband's money did not come from OxyContin.

"Suggestions that his philanthropy is now somehow tainted are simply false," she wrote earlier this year in a Washington Post opinion piece.

THE FAMILY BRANCHES: RAYMOND SACKLER

Raymond Sackler's son Richard, who now lives in Florida, was an executive at Purdue when OxyContin launched in 1996 and later became CEO of the company.

Plaintiffs in the lawsuits have seized on his words, especially his remarks to the company sales force at

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a 1996 launch party for OxyContin held just after a major snowstorm. He said the launch of the tablets would "be followed by a blizzard of prescriptions that will bury the competition. The prescription blizzard will be so deep, dense and white."

The drug did become a blockbuster, though generic opioids were prescribed far more often. Still, state and local governments that are suing the company assert that marketing by Purdue opened the door to wider use of prescription opioids.

Richard Sackler wrote in a 1999 email cited in court filings, "You won't believe how committed I am to make OxyContin a huge success. It is almost that I dedicated my life to it."

In a 2015 deposition, he tried to estimate how much the family had made from OxyContin. He said it was over \$1 billion but less than \$10 billion. In a video of the deposition that emerged in August, he was asked if he believed OxyContin was marketed too aggressively. He answered with a single word — "no" — while barely glancing up from papers he was looking through.

Representatives for Raymond Sackler's branch of the family did not respond to interview requests.

THE FAMILY BRANCHES: MORTIMER SACKLER

At the end of his life, Mortimer Sackler lived in London. His widow, Theresa, who lives in England, and children Mortimer D.A. Sackler, Kathe Sackler and Ilene Sackler Lefcourt are all former board members and are named in lawsuits.

Mortimer D.A. Sackler and Kathe Sackler were also Purdue executives.

In an April 1 deposition, Kathe Sackler was asked about an email attributed to her that concluded, "PS, I will strenuously protest approval of any document that suggests or implies, as this draft does, that Richard Sackler was responsible for the idea of developing a controlled-release oxycodone product. As you know, when I told Richard of my idea in the mid '80s, he asked me what oxycodone was."

In questioning under oath, though, she said she did not remember writing that and that it would have been uncharacteristic of her to do so.

Representatives Mortimer Sackler's branch of the family did not respond to interview requests.

THE MONEY

In 2016, Forbes magazine listed the Sacklers as one of the 20 wealthiest families in the U.S. and tallied their holdings at \$13 billion.

For decades, the family members have been major philanthropic donors. In the 1970s, they underwrote the Metropolitan Museum of Art wing that houses an ancient Egyptian temple and bears the Sackler name.

This year, institutions including the Met, Britain's Tate museums, New York's Guggenheim and Tufts University, where the graduate school of biomedical sciences also bears the family's name, have announced they will stop taking gifts from the family or re-evaluate the relationship. The Louvre Museum in Paris took the Sackler name off a wing.

In legal filings, states have contended that the heirs of Mortimer and Raymond Sackler have accepted payments of at least \$4 billion over the last dozen years.

Arizona's attorney general has asked the U.S. Supreme Court to force the family to return some money to Purdue so it could be fair game in lawsuits against the company. New York's attorney general has requested financial records of entities connected to the family to try to trace the money. Her office said in a legal filing this month that it found \$1 billion transferred to the family through Swiss banks and other secret accounts.

THE YOUNGER GENERATION

The major exception to the Sackler family's silence in recent years came when Richard Sackler's son David and David's wife, Joss, both in their 30s, both gave interviews for magazine profiles published earlier this year.

Joss Sackler has a doctorate in linguistics, serves as a rock climbing guide and has a fashion line. In

a Town & Country interview, she expressed frustration with media attention on her connection to the Sacklers rather than her own work. More recently, she feuded about OxyContin with rock star Courtney Love, who said in an Instagram post this month directed at Joss Sackler, "Your. People. Killed. My. People."

David Sackler, a Princeton University graduate who runs a family investment firm, made headlines last year when it was reported that he had paid \$22.5 million in cash for a mansion in Los Angeles' Bel Air neighborhood. He told Vanity Fair that the family has been vilified in part because family members have not told their story publicly.

"We have not done a good job of talking about this," he said. "That's what I regret the most."

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Key Senate panel approves \$250 million for election security

By ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A key Senate panel on Thursday approved \$250 million to help states beef up their election systems, freeing up the money after Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell came under criticism from Democrats for impeding separate election security legislation.

The Kentucky Republican announced in a floor speech in advance of the Appropriations Committee vote that he would support the funding, which had bipartisan support on the funding panel. McConnell still isn't yielding in his opposition to more ambitious Democratic steps such as requiring backup paper ballots as a backstop against potential hacks of election systems.

He said the Trump administration has "made enormous strides" in protecting the nation's voting infrastructure.

The committee approved the money on a bipartisan voice vote. The panel's top Democrat, Patrick Leahy, said "funding election security grants is a matter of national security." The House approved \$600 million earlier this year, though there is considerable money left in the pipeline from earlier appropriations.

Democrat Chris Coons said the funding would help states invest in updated voting systems and combat cyberattacks from foreign actors such as Russia, whose widespread efforts on behalf of President Donald Trump's campaign were documented by special counsel Robert Mueller.

"We are simply responding to what I know to be an unmet need," Coons said. "In 2016 we all know the Russian government's military intelligence branch directed extensive activity against our election infrastructure and I think there is important undone work in providing modest federal support that will make some progress in assuring that our election infrastructure is protected."

An earlier version of a spending bill that funds the Federal Election Assistance Commission did not include the money. But Leahy and Coons appeared to have GOP allies on the powerful Appropriations panel and the committee's top Republican opted for bipartisan negotiations.

"Funding election security grants is a matter of national security, preserving our democracy, and maintaining full faith in our elections," Leahy said, calling the grants "a vital issue this committee has not funded since fiscal year 2018, despite a persistent — and confirmed — threat of interference in our elections by foreign adversaries."

The House has passed significantly broader election security legislation, but McConnell opposes the measure and has discouraged the Senate Rules Committee from acting on a companion bill.

"The Trump administration has made enormous strides to help states secure their elections without giving Washington new power to push the states around," McConnell said.

Sen. Ron Wyden, D-Ore., who has been outspoken about the need for improved election security, called the proposal a "joke" and an effort by McConnell to "desperately" get the issue to go away.

"This amendment doesn't even require the funding be spent on election security — it can go for anything related to elections," Wyden said in a statement. "Giving states taxpayer money to buy hackable, paperless machines or systems with poor cybersecurity is a waste."

Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., was more measured.

"Maybe, just maybe Republicans are starting to come around to our view election security is necessary, that if Americans don't believe their elections are on the up and up, woe is us as a country, as a democracy," Schumer said. "It's not all the money we have requested and doesn't include a single solitary reform that virtually everyone knows we need, but it's a start."

House Speaker Nancy Pelosi issued a statement with other top Democrats calling McConnell's move "the smallest of steps to help guard against foreign election interference" and vowing to press for more action in upcoming spending bill negotiations this fall.

But Sen. James Lankford, R-Okla., said there is about \$250 million in unspent funds from a \$380 million appropriation for the 2018 budget year. He said oversight is needed given the loose strings on the grants to states.

Critics of McConnell such as MSNBC host Joe Scarborough have taken to calling him "Moscow Mitch" over his refusal to bring the separate election security measure up for a Senate vote.

Democrats say McConnell is shunning the stand-alone election security legislation because it could be seen as a slap at Trump, who has discounted Russian interference in the election.

AP writer Tami Abdollah contributed to this report.

Recording details synagogue shooting suspect's 911 call

By ELLIOT SPAGAT Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — Prosecutors on Thursday played a 12-minute recording of a gunman calmly telling a 911 dispatcher that he had just fired an assault rifle inside a synagogue to save white people from Jews, describing terms for a peaceful surrender and scolding law enforcement for taking too much time to find him in his parked car.

John T. Earnest, 20, sat stone-faced with his arms folded on his lap during hours of testimony at a hearing to determine if there is enough evidence for a judge to order him to stand trial on charges of murder, attempted murder and arson.

One woman was killed in the lobby of Chabad of Poway synagogue and three people were wounded during a service on April 27, the last day of Passover. Earnest has pleaded not guilty.

"I'm defending our nation against the Jewish people, who are trying to destroy all white people," the caller, who identified himself as John Earnest, told the dispatcher in an even, almost casual tone.

Earnest gave details of where he was waiting for police in his Honda Civic. He promised to leave his AR-15 assault rifle on the passenger seat and get out of the car with a supply of bullets hanging on the chest of his vest, as if his surrender had been planned in advance.

As the caller spoke about his hatred of Jews, another dispatcher steered him back to describing where he was. He readily answered all questions.

Twice during the call, he expressed impatience that law enforcement hadn't arrived, saying they were bad at their jobs.

"You guys are taking a long-ass time. You realize you're fighting the wrong people?" he said.

The 911 recording was played publicly for the first time during the dramatic day in court that included surveillance video of the shooting and a congregant describing how he singlehandedly confronted the gunman and chased him away.

San Diego police Officer Jonathan Wiese testified that he sped north on Interstate 15 at about 130 mph as reports of a shooting in suburban Poway came in over his radio. It took him just under 10 minutes to find Earnest alone.

The suspect got out of his car as promised, kneeled as ordered, then rose to his feet after being handcuffed.

"His first statement was, 'How's your day going?'" said Wiese, who responded with profanity to indicate it was going badly.

Wiese, who is white, said Earnest asked him if he knew "what the Jews have done to our race."

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Oscar Stewart, an electrician who is married with a stepdaughter, spoke publicly for the first time about confronting Earnest as shots rang from the lobby.

"People were falling over each other. It was chaos," he said. "I screamed (to everyone) 'Get down! Get out here.'"

Stewart, 51, was standing toward the back of the service when shots rang. He said he took three or four steps to flee then turned around for reasons he still can't explain, perhaps "a sense of duty." He saw the shooter in the lobby fire two rounds and rushed toward him.

"He was firing in front of me," Stewart said. "I was paying attention to the rifle."

As the gunman struggled to reload, Stewart said he relied on combat training to try to distract him from his plan of attack.

"I told him I was going to kill him," said Stewart, who served in the Persian Gulf War as a Navy bomb disposal expert. "I screamed it out really loud. I kept screaming at him."

Stewart walked across the street after the suspect fled, as shown in the surveillance video, and banged on the side of his car. He worried the shooter might attack a church next door or a grocery store down the street.

Stewart got out of the way after an off-duty Border Patrol agent at the service said from behind that he had a gun. The agent fired about five shots as the gunman drove away erratically, "like pedal to the floor."

Back in the synagogue lobby, Stewart said he checked on a rabbi whose hand was bleeding from a gunshot wound and performed CPR on Lori Kaye, 60, who died.

Dr. Howard Kaye, came to help and recognized his wife.

"He let out like a groan and he fainted," Stewart said.

Outside the mosque, authorities say, the suspect had scrawled the name of a man accused of shootings at two mosques in New Zealand that killed 51 people earlier this year.

The day before the synagogue shooting, Earnest bought a Smith & Wesson AR-15 rifle from a San Diego gun shop, according to federal charges. Officials have said he bought the gun legally.

Superior Court Judge Peter C. Deddeh is expected to rule Friday on whether Earnest should stand trial.

If convicted of the murder charge, classified as a hate crime, he would be eligible for the death penalty, but prosecutors have not said what punishment they plan to seek.

Weeks before the attack, Earnest tried to burn down a mosque in nearby Escondido, where seven people on a spiritual retreat were sleeping, prosecutors say. They awoke to flames and managed to extinguish the fire.

Iran envoy: 'All-out war' to result if hit for Saudi attack

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Any attack on Iran by the U.S. or Saudi Arabia will spark an "all-out war," Tehran's top diplomat warned Thursday, raising the stakes as Washington and Riyadh weigh a response to a drone-and-missile strike on the kingdom's oil industry that shook global energy markets.

The comments by Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif represented the starkest warning yet by Iran in a long summer of mysterious attacks and incidents following the collapse of Iran's 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, more than a year after President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the accord.

They appeared to be aimed directly at U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, who while on a trip to the region earlier referred to Saturday's attack in Saudi Arabia as an "act of war."

Along with the sharp language, however, there also were signals from both sides of wanting to avoid a confrontation.

On Thursday evening, a spokesman at Iran's mission to the United Nations said Zarif and President Hassan Rouhani had received U.S. visas to attend next week's annual U.N. General Assembly meeting in New York.

In his comments, Zarif sought to expose current strains between the Americans and the Saudis under Trump, who long has criticized U.S. wars in the Middle East.

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Trump's close relationship with Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has been challenged by opponents following the killing of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi last year in the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul and the kingdom's long, bloody war in Yemen. That country's Houthi rebels claimed the oil field attack Saturday in Saudi Arabia, although the U.S. alleges Iran carried it out.

"I think it is important for the Saudi government to understand what they're what they're trying to achieve. Do they want to fight Iran until the last American soldier? Is that their aim?" Zarif asked in a CNN interview. "They can be assured that this won't be the case ... because Iran will defend itself."

Asked by the broadcaster what would be the consequence of a U.S. or Saudi strike, Zarif bluntly said: "An all-out war."

"I'm making a very serious statement that we don't want war. We don't want to engage in a military confrontation," he said. "We believe that a military confrontation based on deception is awful."

Zarif, who was to travel to New York on Friday, added: "We'll have a lot of casualties, but we won't blink to defend our territory."

Pompeo, who was in the United Arab Emirates, dismissed Zarif's remarks, saying: "I was here (doing) active diplomacy while the foreign minister of Iran is threatening all-out war to fight to the last American."

Pompeo said he hoped Iran would choose a path toward peace, but he remained doubtful. He described "an enormous consensus in the region" that Iran carried out the attack.

"There are still those today who think, 'Boy, if we just give Iran just a little bit more money they'll become a peaceful nation,'" he said. "We can see that that does not work."

Pompeo met Abu Dhabi's powerful crown prince, Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan. The UAE is a close ally of Saudi Arabia and joined the kingdom in its war with the Houthi rebels in Yemen. The 4-year-old war has killed tens of thousands of people and destroyed much of the country, with millions more driven from their homes and thrown into near starvation.

On Wednesday, Pompeo met with the Saudi crown prince in Jiddah about the attack on the kingdom's crucial oil processing facility and oil field, which cut its oil production in half.

While Pompeo struck a hard line, Trump has been noncommittal on whether he would order U.S. military retaliation. He said separately Wednesday that he is moving to increase financial sanctions on Tehran over the attack, without elaborating. Iran already is subject to a crushing American sanctions program targeting its crucial oil industry.

The UAE said it had joined a U.S.-led coalition to protect waterways across the Middle East after the attack in Saudi Arabia.

The state-run WAM news agency quoted Salem al-Zaabi of the Emirati Foreign Ministry as saying the UAE joined the coalition to "ensure global energy security and the continued flow of energy supplies to the global economy."

Saudi Arabia joined the coalition on Wednesday. Australia, Bahrain and the United Kingdom also are taking part.

The U.S. formed the coalition after attacks on oil tankers that Washington blamed on Tehran, as well as Iran's seizure of tankers in the region. Iran denies being behind the tanker explosions, although the attacks came after Tehran threatened to stop oil exports from the Persian Gulf.

Iraq said it would not join the coalition. The government in Baghdad, which is allied with both Iran and the U.S., has tried to keep a neutral stance amid the tensions.

At a news conference Wednesday, the Saudis displayed broken and burned drones and pieces of a cruise missile that military spokesman Col. Turki Al-Malki identified as Iranian weapons collected after the attack. He also played surveillance video that he said showed a drone coming in from the north. Yemen is to the south of Saudi Arabia.

Eighteen drones and seven cruise missiles were launched in the assault, Al-Malki said, with three missiles failing to hit their targets. He said the cruise missiles had a range of 700 kilometers (435 miles), meaning they could not have been fired from inside Yemen. That opinion was shared by weapons experts who spoke to The Associated Press.

French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian similarly was skeptical of the Houthi claim of responsibility.

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"This is not very credible, relatively speaking," he told CNews television. "But we sent our experts to have our own vision of things."

Separately, a U.N. panel of experts on Yemen arrived in Saudi Arabia to investigate the attack, U.N. spokesman Farhan Haq said.

Associated Press writers David Rising in Berlin, Angela Charlton in Paris, Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Baghdad and Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed.

Trump scores a victory in bicoastal battle over tax returns

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE and JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) — President Donald Trump's efforts to keep his tax returns private played out on both coasts Thursday, with a California judge handing him an initial victory and his lawyers in New York City arguing that federal prosecutors there are trying "to harass" him by seeking the documents.

On the West Coast, a federal judge in Sacramento granted the Trump campaign's request to block a new California law that requires presidential candidates to release five years of tax returns to run in the state's March 2020 primaries. State officials are deciding whether to appeal.

The ruling came hours after the president sued to block New York prosecutors from their push to obtain his returns as part of a criminal investigation into payments made to two women who claimed to have affairs with Trump.

The two Democratic-led states have emerged as Trump's most ardent foes, fighting not just for his tax returns but repeatedly suing his administration over his environmental, immigration and other policies.

In California, Democrats have argued that the president's tax returns provide critical information about his financial history and business dealings. While the New York battle is part of a criminal investigation, lawmakers there also have pushed for the disclosure of his state returns, drawing another Trump lawsuit.

"States have a legal and moral duty to restore public confidence in government and ensure leaders seeking the highest offices meet minimal standards," said Jesse Melgar, a spokesman for Democratic California Gov. Gavin Newsom.

He did not address whether California plans to appeal the ruling. Secretary of State Alex Padilla, who's in charge of elections, said the state will consider its options when the judge releases a written ruling by Oct. 1.

In court in Sacramento, Trump's lawyers conceded that the president would likely forgo the state's primary ballot rather than release his returns. U.S. District Judge Morrison England Jr. questioned why releasing tax returns was such a hurdle but was ultimately open to arguments opposing the law.

He appeared swayed by arguments that the U.S. Constitution, not states, sets the qualifications to run for president and that a federal law requiring candidates to release financial information supersedes the state's power to seek additional details.

"I don't care how you skin the cat, it's an unconstitutional law," said Harmeet Dhillon, who represented the state and national Republican parties.

Trump counsel Jay Sekulow said he was "encouraged" by the tentative ruling.

Republican lawyers also eagerly pointed to California's former Gov. Jerry Brown, a Democrat who vetoed a similar law in 2017. Brown argued it would create a slippery slope that could lead states to impose requirements like medical records or college transcripts.

"The elephant in the room is President Trump's tax returns — that's what this is about," Judge England said. "But it does have implications that are far reaching."

The state's lawyers said it's within California's power to regulate its primary elections, and it called the requirement a measure of ballot access, not a new qualification to run for president.

"We remain firm in our belief that SB 27 is constitutional and provides invaluable transparency for voters as they decide who will hold the most powerful office in the United States," Padilla, the secretary of state, said in a statement.

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In New York, Trump's attorneys on Thursday sued Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr., who recently subpoenaed the president's accounting firm for eight years of state and federal tax returns.

They called the subpoena a "bad faith effort to harass" Trump and said Vance, a Democrat, had overstepped his constitutional authority.

Unlike in California, the New York case is part of a criminal investigation and a grand jury issued the subpoenas.

A spokesman for Vance said his office had received the lawsuit "and will respond as appropriate in court."

Democratic-led congressional committees also are trying to obtain Trump's tax returns and other records that could provide a window into his finances. Trump and three of his children sued in April seeking to block two House committees from getting records that his longtime lender, Deutsche Bank, has said include tax returns.

Mustian reported from New York. Associated Press writers Eric Tucker in Washington contributed to this story.

US vaping illnesses top 500, Missouri man is 8th death

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — More than 500 people have been diagnosed with vaping-related breathing illnesses, but the cause remains unknown, U.S. health officials said Thursday. An eighth death was also reported.

Meanwhile, the Food and Drug Administration revealed that its criminal investigations unit started tracking leads early on, as cases pointed to black market vaping products. The agency's tobacco director, Mitch Zeller, stressed that it is not interested in prosecuting individuals who use illegal products but is lending a hand because of the unit's "special skills."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said 530 confirmed and probable cases have been reported in 38 states and one U.S. territory, up from 380 a week ago.

Missouri joined the list later Thursday, announcing the death this week of a man in his mid-40s at a St. Louis hospital.

Canada reported its first case Wednesday, a high school student who was on life support and has since recovered.

All patients had used an electronic cigarette or other vaping device.

Doctors have said the illnesses resemble an inhalation injury, with the lungs apparently reacting to a caustic substance. So far, no single vaping product or ingredient has been linked to the illnesses, though most patients reported vaping THC, the high-producing ingredient in marijuana.

The man who died in Missouri told his family he started vaping in May for chronic pain, but investigators have not yet determined if he was vaping THC, according to a spokeswoman at Mercy Hospital St. Louis.

Two-thirds of the cases involved 18- to 34-year-olds. Three-quarters are men.

Some of the first cases appeared in April. CDC hasn't said when most people got sick.

A congressional subcommittee will hold a hearing on the outbreaks on Tuesday.

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

'Middle of the herd' no more: Amazon tackles climate change

By JOSEPH PISANI and BANI SAPRA AP Business Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — Online shopping giant Amazon revealed a carbon footprint Thursday that rivals that of a small country and vowed to reduce the damage to the planet by cutting its use of fossil fuels.

The company, which ships more than 10 billion items a year on fuel-guzzling planes and trucks, said it has ordered 100,000 electric vans that will start delivering packages to shoppers' doorsteps in 2021. It

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also plans to have 100% of its energy use come from solar panels and other renewable energy by 2030. That's up from 40% today.

"We've been in the middle of the herd on this issue and we want to move to the forefront," said Amazon CEO and founder Jeff Bezos, who announced the initiatives at an event in Washington.

Amazon said it emitted 44.4 million metric tons of carbon dioxide last year, a number that comes close to pollution rates of some small nations.

"Its greenhouse gas emissions are about 85% of the emissions of Switzerland or Denmark," said Gregg Marland, a professor at the Research Institute for Environment, Energy and Economics at Appalachian State University.

Amazon's employees have pressured the company to do more to combat climate change. Earlier this year, more than 8,000 Amazon staffers signed an open letter to Bezos, demanding that Amazon cut its carbon emissions, end its use of fossil fuels and stop working with oil companies who use Amazon's technology to find drillable oil faster. More than 1,500 employees are planning a walk-out Friday to support the Global Climate Strike, a worldwide climate change protest.

Amazon plans to be carbon neutral by 2040 and wants other companies to join it. Bezos unveiled a climate pledge and said he would talk with CEOs of other large companies to get them to sign it.

"We want to use our scale and our scope to lead the way," Bezos said.

A climate change advocacy group founded by Amazon workers said the company's announcement amounted to a "huge win" and proved that employee pressure works. In a statement, Amazon Employees For Climate Justice said that it would keep pushing the issue as long as Amazon continues working with oil and gas companies and donating to politicians who deny climate change.

Bezos defended Amazon's work with the oil and gas industry, arguing that "we need to help them instead of vilify them," and said Amazon would take a "hard look" at campaign contributions to climate deniers. However, he stopped short of saying such donations would stop.

Employees from other big tech giants, including Google and Microsoft, also planned to walk out on Friday. Their gripes mirror those of Amazon's employees, including that their companies provide technology to the oil industry. Ahead of the strikes, Google made its own announcement Thursday, saying it would buy enough renewable energy to spur the construction of millions of solar panels and hundreds of wind turbines across the world.

To measure its carbon footprint, Amazon looked at emissions from all of its businesses, including the planes it operates and the energy it uses to make Echos, Kindles and its other devices. Amazon even included customers' trips to Whole Foods, the grocery chain it owns.

"It's very comprehensive," said Beril Toktay, professor of operations and supply chain management at Georgia Tech's Scheller College of Business. She said she would like to see Amazon include the carbon footprint of the products it sells on its website, which could help drive people to shop for items that are less damaging to the environment.

Robin Bell, a research professor at Columbia University's Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory, said it was exciting to see Amazon taking meaningful steps to reduce its carbon footprint.

"They're blazing a trail for other companies to follow suit," Bell said.

Pisani reported from New York.

Trump says gun bill negotiations going 'very slowly'

By MATTHEW DALY and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump on Thursday poured cold water on prospects for a bipartisan compromise on gun legislation, even as Attorney General William Barr circulated a draft plan on Capitol Hill to expand background checks for gun sales.

In a Fox News interview, Trump said no deal is imminent, more than six weeks after mass shootings in Texas and Ohio killed more than 30 people.

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"We're going very slowly," Trump said, adding that while he doesn't want "bad people" to have weapons, he won't allow any plan to move forward that takes guns away from law-abiding people or restricts Second Amendment rights.

A proposal being floated by Barr would require background checks on all commercial gun sales, including at gun shows.

The leaked proposal caused an uproar on Capitol Hill as lawmakers wondered whether Trump was poised to support expanded background checks in the face of opposition from fellow Republicans and the National Rifle Association.

But speaking to reporters on Air Force One as he returned home from California late Wednesday, Trump said the plan was just one of many ideas under consideration.

"Those are ideas that we're talking to Republicans, Democrats, everybody about. Some they like, some they don't like. Just a series of concepts," Trump said.

Trump told Fox that a call by Democratic presidential candidate Beto O'Rourke to confiscate assault-style rifles has made it more difficult for Republicans to reach agreement on gun control.

"Hell, yes, we're going to take your AR-15, your AK-47, and we're not going to allow it to be used against your fellow Americans anymore," O'Rourke, a former Texas congressman, declared during a Democratic presidential debate last week.

"Dummy Beto made it much harder to make a deal," Trump tweeted Wednesday. "A lot of people think this is just a way of taking away guns," Trump told Fox, adding that he won't let that happen.

Asked about the proposal to expand background checks for gun purchases, Trump distanced himself, saying the document was put out by Barr.

Still, Trump said Barr was working on his behalf to try to reach a deal. "We got Bill Barr involved. He's an expert on guns and gun control," Trump said.

Barr and Eric Ueland, the White House director of legislative affairs, have been meeting with lawmakers to talk about ways to reduce gun violence. Among the things they have discussed is a one-page document that would require background checks on all advertised commercial gun sales. The plan builds on a proposal by Sens. Joe Manchin, D-W.Va., and Pat Toomey, R-Pa., to expand background checks.

Barr downplayed the proposal Wednesday, telling reporters: "We're just kicking around a number of ideas. The president hasn't made any decisions. I'm just kicking around ideas and perspectives so I'm in a better position to advise him."

Asked whether he would recommend the background check plan to Trump, Barr said "a number of different proposals" were being considered.

Even so, the NRA weighed in immediately, calling the proposal "a non-starter" with the NRA and its 5 million members.

The plan "burdens law-abiding gun owners while ignoring what actually matters: fixing the broken mental health system and the prosecution of violent criminals," said Jason Ouimet, the NRA's legislative director.

Manchin, who met with Barr on Wednesday, along with Toomey and Sen. Chris Murphy, D-Conn., said he remained hopeful.

Referring to Barr, Manchin said, "I think we're close to where he can take something to the president, to see if the president really wants to do something" on gun control.

Toomey said Barr's idea "is a mechanism for expanding background checks beyond what we have today. I have (Republican) colleagues who are open to that, so I'm modestly encouraged."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said earlier this week that Congress remains "in a holding pattern" on gun control as lawmakers await proposals from the White House.

Trump has previously pledged to veto a House-passed bill to expand background checks for gun purchases, but McConnell said he is hopeful there are other gun-related proposals that Congress can approve and Trump can support.

Trump and White House aides have discussed a number of gun control measures with lawmakers, including steps to go after fraudulent buyers, notify state and local law enforcement when a potential buyer fails

a background check, issue state-level emergency risk protection orders, boost mental health assistance and speed up executions for those convicted of mass shootings.

Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi have warned Trump that gun-control legislation must include the House-passed bill to expand background checks. Any proposal that does not include the House legislation "will not get the job done" because dangerous loopholes will be left open, the Democrats said.

Pelosi offers Medicare negotiation plan to curb drug prices

By RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, trying to seize the agenda on a top consumer issue, announced an ambitious prescription drug plan Thursday that would allow Medicare to negotiate prices for seniors and younger people.

The proposal would direct Medicare to bargain over as many as 250, but no fewer than 25, of the costliest drugs. Insulin is on the list. Drugmakers that refuse to negotiate could face steep penalties. Companies that raise prices beyond inflation would have to pay rebates to Medicare.

The plan would limit copays for seniors covered by Medicare's "Part D" prescription drug program to \$2,000. Medicare-negotiated prices would be available to other buyers, such as employer health plans.

It's shaping up as a high-stakes gamble for all sides in Washington. Polls show that high drug prices have Americans worried, and regardless of party affiliation, they want Congress to act. As a candidate, President Donald Trump called for Medicare negotiations but later seemed to drop the idea.

Pelosi, D-Calif., said her goal is a deal that Trump can sign onto and that could pass the GOP-controlled Senate.

"We don't want a political issue at the polls," Pelosi said at a news conference. "We want a solution in Congress, and we want it now."

Weighing in on Twitter, Trump said, "Let's get it done in a bipartisan way!" Unlike other Republicans, he refrained from criticizing Pelosi's bill and said "it's great" to see her out with a plan. But he said he preferred a bipartisan Senate bill being pushed by Iowa Republican Chuck Grassley.

In the Senate, Republican John Cornyn of Texas said Pelosi's proposal "has absolutely no chance — zero, zip, nada" of passing. Some House Republicans quickly dismissed it as "socialism."

The 2003 law that created Medicare's prescription drug benefit barred the program from negotiating prices, a restriction Democrats have long opposed. Most Republicans say they believe price negotiations are best left to private players such as insurance companies.

The industry group Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America said Pelosi's plan was "radical" and would usher in an era of government price-setting that would "blow up" the current system, stifling innovation. But health insurers called the plan "bold reform" and hospitals said it takes "significant strides toward reducing out-of-control drug prices." Public Citizen, a consumer group on the political left, said the bill didn't go far enough because it left intact drugmakers' monopoly on new medicines.

A leading House progressive, Texas Democrat Lloyd Doggett, agreed that more is required. "This new bill was promoted as a way to sway President Trump and a reluctant Republican Senate," said Doggett. "I await their embrace."

While the legislation leans left politically it also incorporates ideas from the Trump administration and from Republican and Democratic senators — a signal Pelosi wants a deal.

Pelosi's proposal would:

— authorize Medicare to negotiate prices for up to 250 drugs with the greatest total cost to society. That includes pharmacy drugs under the Part D prescription benefit, and Part B medications dispensed in doctors' offices, such as many cancer drugs. Medicare would negotiate for as many drugs as possible on a list refreshed annually, but no fewer than 25. The maximum price would be determined using a blend of international prices, similar to a more limited proposal from the administration. Drug companies that balk at making a deal would face penalties that start at 65% of sales for the drug at issue, and escalate

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if they hold out.

— require drugmakers to pay rebates to Medicare if they raise prices beyond the increase in inflation. That idea resembles the plan from Sens. Grassley and Ron Wyden, D-Ore. Their proposal has cleared a key committee, with Trump's support. But many Senate Republicans oppose inflation rebates, and it's unclear what Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., plans to do next.

— limit what seniors pay out of pocket for their medications to \$2,000 a year. Currently, Medicare's pharmacy benefit has no cap on copays, and the advent of drugs costing hundreds of thousands of dollars a year has left some seniors saddled with bills that rival a mortgage payment. An out-of-pocket limit is part of the Grassley-Wyden bill and is backed by the administration.

For now, criticism of the industry — from Trump and lawmakers of both parties — appears to be having an effect on prices.

The Commerce Department's inflation index for prescription drug prices has declined in seven of the past eight months, which is highly unusual. That index includes lower-cost generic drugs.

For brand-name drugs, a recent Associated Press analysis shows prices are still going up on average, but at a slower pace. Costly brand-name drugs that translate to steep copays are the top concern for consumers.

The AP analysis found that in the first seven months of 2019, drugmakers raised list prices for brand name medicines by a median, or midpoint, of 5%. That's a slowdown. Prices were going up 9% or 10% over those months the prior four years.

Still, there were 37 price increases for every decrease in the first seven months of 2019.

Associated Press writer Alan Fram contributed to this report.

Governor: Suicide bomb in southern Afghanistan kills 20

By TAMEEM AKHGAR and KATHY GANNON Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — A powerful suicide truck bomb devastated a hospital in southern Afghanistan early Thursday morning, killing 20 people and wounding 97 others, according to the province's governor, while a deadly drone strike in the country's east was blamed on U.S. forces.

The Taliban, who claimed responsibility for the suicide bombing, have carried out nearly daily attacks since peace talks with the United States collapsed earlier this month.

Thursday's massive explosion destroyed part of the hospital in Qalat, the capital of southern Zabul province, and left a fleet of ambulances broken and battered.

Local residents, many of whom had come to see their sick family members, used shawls and blankets to carry the wounded inside the destroyed building, while authorities scrambled to take the worst of the wounded to hospitals in nearby Kandahar.

Hours earlier, a drone attack in eastern Afghanistan's Nangarhar province blamed on U.S. forces killed at least 16 and wounded tens of others, most of them civilians, said Jawaid Zaman, presidential adviser on tribal affairs.

The U.S. forces in Afghanistan said they carried out a strike in eastern Nangarhar targeting Islamic State positions in the area.

"We are aware of allegations of the death of non-combatants and are working with local officials to determine the facts," said Col. Sonny Legget, U.S. Forces-Afghanistan.

Angry residents of the area where the strike occurred carried 12 of the bodies to the provincial capital Jalalabad Thursday morning protesting the attack, said provincial council head Ahmad Ali Hazrat. Many more people are believed to be missing.

Attaullah Khogyani, spokesman for the provincial governor, also said the target was Islamic State group militants who are in the area.

But according to Zaman the local residents had provided prior notice to the local authorities that they would be collecting dried fruit. As many as 50 people were in the fields when the aerial attack occurred,

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he said.

Meanwhile in southern Zabul province, Governor Rahmatullah Yarmal said the death toll was 20 with many of the 97 injured in critical condition. There were contradictory figures of the dead and wounded in the early hours immediately after the 6 a.m. suicide truck bombing.

Morning prayers had just finished when worshippers were stunned by the ear-splitting blast that destroyed parts of a mosque adjacent to the hospital and the hospital building, said Mahboob Hakimi, a resident of Qalat.

Windows in his home nearly two kilometers (over one mile) away were shattered by the blast, he said.

A Taliban spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahed, said in a tweet the target was a nearby intelligence office, which he claimed was destroyed and "tens of intelligence operatives killed/wounded."

Provincial council chief Atta Jan Haqbayan said the wall of the National Security Department (NDS) building was damaged. He couldn't say whether any personnel were among the casualties.

Gov. Yarmal said many of the dead and wounded were women and children. On Twitter, an Afghan National Security Forces personnel posted a picture of a six-month-old child saying they were searching through the rubble for the parents and sought the public's help.

President Ashraf Ghani's spokesman, Sediq Sediqqi, condemned the attack in Zabul, tweeting that the Taliban "continue to target civilians while their leaders travel to Iran and Russia," a reference to the Taliban negotiators recent forays seeking support abroad.

The U.N. Security Council condemned the continuing high number of attacks in Afghanistan in recent weeks, including Thursday's attack in Qalat that the Taliban claimed responsibility for, "in the strongest terms."

The U.N.'s most powerful body stressed that "further violence must stop" and strongly condemned "the heinous and cowardly terrorist attacks in Kabul and against an election campaign rally in Charikar, Parwan province, on Sept. 17."

A council statement "underlined the need to hold perpetrators, organizers, financiers and sponsors of these reprehensible acts of terrorism accountable and bring them to justice."

The violence has further rattled the country as it prepares for national elections later this month. Two separate bombings on Tuesday, including one that targeted Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's election rally, killed 48 people, mostly civilians. The Taliban took responsibility for both attacks.

Suhail Shaheen, the Taliban's spokesman for their political office in the Middle Eastern state of Qatar, said in a tweet that a cease fire had been part of a U.S.-Taliban deal before President Trump declared it "dead." He did not elaborate and earlier defended Taliban attacks prior to an agreement signing, saying both sides in the conflict had carried out attacks.

Meanwhile, former Afghan President Hamid Karzai made an appeal to the Taliban to end their attacks and to negotiate with Afghans, saying that the country can construct its own peace deal without the U.S. and ask for American troops to leave.

The former president has been a strong and consistent critic of U.S. air strikes and night raids.

Karzai was speaking to local reporters invited to his home in the Afghan capital. He was critical of U.S. airstrikes and of Ghani's decision early in his tenure to sign a forces protection agreement with the U.S., saying it gave Americans immunity from Afghan civilian deaths.

Karzai was a vocal critic of the so-called Bilateral Security Agreement during his time in office, refusing to sign it.

The former president, whose press meeting was televised, opposed upcoming polls saying, "elections can only happen in an independent, peaceful country, not now."

House OKs measure to prevent possible end-of-month shutdown

By **ANDREW TAYLOR Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House passed a short-term bill Thursday to prevent a federal shutdown when the budget year ends Sept. 30, and give lawmakers until the Thanksgiving break to negotiate and approve \$1.4 trillion for federal agencies.

The Senate is expected to approve the stopgap bill next week. The vote in the Democratic-run House on the bipartisan plan was 301-123.

The agency spending bills would fill in the details of this summer's budget and debt agreement between President Donald Trump and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

The Republican-controlled Senate is struggling over how to move ahead with its versions of the follow-up spending bills. There is partisan skirmishing over the boundaries of the budget agreement and Trump's moves to pay for the U.S.-Mexico border fence without congressional approval.

The Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday approved three noncontroversial measures on unanimous votes as the sniping continued in the wake of Wednesday's Democratic filibuster of the almost \$700 billion defense bill and other legislation.

Senate Democrats accused Republicans of shortchanging health and education programs to finance the border project and would permit the president to transfer military dollars for the wall again.

But Democrats also want to maintain some leverage over Trump by holding back the Pentagon measure he cares most in order to help force compromises on the domestic bills important to their party.

"We're at a crossroads right now," said the committee chairman, Sen. Richard Shelby, R-Ala., who is caught in the middle of a battle between Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., and top Senate Democrat Chuck Schumer of New York. "I don't know what will happen."

In the House, Pelosi and the top Republican simply want the Senate to act. The second-ranking House Democrat, Rep. Steny Hoyer of Maryland, was one of several lawmakers who said there's no reason that Congress cannot complete the spending bills before Thanksgiving.

"I had discussions yesterday with Schumer. I think we can get this done," said House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy, R-Calif., who called the Senate's battles "more theatre than anything — I think we'll get it done."

The House-passed measure also extends some expiring federal programs and replenishes Trump's bailout of farmers who've been hurt by the U.S. trade dispute with China. Democrats say Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue is favoring certain crops over others, and Democrats won language requiring a report on where the bailout money is going.

Trump sues Manhattan DA seeking to block tax return subpoena

By **JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press**

NEW YORK (AP) — President Donald Trump asked a federal court Thursday to block an effort by New York prosecutors to obtain his tax returns as part of a criminal investigation, opening another front in the president's efforts to keep his financial information private.

Trump's attorneys filed a lawsuit against Manhattan District Attorney Cyrus R. Vance Jr., who recently subpoenaed the president's accounting firm for eight years of his state and federal returns as part of an investigation into payments made to two women who claimed to have had affairs with Trump.

They called the subpoena a "bad faith effort to harass" Trump and said Vance, a Democrat, had overstepped his constitutional authority.

"Virtually 'all legal commenters agree' that a sitting President of the United States is not 'subject to the criminal process' while he is in office," Trump's lawyers wrote. "Yet a county prosecutor in New York, for what appears to be the first time in our nation's history, is attempting to do just that."

The lawsuit, filed in Manhattan federal court, asks U.S. District Judge Victor Marrero to declare the subpoena unenforceable until Trump leaves office.

Trump lawyer Jay Sekulow said the lawsuit is intended "to address the significant constitutional issues

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at stake in this case.”

A spokesman for Vance said his office had received the lawsuit “and will respond as appropriate in court.” Trump’s accounting firm, Mazars USA, declined to comment.

The lawsuit marks Trump’s latest attempt to prevent his tax returns from being seen by Democratic investigators and comes as his campaign is fighting a new law in California requiring presidential candidates to release five years of tax returns as a condition of appearing on the state’s March 2020 primary ballot.

Trump’s campaign and the Republican National Committee have sued, and a hearing is set Thursday in federal court in Sacramento.

Meanwhile, Democratic-led congressional committees are also trying to obtain Trump’s tax returns and other records that could provide a window into his finances. Trump and three of his children filed a lawsuit in April seeking to block two House committees from getting records that his longtime lender, Deutsche Bank, has said include tax returns.

And in July, the president sued to block a new New York law that could allow a House committee to obtain his state tax returns.

Unlike those efforts, Vance’s investigation is conducting a criminal probe. His subpoenas were issued by a grand jury.

The grand jury also subpoenaed the Trump Organization for records related to payments that former Trump lawyer Michael Cohen helped arrange to the porn actress Stormy Daniels and model Karen McDougal during the 2016 presidential campaign to keep either woman from speaking publicly about alleged affairs with Trump. He made one of the payments himself and arranged for American Media Inc., the parent company of the National Enquirer, to make the other.

Cohen pleaded guilty to federal charges that the payments amounted to illegal campaign contributions. Federal prosecutors did not charge Trump or anyone else involved in either arranging the payoffs or reimbursing Cohen through Trump’s company.

Trump has denied any sexual relationship with either woman and said any payments were personal matters, not campaign expenses.

In a letter to Manhattan prosecutors made public as part of Thursday’s lawsuit, Trump’s lawyers, Marc Mukasey, William Consavoy and Alan Futerfas, wrote that the Trump Organization had already willingly provided “hundreds of documents” to Vance’s team of investigators.

Vance is also pursuing a mortgage fraud case against former Trump campaign chairman Paul Manafort.

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker in Washington and Kathleen Ronayne in Sacramento contributed reporting.

Where have the wild birds gone? 3 billion fewer than 1970

By **SETH BORENSTEIN** and **CHRISTINA LARSON** AP Science Writers

WASHINGTON (AP) — North America’s skies are lonelier and quieter as nearly 3 billion fewer wild birds soar in the air than in 1970, a comprehensive study shows.

The new study focuses on the drop in sheer numbers of birds, not extinctions. The bird population in the United States and Canada was probably around 10.1 billion nearly half a century ago and has fallen 29% to about 7.2 billion birds, according to a study in Thursday’s journal *Science*.

“People need to pay attention to the birds around them because they are slowly disappearing,” said study lead author Kenneth Rosenberg, a Cornell University conservation scientist. “One of the scary things about the results is that it is happening right under our eyes. We might not even notice it until it’s too late.”

Rosenberg and colleagues projected population data using weather radar, 13 different bird surveys going back to 1970 and computer modeling to come up with trends for 529 species of North American birds. That’s not all species, but more than three-quarters of them and most of the missed species are quite rare, Rosenberg said.

Using weather radar data, which captures flocks of migrating birds, is a new method, he said.

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"This is a landmark paper. It's put numbers to everyone's fears about what's going on," said Joel Cracraft, curator-in-charge for ornithology of the American Museum of Natural History, who wasn't part of the study.

"It's even more stark than what many of us might have guessed," Cracraft said.

Every year University of Connecticut's Margaret Rubega, the state ornithologist, gets calls from people noticing fewer birds. And this study, which she wasn't part of, highlights an important problem, she said.

"If you came out of your house one morning and noticed that a third of all the houses in your neighborhood were empty, you'd rightly conclude that something threatening was going on," Rubega said in an email. "3 billion of our neighbors, the ones who eat the bugs that destroy our food plants and carry diseases like equine encephalitis, are gone. I think we all ought to think that's threatening."

Some of the most common and recognizable birds are taking the biggest hits, even though they are not near disappearing yet, Rosenberg said.

The common house sparrow was at the top of the list for losses, as were many other sparrows. The population of eastern meadowlarks has shriveled by more than three-quarters with the western meadowlark nearly as hard hit. Bobwhite quail numbers are down 80%, Rosenberg said.

Grassland birds in general are less than half what they used to be, he said.

Not all bird populations are shrinking. For example, bluebirds are increasing, mostly because people have worked hard to get their numbers up.

Rosenberg, a birdwatcher since he was 3, has seen this firsthand over more than 60 years. When he was younger there would be "invasions" of evening grosbeaks that his father would take him to see in Upstate New York with 200 to 300 birds around one feeder. Now, he said, people get excited when they see 10 grosbeaks.

The research only covered wild birds, not domesticated ones such as chickens.

Rosenberg's study didn't go into what's making wild birds dwindle away, but he pointed to past studies that blame habitat loss, cats and windows.

"Every field you lose, you lose the birds from that field," he said. "We know that so many things are killing birds in large numbers, like cats and windows."

Experts say habitat loss was the No. 1 reason for bird loss. A 2015 study said cats kill 2.6 billion birds each year in the United States and Canada, while window collisions kill another 624 million and cars another 214 million.

That's why people can do their part by keeping cats indoors, treating their home windows to reduce the likelihood that birds will crash into them, stopping pesticide and insecticide use at home and buying coffee grown on farms with forest-like habitat, said Sara Hallager, bird curator at the Smithsonian Institution.

"We can reverse that trend," Hallager said. "We can turn the tide."

Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears and Christina Larson at @larsonchristina .

The Associated Press Health and Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

In Israel, calls for unity reveal deep divisions after vote

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his chief rival, Benny Gantz, on Thursday each called for the formation of a unity government following Israel's inconclusive national election. But with both men demanding to be prime minister, there were no signs they could break the deadlock.

The rival proposals, marked by deep differences, indicated the country could be headed for a long and contentious period of uncertainty, and politicians on both sides of the aisle warned of being forced into an unprecedented third election in less than a year.

"There is no choice but to form a broad unity government," Netanyahu said in a video statement. "We cannot and there is no reason to go to third elections."

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After failing to form a coalition following April's election, Netanyahu called Tuesday's vote, only to see the country emerge with another political stalemate.

With nearly all votes counted Thursday, Gantz's centrist Blue and White party stood at 33 seats in the 120-seat parliament. Netanyahu's conservative Likud stood at 31 seats.

But neither party can muster a majority coalition of 61 seats with their smaller allies. The difference-maker appears to be Avigdor Lieberman, whose Yisrael Beiteinu party captured eight seats. Lieberman, known as a wily tactician, has refused to commit to either side and is instead demanding a broad unity government with the two major parties.

Netanyahu's proposal is a nonstarter for Gantz. His Blue and White party has said it will only sit with Likud if Netanyahu steps aside to deal with his legal woes. Netanyahu is expected to be charged in a series of corruption cases in the coming months. Likud lawmakers remain loyal to Netanyahu and have given no signs of wanting to replace him.

Speaking to reporters, Gantz said that as the largest party, he should lead the next government.

"The people chose unity, the people want Israel to come before everything, and therefore, Blue and White under my leadership won the elections," said Gantz, a former military chief of staff.

Yair Lapid, a senior Blue and White member, accused Netanyahu of dragging the country to a third election and called for him to step down.

"One person is preventing right now the establishment of a liberal unity government. One person stands between what is good for the country and what's good for that person. And country always comes first," he said.

Netanyahu repeated his offer at a memorial for the late Israeli leader Shimon Peres, where he and Gantz shook hands in their first public encounter since Tuesday's vote. He also offered to meet with Gantz.

Neither party appears able to form a majority government without the support of Lieberman, who heads a secular, ultranationalist party and refuses to sit with Netanyahu's ultra-Orthodox religious allies. At the same time, Lieberman is unlikely to sit with leftist Arab parties whose support Gantz would need to secure a majority.

Lieberman believes a broad, secular unity government with Likud and Blue and White is the only way out of the impasse.

The focus will shift next week to President Reuven Rivlin, who will begin consulting with all of the parties Sunday before he chooses a politician to form a government and be the next prime minister. Each party will recommend its choice for prime minister, after which Rivlin is to pick the politician who he thinks has the best chance of forming a stable coalition.

Rivlin said the consultations are expected to last two days. After that, he'll announce his pick.

The prime minister-designate then has six weeks to form a coalition. If he fails, the president can give another candidate 28 days to form a government. If that fails, the president could then order a new election, something that has never happened. Rivlin promised he will do everything in his power to prevent a third vote.

The uncertainty has thrown Netanyahu's political future into question.

Israel's attorney general has recommended charging Netanyahu with bribery, breach of trust and fraud in three separate corruption cases. Netanyahu will be given an opportunity to defend himself at a hearing in early October, after which the attorney general will make a final decision.

Netanyahu had hoped to secure a narrow majority of hard-line and religious parties that support granting him immunity from prosecution. With immunity now off the table, Netanyahu is desperate to remain in office.

Israeli law does not require a sitting premier to resign if indicted. But if he is charged, as is widely expected, he would come under heavy pressure to resign amid what would be a huge national distraction.

Tuesday's vote was largely seen as a referendum on Netanyahu, who this summer surpassed Israel's founding prime minister to become the country's longest-serving leader.

During the campaign, Netanyahu cast himself as a seasoned statesman who was the only candidate

able to steer Israel through a sea of challenges.

But that message was mixed with frequent attacks on the country's Arab minority, drawing charges of racism. Netanyahu also frequently lashed out at the media, the judiciary and his opponents, claiming they were conspiring to oust him.

Gantz tried to paint Netanyahu as divisive and scandal-plagued, offering himself as a calming influence and honest alternative.

After such a caustic race, there is little public appetite for another bruising campaign.

"I will do everything I can to prevent another general election," Rivlin said at the memorial service for Peres. "I hear, loud and clear, the voices calling for a broad and stable national unity government."

UK top court aims to rule next week on Parliament shutdown

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — British Prime Minister Boris Johnson was accused by one of the country's former leaders of obstructing Parliament by shutting down the legislature for five weeks, as a landmark legal challenge to the suspension wrapped up Thursday at the U.K. Supreme Court.

But a government lawyer warned the country's most senior judges, who will rule next week on whether the prime minister broke the law, not to enter a "minefield" by meddling in political decisions.

Meanwhile, the European Union and Britain announced new talks on an elusive Brexit divorce deal — even as they squabbled over whether or not the U.K. had brought any new ideas to the table.

The U.K.'s top court must decide whether Johnson acted illegally by sending lawmakers home just weeks before the country is due to leave the EU on Oct. 31. At the end of a three-day hearing the court's president, Brenda Hale, said the 11 judges would give their ruling early next week.

Opponents of the government claim Johnson unlawfully shut Parliament until Oct. 14 to prevent lawmakers from scrutinizing his plan to take Britain out of the EU at the end of next month, with or without a divorce deal. They also accuse the prime minister of misleading Queen Elizabeth II, whose formal approval was needed to suspend the legislature.

"The remedy that we seek is a declaration that the prime minister's advice to Her Majesty was unlawful," said David Pannick, lawyer for one of the campaigners challenging the government.

The challengers are being backed by John Major, who was Britain's prime minister between 1990 and 1997 — and, like Johnson, is a Conservative.

In a written submission, Major said Johnson had not provided a sworn statement explaining the reasons for suspending Parliament, and argued that "his failure or refusal to do so is conspicuous."

Major said the inescapable conclusion was that "the decision was in fact substantially motivated by a desire to obstruct Parliament from interfering with the prime minister's plans."

The government says the suspension is routine and not motivated by Brexit, and argues that judges should not interfere in political decisions for fear of upsetting the delicate balance of powers between legislature, executive and judiciary in Britain's largely unwritten constitution.

Government lawyer Richard Keen said the prime minister's opponents were "inviting the courts into forbidden territory and into what is essentially a minefield."

Hale, the country's most senior judge, agreed that "none of this is easy."

She said the court would give its answer "as soon as it humanly can" and was aiming for early next week.

The case has drawn intense interest, with millions watching the Supreme Court's livestream as lawyers cited case law and precedent stretching back to the 17th century. Rival pro-EU and pro-Brexit demonstrators gathered daily outside the courthouse on London's Parliament Square.

Although it has become a Brexit flashpoint, Hale stressed that "this case is not about when and on what terms the United Kingdom leaves the European Union."

"The result of this case will not determine that," she said. "We are solely concerned with the lawfulness of the prime minister's decision to advise Her Majesty to prorogue Parliament on the dates in question."

If the court rules that the suspension was illegal, Johnson could be forced to call lawmakers back to

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Parliament immediately.

It's not clear what they would do there, since there is no business scheduled. But lawmakers could use the time to pass new laws aimed at directing the course of Brexit. It already did so just before it was suspended, legislating that the government must seek a three-month delay of Brexit if it can't get a divorce deal by late October.

Johnson says he will not seek a delay under any circumstances, though it's not clear how he could avoid it. The government could also start the new session of Parliament — currently scheduled to begin Oct. 14 — earlier than planned. It also has not ruled out trying to suspend Parliament for a second time.

Asked about the case on Thursday, Johnson said "I have the greatest respect for the judiciary in this country."

"I will wait to see what transpires," he said.

Losing the court case would be a new blow for Johnson, who is battling to fulfill his pledge to lead Britain out of the EU on the scheduled date of Oct. 31 come what may.

Johnson insists he is working hard to get an agreement with the EU that will ensure a smooth departure. EU leaders are skeptical of that claim, saying the U.K. has not produced any concrete proposals.

Finland's Prime Minister Antti Rinne warned that "it's all over" if Britain doesn't come up with solid new Brexit proposals by the end of the month.

Finland currently holds the rotating presidency of the 28-nation bloc.

Britain says it has not revealed detailed proposals because they would likely leak, to the detriment of negotiations. But the government insisted Thursday it had sent "confidential technical non-papers which reflect the ideas the U.K. has been putting forward." Non-papers are documents intended for discussion, rather than formal proposals.

The British government said in a statement it would not meet an "artificial deadline" but would make formal submissions "when we are ready."

The EU confirmed it had received new documents from Britain relating to ways of maintaining an open border between EU member Ireland and the U.K.'s Northern Ireland — the key sticking point to a deal.

Britain has suggested implementing what it calls "alternative arrangements" — a mix of technology to replace border checks and a common area for agricultural products and animals covering the whole island of Ireland.

European Commission spokeswoman Mina Andreeva said the two sides would hold "technical discussions" on Thursday, followed by a meeting between EU chief negotiator Michel Barnier and Britain's chief Brexit minister Steve Barclay on Friday.

Barclay insisted that the six weeks until Oct. 31 were "sufficient for a deal" if both sides provided "creative and flexible solutions."

"A rigid approach now at this point is no way to progress a deal and the responsibility sits with both sides to find a solution," he said during a visit to Madrid.

Johnson remained cautious.

"I don't want to exaggerate the progress that we are making," he said. "But we are making progress."

Associated Press writers Samuel Petrequin in Brussels, Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen and Jari Tanner in Tallinn, Estonia, contributed to this report.

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

How to navigate new privacy features in Apple iPhone update

By ANICK JESDANUN AP Technology Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Apple's iOS 13 software update comes with plenty of privacy enhancements — but in some cases, only if you take the time to understand how they work.

Among the changes: You'll be able to sign in to third-party services with your Apple ID account rather

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than Facebook's or Google's. You'll also get more notices and warnings about apps tapping location data.

The free update is available for existing iPhones on Thursday and will come with new iPhone 11 models out Friday.

Here's how to navigate the new privacy features and make the most of them.

APPLE SIGN-IN

Google and Facebook have long made it easy to sign into third-party services without having to create new accounts — and new passwords to remember. Trouble is, by leaning on those companies, you're also opening the door for them to collect more data about you. You may find that disheartening given numerous privacy lapses, especially involving Facebook.

Apple is offering an alternative. The company doesn't have the same need to collect data, as it doesn't count on profits from data-driven targeted ads the way Google and Facebook do. Apple promises it won't track you when you use "Sign in with Apple."

One attractive feature is the ability to mask your real email address. Apple can give you a new, unique email for every service you use, and will automatically forward messages to your own email account. You can reduce junk mail by disabling forwarding from specific companies, while still using that Apple email to sign in. Apple says it won't snoop on messages.

Apps that offer an outside sign-in system, such as Facebook's, must also include Apple's to be on iPhones. But Apple's system is limited to sharing your name and email address. If the app needs more information, you'll have to provide that on your own — or fall back on Facebook or Google anyway.

But don't stray from Apple's garden. You'll need to sign in through a web browser if you use the service on Android, Windows or other non-Apple devices. That eliminates much of the convenience.

LOCATION, LOCATION, LOCATION

Maps, ride-hailing and many other apps need your location data to work. But does your drug store or coffee shop really need to know where you are and where you've been?

Previously, Apple gave you just a few choices on the matter. You could share your location continuously with an app, provide it only when you were using the app, or deny the app access to any location information. (The last choice breaks many apps, and it can be a challenge to turn location back on if you change your mind.)

Now Apple will let you grant location permission temporarily. If you close the app or restart the phone, you'll have to grant permission again. You can keep doing that until you're more comfortable with the app and its use of location, at which time you can make permission permanent.

But permanent doesn't mean sharing while the app is in the background. After you've used an app for a while, the phone will prompt you with details on where and how many times it has tapped your location. Only then can you grant "always allow" access. You can also take it back if you've given it before. The idea is to arm you with more information before deciding.

Unfortunately, there's no "reject once" option to see how well an app works without location. Once you reject it, you'll have to go into settings to turn location back on.

LOCATION, THE SNEAKY WAY

Even if you've denied location access, apps might be able to infer it through Bluetooth connections. A retail store, for instance, might have Bluetooth beacon trackers to detect people who have its app installed. Now, apps must specially ask for that permission. (There are exceptions when a music app, for instance, wants to stream to headphones you've already paired with the phone.)

Apps that have been updated for iOS 13 must tell you specifically why they need Bluetooth. Citi's app, for instance, says it's to enable after-hours entry to ATM lobbies without pulling out your card. You're left guessing with older apps. If you're not sure, just say "no."

Apple is also clamping down on apps' ability to infer your location by identifying nearby Wi-Fi networks, which can be matched to location databases. Apps that want that information must already have location permission from you or meet Apple's criteria for needing that information. This won't affect your ability to use apps over Wi-Fi, as that's set up through your phone, not the app.

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PHOTOS

When sharing photos through the Photos app, you can now remove embedded location information by tapping on the small "Options" link at the top of the screen. Location is shared by default, and you need to turn it off each time.

You can disable the camera's ability to embed location information to begin with. To do that, go to "Privacy" in the phone's settings, then "Location Services," "Camera" and finally the "Never" option. This feature exists in earlier versions of iOS as well.

REDUCING ROBOCALLS

A new setting lets you silence unknown callers. You'll still hear from numbers you've recently called or ones stored in your contacts, as well as from numbers the digital assistant Siri finds in other apps, such as within your emails. But the iPhone will assume everything else is spam and send it straight to voice mail.

This option is off by default; you need to turn it on under "Phone" in the settings. Apple will also suggest the option when you look through your recent and missed calls.

AP Exclusive: US helping Venezuela's Guaidó track stolen art

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press

CARACAS, Venezuela (AP) — U.S. officials are investigating the suspected looting of valuable European and Latin American artwork they believe is being quietly plundered by Venezuelan government insiders as Nicolas Maduro struggles to maintain his grip on power.

The U.S. Treasury in recent months has sought the cooperation of the FBI, Italian police and museum experts to identify and locate the missing artwork. Among the objects being traced: three Venezuelan masterpieces that hung for decades on the walls of the ambassador's stately residence in Washington but which were nowhere to be found when opposition leader Juan Guaidó's envoy took over the diplomatic mission in May.

Although the paintings are the only ones unaccounted for, there are fears many more could be missing as Venezuela's dire economic situation takes its toll on the country's once prized collections and financial sanctions target corrupt insiders who have long used art as a way to launder money.

"This is likely just the tip of the iceberg," said Carlos Vecchio, an exiled politician who the U.S. recognizes as Venezuela's ambassador. He pointed to a large empty wooden frame still hanging above the fireplace in the residence's den where he believes one of the missing canvasses was ripped from the wall. "If this is what they've managed to do with some artwork at a single diplomatic mission, you can imagine what they've done inside Venezuela."

The missing mid-20th century paintings, which were last publicly exhibited at the Inter-American Development Bank in Washington in 2008, are a landscape of Caracas' imposing Avila mountain by Manuel Cabré, the portrait "Juanita" by Armando Reverón and a work of social realism by Héctor Poleo called "The Broken Doll."

Together the three works are believed to be worth around \$1 million, according to an appraisal ordered by Vecchio. But their true value is as icons of Venezuela's cultural heritage — a patrimony that Venezuelan art experts fear could be lost amid the country's ongoing chaos, much like thousands of ancient artifacts were looted from Afghanistan and Iraq during those countries' recent wars.

"The moral damage is enormous," said María Luz Cardenas, the former head curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Caracas. "A whole generation is being denied a spiritual connection with their country that only art can provide."

Spearheading the artistic sleuthing is Marshall Billingslea, the assistant U.S. Treasury secretary for terrorist financing who has led the Trump administration's charge to sanction senior Venezuelan officials and prevent Maduro from raiding the nation's sizable oil assets abroad.

With the help of Vecchio, Billingslea has been compiling an inventory of all the artwork assigned to the diplomatic missions in the more than 50 countries that recognize Guaidó as Venezuela's rightful leader. At the same time, he's sought the help of the Italian Carabinieri — which boasts the world's foremost art

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squad — and has asked international museum groups to be on the lookout for the potential looting of Venezuela's cultural heritage.

Billingslea, who President Donald Trump recently nominated to become the State Department's top human rights official, did not respond to a request for comment. His confirmation hearing is Thursday.

The endeavor harkens to World War II when the Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Funds Control tracked Jewish-owned artwork stolen by the Nazis and used to get around an allied blockade. From that initiative was born the Office of Foreign Assets Control, which locates and freezes the assets of sanctioned individuals and businesses.

In the case of Venezuela, crippling U.S. financial sanctions are making it similarly hard for Maduro's government and well-connected insiders to access Western financial institutions. The oblique and unregulated art market is considered an ideal way to stash illegal proceeds from corruption that the opposition-controlled congress estimates reached a staggering \$400 billion in recent years under socialist rule.

Maduro's culture minister, Ernesto Villegas, did not respond to a request for information about the status of the missing works or the opposition's allegations that they had been stolen.

Vecchio said former embassy staffers quietly warned opposition lawmakers a few years back that the Washington residence's artwork was at risk. The last known sighting is from a photo distributed by the Venezuelan Embassy in 2012 showing the two paintings framing the doorway of an elegant salon.

A similar void of information exists around the many non-exhibited collections owned by state oil giant PDVSA as well as the Venezuelan central bank's trove of weaponry and memorabilia that belonged to South American independence hero Simón Bolívar.

"We don't know for sure that the artwork was stolen, but the official silence and censoring of information does make us wonder," Cardenas said.

Fitting the country's reputation as a petro state, past governments spent lavishly on artwork when the oil wells were gushing, much of it used to decorate Venezuela's embassies abroad. Hundreds more prominent works were seized by the country's Bank Deposit Protection Fund from once high-flying institutions following a banking crisis in the 1990s.

But the artworks were also fodder for abuse in government institutions plagued by corruption.

A New York-based art dealer said that in 2012 he toured the vaults of the agency's headquarters in downtown Caracas in the company of its vice president, who proposed unloading sculptures and paintings by well-known Spanish artists Baltasar Lobo and Manuel Valdes in exchange for kickbacks. The collection was commercially attractive but poorly cared for, with canvasses piling up on emergency stairwells and exposed to sunlight, said the dealer, who spoke on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals from Venezuelan government officials. He showed The Associated Press photos on his cell phone of some of the works on offer.

Even in better times Venezuela was ripe for some high-stakes museum heists. A painting by the French artist Henri Matisse, "Odalisque in Red Pants," went missing around two decades ago from the Museum of Contemporary Art and was replaced by a badly-produced fake. The original was discovered in 2012 in a Miami hotel room and returned by the FBI to Venezuela's government two years later. A Cuban man and a Mexican woman were arrested trying to sell the painting to undercover FBI agents in Miami Beach, but who was behind the theft, and exactly when it even took place, remains a mystery.

Today, the museum, which boasted the largest collection of contemporary art in Latin America when it was founded in the 1970s, is a shadow of its former glory. Galleries are mostly empty, security guards nowhere to be found and the artwork exposed to the tropical heat after the air conditioning units were damaged in the frequent blackouts ravaging the capital.

One of the museum's highlights, a collection of 147 works by Picasso, is no longer on permanent display, although it did make a brief appearance at a rare show last year titled "Comrade Picasso" that stressed the Spanish artist's communist activism. For the museum's once loyal promoters, who were removed by Chávez in a cultural purge 18 years ago, it is a recent photo that went viral on social media of a bucket collecting water from a leaky gallery ceiling that best sums up the current state of neglect.

A few blocks away, at the century-old Museum of Fine Arts, the situation is even more desperate. Only

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about a third of its 18 galleries are open to the public; the rest have been closed for months for renovations, although there's no sign any are taking place.

A museum employee loosened a thin, braided knot that was the only security for the shuttered and sweltering salons containing a collection of priceless Baroque paintings and delicate 18th-century etchings by the Spanish master Francisco Goya.

The museum worker recalled how when he started his job two decades ago there were 34 curator-guides. Today, there are just two.

And while he doesn't know of artwork being stolen, the collection is vulnerable, he said, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of losing his job for talking to a reporter about the museum's sorry state. He recalls how a few months ago a Chinese businessman came to the museum every day taking pictures and through a translator offered large sums of cash for an ancient Greek vase. He was only turned back after the staff removed the object from exhibition.

"Maybe one night he could've hidden during closing hours and slept inside the museum," said the man with a shrug of resignation. "It's easy to imagine lots of things."

Associated Press writers Andrea Hernández Briceno in Caracas, Pablo Martínez Monsiváis in Washington and Frances D'Emilio in Rome contributed to this report.

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AP source: Joe Kennedy to challenge Sen. Markey in primary

By **STEVE LeBLANC** Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Massachusetts U.S. Rep. Joe Kennedy III, a scion of one of America's most storied political families, is set to announce he will challenge U.S. Sen. Edward Markey in the state's Democratic primary in 2020.

A person with knowledge of Kennedy's plans told The Associated Press that Kennedy will formally make the announcement Saturday. The person wasn't authorized to preempt Kennedy's announcement and spoke Wednesday on the condition of anonymity.

The 38-year-old grandson of Robert F. Kennedy has been quietly laying down the foundation of a run, building up his staff and formally announcing his interest in the race by filing preliminary paperwork with the Federal Election Commission last month.

"I don't think primaries are something that people should shy away from," Kennedy told reporters at the state Democratic convention last Saturday. "The idea behind it is that every seat, my own included, the one that I currently occupy as a member of the House of Representatives, it's up every two years. It's a two-year term. You have to go out and make that case to voters every two years."

Kennedy has shied away from directly criticizing Markey, calling him "a good man."

Markey, who's already facing two lesser-known challengers, has said he's ready to take on anyone, even Kennedy.

"I run every day on the issues that I've been fighting for throughout my career and that I'm continuing to fight for right now on the floor of the Senate," the 73-year-old Markey said at the same convention. "That's women's reproductive rights, climate change, gun safety laws, income inequality — and I'm going to continue to campaign on those issues. It's been the core of my agenda."

Kennedy is the latest in a long line of members of America's most celebrated political clan to seek elected office — most famously his granduncle President John F. Kennedy, felled by an assassin's bullet in 1963.

Others include his father, former U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy; his grandfather RFK, who was JFK's attorney general and was a senator running for the Democratic presidential nomination when he was slain in 1968; his granduncle Sen. Edward M. Kennedy, who died in 2009; former U.S. Rep. Patrick Kennedy II, a son of Edward Kennedy; and his aunt Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, who served two terms as Maryland's lieutenant governor.

A senior campaign adviser to Markey said in a statement Wednesday that the incumbent is up for the

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political battles ahead.

"Elections are about choices, and Ed looks forward to spending the next 14 months campaigning hard every day to show the people of the Commonwealth why he's the right choice," said John Walsh, a long-time political Democratic operative in Massachusetts.

Given his political pedigree, Kennedy has been seen as a rising star in the party. In 2018, Kennedy was tapped to deliver the Democratic response to President Donald Trump's State of the Union address.

A Kennedy-Markey contest will put more than a few high-profile Democrats in an awkward position, most notably White House hopeful Elizabeth Warren.

Warren has worked with Markey in the Senate and taught Kennedy at Harvard Law School. She formally endorsed Markey before Kennedy floated the idea of a challenge to Markey.

"I endorsed Sen. Markey back in February. I couldn't ask for a better partner in the Senate than Ed Markey. He is a good friend," Warren said. "Joe Kennedy is also a good friend. I have worked with him since he was a student of mine; both he and his wife were my students. I have worked with him as a congressman. I have nothing but the highest respect for him. And I have no criticism."

Kennedy has tried to position himself as more of a pragmatist than those on the left of his party.

Although he's adopted many of the causes driving the party's liberal wing — Kennedy has called for Congress to initiate impeachment efforts against Trump and has backed a "Medicare for All" bill in the House — he's also tried to carve out his own path.

In January 2017, as many Democrats were still reeling from Trump's win, Kennedy, first elected to Congress in 2012, suggested that party leaders should be listening better to the economic worries of Democratic voters who bolted the party for Trump, saying that not taking the time to understand those voters would be folly.

He also argued that Democrats, then in the minority in the House, had to try to cut the best deals they could with Republicans.

"You've got to fight, but you've got to also try to move an agenda forward," he said at the time. "If you're just out there screaming and yelling, there are people out there who need help and need help now and they deserve progress, too."

Kennedy also has spoken frequently about what he calls "moral capitalism," a less politically fraught term than "socialism" but one that has become central to his political worldview in the Trump era.

Markey is a formidable opponent. He served for decades in the House before joining the Senate in 2013.

Markey has been quick to point out his endorsement by Democratic U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez of New York. The two have worked to push for the Green New Deal initiative.

"The Green New Deal will be the greatest force for blue-collar job creation in a generation," Markey has said.

Markey also has called for the House to begin an impeachment inquiry into Trump.

Kennedy and Markey have worked together at times.

Earlier this year the two reintroduced a bill that would end the use in federal court of "gay panic" and "trans panic" defenses, which argue that the revelation of a person's sexual orientation or gender identity helped provoke a defendant's violent reaction.

Markey already is facing two lesser-known candidates: Shannon Liss-Riordan, a workers' rights lawyer, and Steve Pemberton, a former senior executive at Walgreens.

The contest could be expensive.

Markey reported having more than \$4 million in his campaign account as of June 30. Kennedy reported having \$4.2 million in his House campaign account as of the same period.

This story has been corrected to show that John F. Kennedy and Edward M. Kennedy were Joe Kennedy III's granduncles, not uncles.

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Asian shares mostly higher as China cuts loan rate

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BANGKOK (AP) — Asian shares were mostly higher on Friday after a lackluster session on Wall Street, as investors shifted their focus to China-U.S. trade talks after a busy week of central bank news.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index gained 0.4% to 22,135.98 and the Shanghai Composite index rose 0.2% to 3,004.48. The Kospi in South Korea climbed 0.4% to 2,089.00 and Australia's S&P ASX 200 picked up 0.6% to 6,760.50. Hong Kong's Hang Seng lost less than 0.1% to 26,465.78.

Shares rose in Taiwan and Singapore but fell in Jakarta and Bangkok.

As anticipated, China's central bank reduced its 1-year loan prime rate to 4.2% from 4.25%, slightly easing monetary conditions.

U.S. and Chinese officials were meeting in Washington to prepare trade negotiations next month in the trade war that has cast a shadow on growth.

But expectations have remained modest, with both sides indicating there is little too maneuver on the key sticking points over Beijing's industrial and technology policies.

"To some extent the latest updates on U.S.-China officials having met face-to-face in Washington tilts the sentiment back to the positive, one to aid Asia markets, but it once again highlights the fragility of the market sentiment on this biggest risk that persists," Jingyi Pan of IG said in a commentary.

Major U.S. stock indexes ended mixed Thursday after an early rally fizzled toward the end of the day.

The S&P 500 index rose 0.06 points, or less than 0.1%, to 3,006.79. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gave up an early gain, sliding 0.2% to 27,094.79. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks also relinquished an early gain, ceding 0.4% to 1,561.47.

The Nasdaq squeaked out a gain of 5.49 points, or 0.1%, to 8,182.88.

On Wednesday, the Fed reduced its benchmark interest rate for the second time this year, seeking to prevent the economy from stalling in the face of slowing economic growth overseas and uncertainty over the U.S.-China trade war.

Bond prices were little changed. The yield on the 10-year Treasury held at 1.77%.

Traders were encouraged Thursday by new economic snapshots, including data indicating U.S. home sales rose sharply last month and an index of manufacturing activity that came in ahead of analysts' forecasts. In addition, applications for U.S. unemployment aid edged higher last week, but still totaled less than what economists projected.

Recent data suggests the U.S. job market is solid, wages are rising, consumers are still spending and even such sluggish sectors as manufacturing and construction have shown signs of rebounding. Still, investors have been trying to gauge how the economy will fare amid a slowdown in economies overseas and uncertainty over the trade war between the U.S. and China.

"A lack of escalation or potential de-escalation would be something that would be viewed positively by the markets," said Bill Northey, senior investment director at U.S. Bank Wealth Management.

ENERGY: Benchmark U.S. crude picked up 54 cents to settle at \$58.73 a barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It's up 6.3% this week following the attack on a Saudi Aramco facility last weekend that temporarily cut the country's exports by half. Brent crude, the international standard, rose 32 cents to close at \$64.72.

The dollar fell to 107.91 Japanese yen from 107.92 yen on Thursday. The euro strengthened to \$1.1056 from \$1.1042.

AP Business Writer Alex Veiga contributed.

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Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Friday, Sept. 20, the 263rd day of 2019. There are 102 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Sept. 20, 2001, during an address to a joint session of Congress, President George W. Bush announced a new Cabinet-level office to fortify homeland security and named Pennsylvania Governor Tom Ridge its director.

On this date:

In 1519, Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan and his crew set out from Spain on five ships to find a western passage to the Spice Islands. (Magellan was killed enroute, but one of his ships eventually circled the world.)

In 1873, panic swept the floor of the New York Stock Exchange in the wake of railroad bond defaults and bank failures.

In 1881, Chester A. Arthur was sworn in as the 21st president of the United States, succeeding the assassinated James A. Garfield.

In 1958, Martin Luther King Jr. was seriously wounded during a book signing at a New York City department store when he was stabbed in the chest by Izola Curry. (Curry was later found mentally incompetent; she died at a Queens, New York, nursing home in 2015 at age 98.)

In 1962, James Meredith, a black student, was blocked from enrolling at the University of Mississippi by Democratic Gov. Ross R. Barnett. (Meredith was later admitted.)

In 1963, President Kennedy proposed a joint U-S-Soviet expedition to the moon.

In 1976, Playboy magazine released an interview in which Democratic presidential nominee Jimmy Carter admitted he'd "looked on a lot of women with lust."

In 1984, a suicide car bomber attacked the U.S. Embassy annex in north Beirut, killing at least 14 people, including two Americans and 12 Lebanese. The family sitcoms "The Cosby Show" and "Who's the Boss?" premiered on NBC and ABC, respectively.

In 1995, in a move that stunned Wall Street, AT&T Corporation announced it was splitting into three companies.

In 1999, Lawrence Russell Brewer became the second white supremacist to be convicted in the dragging death of James Byrd Jr. in Jasper, Texas. (Brewer was executed on September 21, 2011.) Raisa Gorbachev, wife of the last Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev (mih-kah-EEL' gohr-bah-CHAHV'), died at a German hospital after a battle with leukemia; she was 67.

In 2004, CBS News apologized for a "mistake in judgment" in its story questioning President George W. Bush's National Guard service, saying it could not vouch for the authenticity of documents featured in the report.

In 2017, Hurricane Maria, the strongest hurricane to hit Puerto Rico in more than 80 years, struck the island, wiping out as much as 75 percent of the power distribution lines and causing an island-wide black-out. Rescuers worked furiously at a collapsed school in Mexico City where a girl was believed trapped under debris in the aftermath of a deadly earthquake; it was later determined that no children were still trapped in the debris.

Ten years ago: Blanketing most of the Sunday TV news shows, President Barack Obama said requiring people to get health insurance, and fining them if they didn't, would not amount to a backhanded tax increase. At the Emmy Awards, best drama and comedy series trophies went to repeat winners "Mad Men" and "30 Rock." The first game at the Cowboys Stadium set an NFL regular-season attendance record with a crowd of 105,121, and most of them went home disappointed after the New York Giants won, 33-31.

Five years ago: Turkish authorities reported freeing 49 hostages held by the militant Islamic State group without firing a shot, paying a ransom or offering a quid pro quo. Emmy-winning actress and singer Polly Bergen, 84, died in Southbury, Connecticut.

One year ago: A woman working a temporary job at a drugstore warehouse in Maryland opened fire on

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colleagues, killing three before taking her own life. A wave of buying sent U.S. stocks solidly higher, driving the Dow Jones Industrial Average above the all-time high it closed at in January. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (shin-zoh AH'-bay) was re-elected as head of his ruling Liberal Democratic party in a landslide.

Today's Birthdays: Actress Sophia Loren is 85. Rock musician Chuck Panozzo is 71. Actor Tony Denison is 70. Hockey Hall of Famer Guy LaFleur is 68. Actress Debbi Morgan is 68. Jazz musician Peter White is 65. Actress Betsy Brantley is 64. Actor Gary Cole is 63. TV news correspondent Deborah Roberts is 59. Country-rock musician Joseph Shreve (Flynnville Train) is 58. Rock musician Randy Bradbury (Pennywise) is 55. Actress Kristen Johnston is 52. Rock singers Gunnar and Matthew Nelson are 52. Rock musician Ben Shepherd is 51. Actress Erika Okuma is 47. Actress-model Moon Bloodgood is 44. Actor Jon Bernthal is 43. Singer The Dream is 42. Actor Charlie Weber is 41. Rock musician Rick Woolstenhulme (WOOL'-sten-hyoolm) (Lifehouse) is 40. Rapper Yung Joc is 39. Actress Crystle Stewart is 38. Actor Aldis Hodge is 33. Rock drummer Jack Lawless is 32. Actor Malachi (MAL'-ah-ky) Kirby is 30.

Thought for Today: "A faith is a necessity to a man. Woe to him who believes in nothing." — Victor Hugo, French author (1802-1885).

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