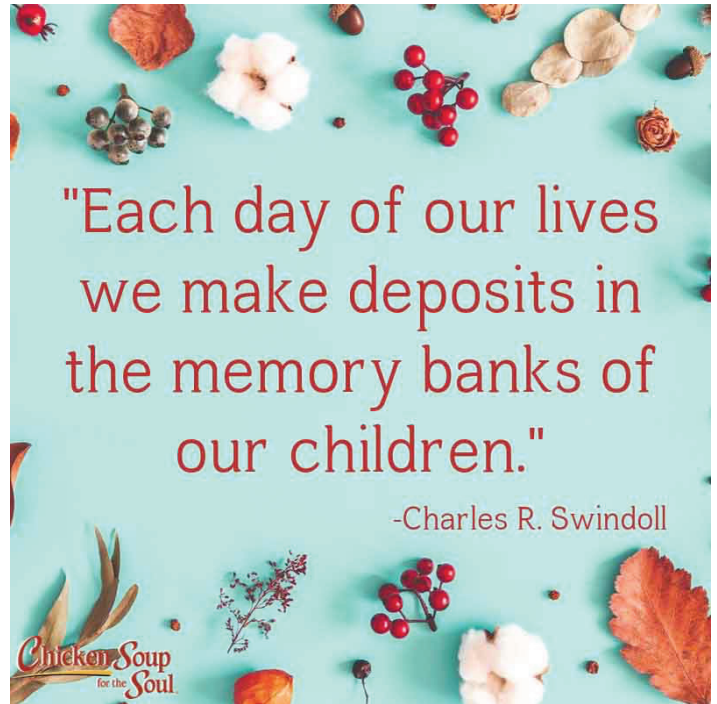


Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 1 of 51

- [1- Roncalli passes Groton Area in seed points](#)
- [2- GHS Open House & Family Night](#)
- [6- Bowling Scores](#)
- [7- Final NEC Standings](#)
- [9- Weather Pages](#)
- [12- Daily Devotional](#)
- [13- 2019 Groton Events](#)
- [14- News from the Associated Press](#)



Roncalli passes Groton Area in seed points

The following is unofficial, but reflects the ratings as of this morning.

Aberdeen Roncalli got more help from its opponents than Groton last night as a result, Roncalli will have the first round bye of the regional volleyball tournament.

On Tuesday, Groton Area will host Sisseton and Webster Area will host Milbank with the winners of those two matches advancing to the next round on Thursday at the highest seed location. In the other side of the bracket, Redfield will host Tiospa Zina with the winner playing Roncalli on Thursday. The two Thursday winners will then advance to the SoDak16.

Upcoming COMMUNITY EVENTS

Wednesday, Oct. 30

MathCounts at Aberdeen Roncalli, 8:30 a.m. to 11:35 a.m.

Friday and Saturday, Nov. 1 and 2

All State Chorus and Orchestra in Sioux Falls

Saturday, Nov. 2

Oral Interp Pumpkinstakes at Watertown

Sunday, Nov. 3

Turn clocks back one hour to return to Standard Time

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

© 2019 Groton Daily Independent

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 2 of 51

GHS Open House & Family Night



Karsten Jeschke portrayed Bill Gates at the Living Wax Museum held at the GHS Open House on Tuesday. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Ashley Johnson portrayed Carol Burnett at the Living Wax Museum held at the GHS Open House on Tuesday. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 3 of 51



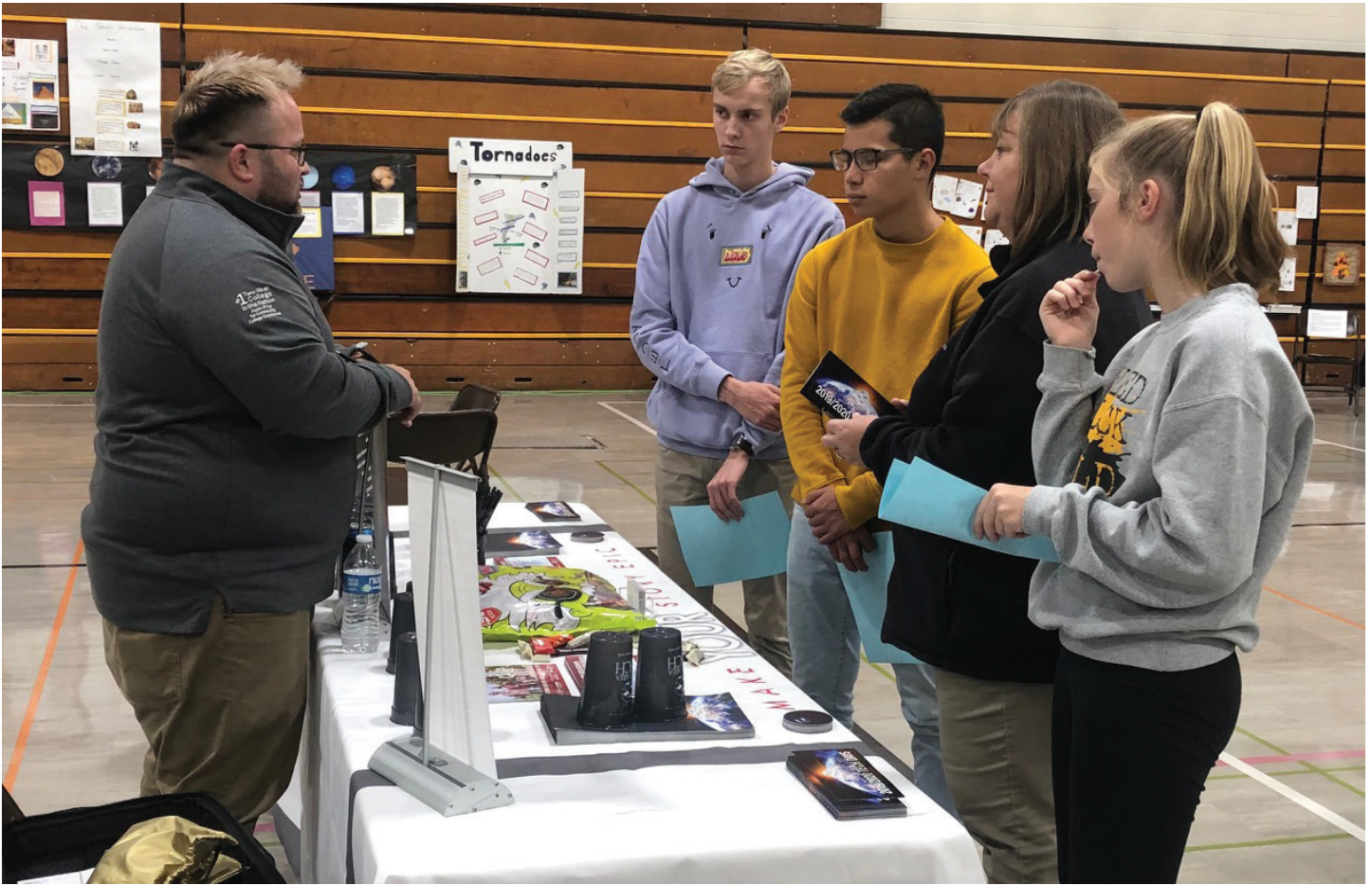
Jeslyn Kosel portrayed Rosa Parks at the Living Wax Museum held at the GHS Open House on Tuesday. (Photo by Paul Kosel)



Several colleges set up booths at the GHS Open House held Tuesday. Here, Deb Schuelke from Presentation College talks with Payton Colestock and her mom, Michelle Muilenberg. Students had to have signatures from teachers and college or National Guard representatives in order to receive bonus points. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 4 of 51



Darren Shelton, lead admissions representative from Lake Area Technical Institute, Wauertown, talks with the Schinkel family. Pictured are Piet Solling, Anthony Schinkel, Marjae Schinkel and Emma Schinkel. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 5 of 51



In order to get Brian Schuring's signature, students had to putt the ball twice. Then he would sign their sheet. Here Cade Larson is giving it a try. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 6 of 51



The sixth grade band performed at the GHS Open House held Tuesday in the GHS Gym. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

Groton Coffee Cup League

Oct. 29 Team Standings: Biker Chix 21, James Valley 18, Kens 14, Ten Pins 11.

High Games: Nancy Radke 176, Angie Carlson 161, Sam Bahr 152.

High Series: Nancy Radke 440, Sam Bahr 433, Sandi Bistedeau 404.

Conde National League

Oct. 28 Team Standings: Mets 24, Pirates 17½, Braves 16½, Cubs 15, Giants 13, Tigers 10.

Men's High Games: Larry Frohling 236, Lance Frohling 183, Austin Schuelke 180.

Men's High Series: Larry Frohling 534, Lance Frohling 489, Austin Schuelke 471.

Women's High Games: Mary Larson 177, Joyce Walter 165, Sandy Hoops 160.

Women's High Series: Mary Larson 476, Joyce Walter 449, Michelle Johnson 431.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 7 of 51

Groton Area wins NEC Title outright

The Groton Area volleyball team scored a perfect 10-0 record to win outright the Northeast Conference Title for 2019. The final conference standings and scores of all of the conference games are listed below. The numbers in parenthesis is the set won-loss record in the matches.

Groton Area	10-0
Aberdeen Roncalli	8-2
Webster Area	8-2
Redfield	7-3
Hamlin	7-3
Deuel.....	3-7
Milbank.....	3-7
Clark/Willow Lake	3-7
Sisseton	3-7
Tiospa Zina	3-7
Britton-Hecla	0-10

Groton Area 10-0 (30-4)

Won

Redfield (25-17) (18-25) (25-21) (25-15)
Britton-Hecla (25-4) (25-7) (25-11)
Webster Area (25-12) (25-18) (25-21)
Hamlin (25-18) (13-25) (25-13) (25-13)
Sisseton (25-8) (25-15) (25-12)
Roncalli (20-25) (25-22) (25-16) (27-25)
Clark/Willow Lake (25-19) (25-20) (25-14)
Tiospa Zina (25-10) (25-13) (25-22)
Milbank (23-25) (25-17) (25-14) (25-21)
Deuel (25-20) (25-11) (25-8)

Aberdeen Roncalli 8-2 (27-7)

Won

Milbank (24-26) (25-13) (25-19) (25-18)
Deuel (25-13) (25-11) (25-10)
Hamlin (25-12) (25-21) (25-17)
Tiospa Zina (25-15) (25-13) (25-12)
Webster Area (10-25) (25-16) (22-25) (25-22) (15-8)
Clark/Willow Lake (25-12) (25-14) (25-10)
Sisseton (25-14) (25-17) (26-24)
Britton-Hecla (25-9) (25-14) (25-20)

Lost

Redfield (25-22) (23-25) (23-25) (26-24) (14-16)
Groton Area (25-20) (22-25) (16-25) (25-27)

Redfield 7-3 (24-11)

Won

Tiospa Zina (25-18) (25-15) (25-11)
Roncalli (22-25) (25-23) (25-23) (24-26) (16-14)
Deuel (25-18) (25-15) (25-18)
Sisseton (25-17) (25-22) (25-16)
Britton-Hecla (25-22) (25-13) (25-15)
Milbank (25-18) (25-20) (25-21)
Clark/Willow Lake (25-17) (25-22) (25-13)

Lost

Groton Area (17-25) (25-18) (21-25) (15-25)
Hamlin (21-25) (22-25) (14-25)
Webster (25-21) (19-25) (17-25) (25-23) (13-15)

Webster Area 8-2 (26-11)

Won

Milbank (17-25) (25-19) (25-21) (24-26) (15-9)
Deuel (25-11) (25-16) (25-6)
Britton-Hecla (25-13) (25-12) (25-8)
Clark/Willow Lake (25-4) (25-21) (25-7)
Hamlin (22-25) (25-21) (25-18) (25-20)
Sisseton (25-8) (25-14) (25-17)
Tiospa Zina (25-13) (25-18) (25-20)
Redfield (21-25) (25-19) (25-17) (23-25) (15-13)

Lost

Groton (12-25) (18-25) (21-25)
Roncalli (25-10) (16-25) (25-22) (22-25) (8-15)

Hamlin 7-3 (23-12)

Won

Tiospa Zina (25-13) (25-11) (25-13)
Sisseton (20-25) (28-26) (26-24) (31-29)
Redfield (25-21) (25-22) (25-14)
Deuel (25-17) (25-10) (25-18)
Milbank (25-21) (25-22) (25-11)
Britton-Hecla (25-22) (25-15) (25-20)
Clark/WL(25-19) (24-26) (25-18) (25-27) (15-12)

Lost

Groton Area (18-25) (25-13) (13-25) (13-25)
Roncalli (12-25) (21-25) (17-25)
Webster (25-22) (21-25) (18-25) (20-25)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 8 of 51

Deuel 3-7 (9-23)

Won

Britton-Hecla (25-22) (25-13) (25-20)
Sisseton (25-21) (25-17) (15-25) (25-22)
Clark (25-22) (25-22) (18-25) (25-18)

Lost

Milbank (15-25) (13-25) (11-25)
Roncalli (13-25) (11-25) (10-25)
Webster Area (11-25) (16-25) (6-25)
Tiospa Zina (23-25) (11-25) (21-25)
Redfield (18-25) (15-25) (18-25)
Hamlin (17-25) (10-25) (18-25)
Groton Area (20-25) (11-25) (8-25)

Milbank 3-7 (15-22)

Won

Deuel (25-15) (25-13) (25-11)
Clark/Willow Lake (18-25) (25-17) (25-21) (25-20)
Britton-Hecla (25-15) (25-15) (25-11)

Lost

Roncalli (26-24) (13-25) (19-25) (18-25)
Webster Area (25-17) (19-25) (21-25) (26-24) (9-15)
Sisseton (17-25) (17-25) (17-25)
Hamlin (21-25) (22-25) (11-25)
Redfield (18-25) (20-25) (21-25)
Groton Area (25-23) (17-25) (14-25) (21-25)
Tiospa Zina (25-16) (20-25) (25-20) (23-25) (12-15)

Clark/Willow Lake 3-7 (13-23)

Won

Britton-Hecla (25-21) (25-16) (25-13)
Tiospa Zina (23-25) (25-15) (25-23) (26-24)
Sisseton (25-16) (28-30) (25-16) (25-22)

Lost

Milbank (25-18) (17-25) (21-25) (20-25)
Webster Area (4-25) (21-25) (7-25)
Groton Area (19-25) (20-25) (14-25)
Deuel (22-25) (22-25) (25-18) (18-25)
Roncalli (12-25) (14-25) (10-25)
Redfield (17-25) (22-25) (13-25)
Hamlin (19-25) (26-24) (18-25) (27-25) (12-15)

Sisseton 3-7 (12-21)

Won

Tiospa Zina (25-12) (27-25) (25-21)
Milbank (25-17) (25-17) (25-17)
Britton-Hecla (25-16) (25-15) (25-13)

Lost

Groton Area (8-25) (15-25) (12-25)
Redfield (17-25) (22-25) (16-25)
Deuel (21-25) (17-25) (25-15) (22-25)
Webster Area (8-25) (14-25) (17-25)
Roncalli (14-25) (17-25) (24-26)
Hamlin (25-20) (26-28) (24-26) (29-31)
Clark/Willow Lake (16-25) (30-28) (16-25) (22-25)

Tiospa Zina 3-7 (10-22)

Won

Britton-Hecla (25-11) (25-14) (25-21)
Deuel (25-23) (25-11) (25-21)
Milbank (16-25) (25-20) (20-25) (25-23) (15-12)

Lost

Hamlin (13-25) (11-25) (13-25)
Sisseton (12-25) (25-27) (21-25)
Redfield (18-25) (15-25) (11-25)
Roncalli (15-25) (13-25) (12-25)
Groton Area (10-25) (13-25) (22-25)
Clark/Willow Lake (25-23) (15-25) (23-25) (24-26)
Webster Area (13-25) (18-25) (20-25)

Britton-Hecla 0-10 (0-30)

Lost

Clark/Willow Lake (21-25) (16-25) (13-25)
Groton Area (4-25) (7-25) (11-25)
Tiospa Zina (11-25) (14-25) (21-25)
Webster Area (13-25) (12-25) (8-25)
Deuel (22-25) (13-25) (20-25)
Redfield (22-25) (13-25) (15-25)
Milbank (15-25) (15-25) (11-25)
Roncalli (9-25) (14-25) (20-25)
Hamlin (22-25) (15-25) (20-25)
Sisseton (16-25) (15-25) (13-25)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 9 of 51

Wednesday



Sunny

High: 35 °F

Wednesday
Night



Clear

Low: 12 °F

Thursday



Increasing
Clouds

High: 42 °F

Thursday
Night



Chance Snow
Showers

Low: 29 °F

Friday



Slight Chance
Rain/Snow

High: 39 °F

Wednesday
32 to 36°

Thursday
38 to 45°

Friday
near 40°
light morning
Snow Showers

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
Aberdeen, SD
Updated: 10/29/2019 1:23 PM Central

Published on: 10/29/2019 at 9:26AM

Cold and dry conditions should remain through the day Thursday. Expect scattered light snow showers Thursday night into Friday morning.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 10 of 51

Today in Weather History

October 30, 1943: Snow fell across much of central and north central South Dakota on this date in 1943. Snowfall amounts of 2 to 7 inches occurred. Snowfall amounts included, 2 inches at Timber Lake, 4 inches at Murdo, 5 inches at Mobridge, and 7 inches at Kennebec and Pierre.

October 30, 1950: Much above normal temperatures occurred across the entire area of central and northeast South Dakota as well as west central Minnesota. Record highs were mostly in the 80s across the area. The records were 78 degrees at Sisseton, 80 degrees at Wheaton, 85 degrees at Watertown and Aberdeen, 86 degrees at Mobridge, 88 degrees at Pierre, and a hot 91 degrees at Kennebec.

1991: The Perfect Storm, also known as the No-Name Storm reached maximum strength on this day with a low pressure of 972 mb and sustained winds of 69 mph.

1925 - Nashville, TN, was blanketed with an inch of snow, their earliest measurable snow of record. (The Weather Channel)

1947 - The Donora, PA, smog disaster finally came to an end. For five days an inversion trapped impurities in the lower atmosphere over the Monongahela Valley killing 20 persons, and leaving more than 2000 others sick. (26th-30th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Severe thunderstorms in Oklahoma produced golf ball size hail and wind gusts to 74 mph near the town of Gould. Unseasonably warm weather prevailed across the central U.S. Temperatures warmed into the 80s from Texas to the Lower Missouri Valley. (Storm Data) (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Ten cities in the Upper Midwest reported record low temperatures for the date. The morning low of 20 degrees at South Bend IND was a record for October, and lows of 18 degrees at Grand Rapids MI and 20 degrees at Fort Wayne IND equalled records for October. The low of 2 degrees at International Falls MN smashed their previous record for the date by 11 degrees. Syracuse NY received 2.9 inches of snow to establish a record for October with 5.7 inches for the month. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Temperatures soared into the 70s in the northeastern U.S. The record high of 73 degrees at Alpena MI marked their sixth straight day of record warmth. In the western U.S., Klamath Falls OR reported a record low of 19 degrees. (The National Weather Summary)

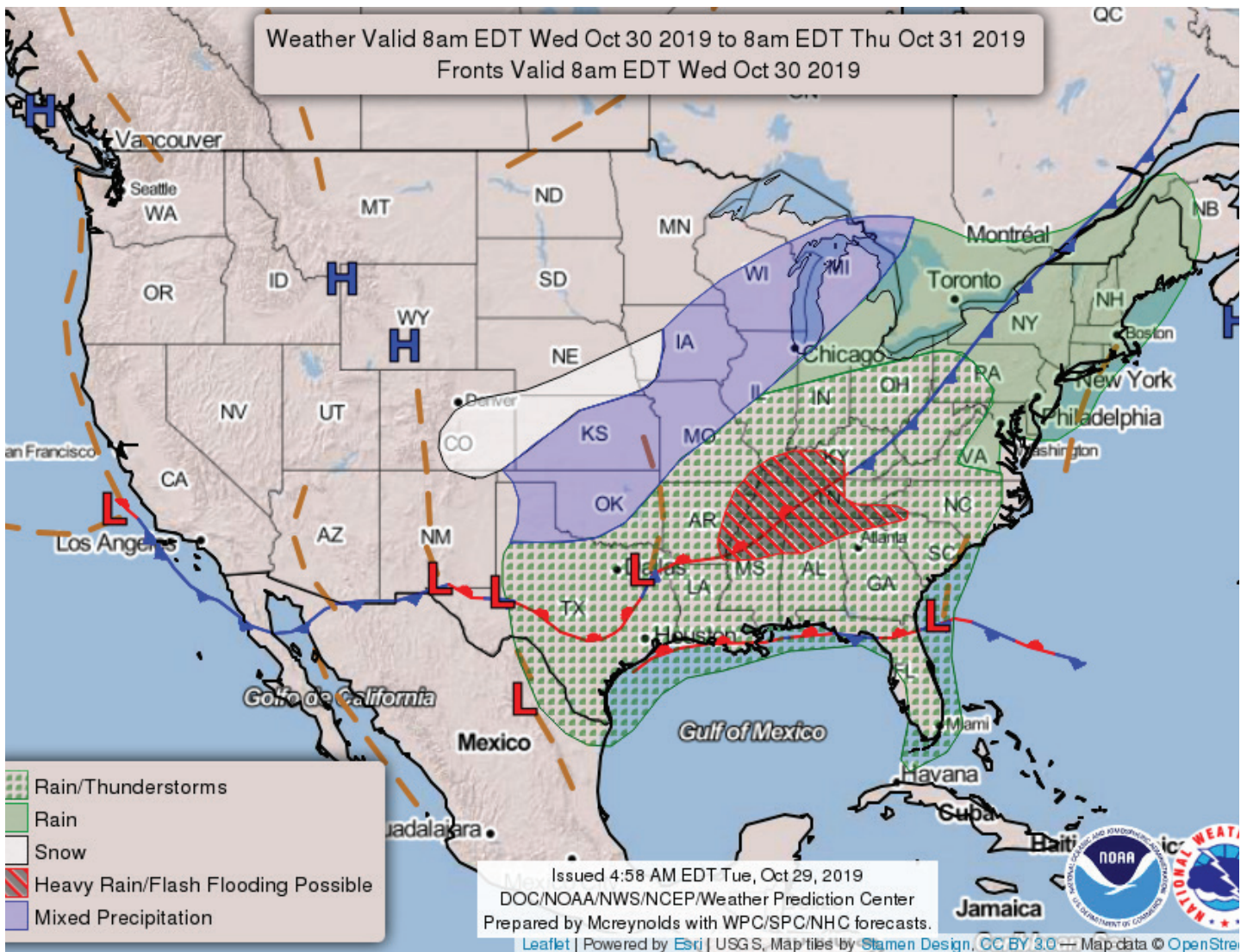
Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 11 of 51

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 32 °F at 4:16 PM
Low Temp: 21 °F at 9:20 PM
Wind: 18 mph at 2:13 PM
Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 85° in 1950
Record Low: 8° in 1925, 1991
Average High: 50°F
Average Low: 27°F
Average Precip in Oct.: 1.91
Precip to date in Oct.: 1.55
Average Precip to date: 20.39
Precip Year to Date: 26.57
Sunset Tonight: 6:24 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:11 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 12 of 51



YOU HAVE MY WORD

As he slipped the engagement ring on her finger, he said, "I want you to know that I will love you forever and then some. But if things don't work out, I expect you to give me back my ring. Is that perfectly clear?"

People change. Situations change. Times change. But God will not change.

If there is anything that we can know beyond a shadow of a doubt, it is this: God's promises and His faithfulness will never change. We have His Word and His Word is truth.

Because God is truth we can believe and be secure in all of His promises. His truth is like the anchor of a ship. Winds may blow, waves may crash, and the ship may move from the left to the right – even in a circle, but it is secure and safe as long as the anchor holds.

In God's eternal truth we find hope. When we feel as though we are being swept along by circumstances that are beyond our control and have nothing secure to grasp or hold on to, we need to reach for Him. He will lift us up and plant our feet securely on the firm foundation that is His never-changing Word.

Though we may not understand what is going on in our world, we know Who is in control of our world. We must always hope, knowing His best is coming soon.

Prayer: Give us, Father, a hope that will not fade, a trust that will not waiver, and hope that holds firm. Help us to realize that all we need can be found in You. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Hebrews 6:18-19 So God has given both his promise and his oath. These two things are unchangeable because it is impossible for God to lie.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 13 of 51

2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 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)

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 14 of 51

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Mega Millions

04-09-17-27-39, Mega Ball: 22, Megaplier: 2

(four, nine, seventeen, twenty-seven, thirty-nine; Mega Ball: twenty-two; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$105 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$140 million

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

Volleyball

Avon def. Bon Homme, 20-25, 25-20, 25-13, 25-16

Bridgewater-Emery def. Centerville, 25-10, 25-10, 25-17

Castlewood def. Flandreau, 25-4, 25-23, 25-14

Chester def. Arlington, 25-13, 25-13, 25-16

Corsica/Stickney def. Colome, 25-20, 25-11, 25-10

Deubrook def. Baltic, 25-16, 25-22, 25-15

Dupree def. Jones County, 25-17, 25-20, 25-15

Elkton-Lake Benton def. Dell Rapids, 25-11, 20-25, 25-21, 25-15

Ethan def. Platte-Geddes, 25-19, 25-13, 25-10

Faulkton def. Wolsey-Wessington, 25-19, 25-20, 25-23

Freeman def. Alcester-Hudson, 23-25, 25-22, 25-20, 23-25, 15-6

Garretson def. Colman-Egan, 25-19, 25-21, 25-27, 25-19

Great Plains Lutheran def. Waverly-South Shore, 25-22, 25-21, 25-14

Hamlin def. Clark/Willow Lake, 25-19, 24-26, 25-18, 25-27, 15-12

Harding County def. Newell, 26-28, 26-24, 25-13, 25-20

Harrisburg def. Aberdeen Central, 26-24, 25-20, 25-16

Hitchcock-Tulare def. Wessington Springs, 25-18, 22-25, 25-17, 25-27, 15-4

Huron def. Mitchell, 25-17, 25-18, 25-15

Ipswich def. Faith, 25-20, 23-25, 20-25, 25-19, 15-8

Irene-Wakonda def. Howard, 25-22, 25-21, 21-25, 25-22

Kimball/White Lake def. Tripp-Delmont/Armour, 25-18, 25-16, 25-16

Lemmon def. Cheyenne-Eagle Butte, 23-25, 15-25, 25-19, 25-23, 15-7

Lennox def. Canton, 25-17, 25-17, 25-20

Miller def. Highmore-Harrold, 25-23, 25-13, 25-14

Mt. Vernon/Plankinton def. Sanborn Central/Woonsocket, 25-19, 20-25, 27-25, 25-18

New Underwood def. Bennett County, 25-19, 25-18, 25-20

North Central def. Northwestern, 25-7, 25-13, 25-8

Parker def. West Central, 25-15, 25-17, 25-19

Pierre def. Brookings, 13-25, 25-19, 25-21, 25-21

Pine Ridge def. St. Francis Indian, 25-14, 25-16, 25-14

Potter County def. Leola/Frederick, 25-16, 25-21, 21-25, 25-15

Rapid City Central def. Spearfish, 25-16, 25-12, 25-14

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 15 of 51

Rapid City Christian def. Hot Springs, 25-10, 25-15, 25-8
Rapid City Stevens def. Sturgis Brown, 25-15, 25-7, 23-25, 25-10
Scotland def. Menno, 25-11, 22-25, 25-15, 25-10
Sioux Falls O'Gorman def. Sioux Falls Washington, 25-18, 25-23, 25-17
Sioux Falls Roosevelt def. Sioux Falls Lincoln, 25-15, 25-12, 25-20
Sisseton def. Britton-Hecla, 25-16, 25-15, 25-13
St. Thomas More def. Lead-Deadwood, 25-17, 25-12, 25-20
Sunshine Bible Academy def. Lower Brule, 25-6, 25-9, 25-16
Timber Lake def. Crazy Horse, 25-14, 25-9, 25-12
Vermillion def. Elk Point-Jefferson, 25-22, 25-20, 14-25, 25-13
Warner def. Langford, 25-11, 25-20, 22-25, 25-21
Watertown def. Brandon Valley, 25-17, 25-15, 25-19
Webster def. Redfield, 21-25, 25-19, 25-17, 23-25, 15-13
Yankton def. Tea Area, 25-19, 25-18, 25-22
Mitchell Christian Triangular
James Valley Christian def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-7, 25-2, 25-14
James Valley Christian def. Mitchell Christian, 25-16, 25-18, 25-12
Mitchell Christian def. Freeman Academy/Marion, 25-14, 25-10, 25-14
Wakpala Tournament (AIC)
Takini def. Wakpala, 18-25, 25-20, 25-18, 18-25, 19-17

US State Department oil pipeline review doesn't ease worries

By MATTHEW BROWN Associated Press

BILLINGS, Mont. (AP) — Opponents of the Keystone XL oil pipeline from Canada said the Trump administration is understating the potential for the line to break and spill into water bodies such as Montana's Missouri River, as the U.S. State Department held the sole public meeting Tuesday on a new environmental review of the long-stalled proposal.

Backers say the \$8 billion project would create thousands of construction jobs and boost local tax revenues. Sponsor TC Energy insists the line would be safe, despite spills on other lines operated by the company.

A federal judge blocked it last year, saying more environmental study was needed.

President Donald Trump issued a presidential permit for the line in March in a bid to avoid another unfavorable court ruling.

The Republican has been a strong supporter and revived the project after it was rejected under President Barack Obama, in part over worries it would make climate change worse.

Tuesday's meeting, held at a conference center in Billings, was not a public hearing and attendees were invited to use computer terminals to submit formal comments. But the event briefly turned into a shouting match between pipeline backers and opponents, reflecting Keystone XL's emergence as a political lightning rod since it was first proposed in 2008.

Keystone supporter Todd Tibbetts said the line would cross through his farm near Terry, Montana. Tibbett is already getting paid by project sponsor TC Energy for a pipe storage yard the company built on his property.

"Keystone is a wonderful neighbor," he said. "Yes, there's a risk of an oil spill. We have to be willing to take a risk. It's a very minuscule chance."

Montana state Sen. Frank Smith says the 1,200-mile (1930-kilometer) line would break eventually. The Democrat worries that could foul downstream drinking water supplies on the Fort Peck Indian Reservation.

"Obama did a really thorough investigation and decided it wouldn't work," Smith said. "If it gets into (downstream water supplies) how long will it take to flush those lines out?"

Smith and other pipeline opponents criticized the format of the meeting, which included a designated

“free speech area,” located just outside of the convention center in a snowy parking lot in subfreezing temperatures.

Keystone XL would be a 36-inch (91-centimeter) wide pipeline that would help transport up to 830,000 barrels (35 million gallons) of crude daily from western Canada to terminals on the Gulf Coast.

Burning that oil would release annually between 2.3 million and 196 million tons (2.1 million up to 178 million metric tons) of additional greenhouse gas emissions that contribute to climate change, according to the State Department analysis. That’s equivalent at the high end to almost 3% of total U.S. emissions.

The broad range reflects uncertainty over how much crude from Keystone XL would displace existing oil supplies.

Rivers crossed by the line include the Missouri and the Yellowstone, which has twice experienced major oil spills. Both are prone to scouring during flooding. That means the river bottom gets scraped by the floodwaters, leaving buried pipelines exposed.

TC Energy spokesman Terry Cunha said Keystone XL would be tunneled at least 25 feet (7.6 meters) beneath major riverbeds to protect from accidents. He said the entry and exit points for the line would be set back from the bank to account for erosion.

“The studies continue to demonstrate or highlight that the project can be built safely, and that is our key priority,” Cunha said.

Follow Matthew Brown at <https://twitter.com/matthewbrownap>

South Dakota inmate seeks delay to choose own execution drug

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Attorneys for a South Dakota prisoner asked a judge Tuesday to delay his execution while they argue that he should be able to choose the drug used in the lethal injection.

Charles Russell Rhines is to be put to death next week with pentobarbital, which several states have used in executions. But Craig Stevens, a professor of pharmacology at the University of Oklahoma, testified on Rhines’ behalf Tuesday that it’s not an “ultra-short-acting” drug.

The state cited testimony from one of its expert witnesses, an anesthesiologist, who said there’s no difference in the way pentobarbital and drugs classified as “ultra-short-acting” work in an execution. Assistant Attorney General Paul Swedlund described in graphic detail how Rhines used a hunting knife to murder a young doughnut-shop worker in Rapid City in 1992. Swedlund called Rhines a “coward” and argued that Rhines is not making the appeal to win the case but to delay his execution.

Lawyers for Rhines argued that he has a “very limited say” in how he will be executed. When Rhines was convicted, South Dakota law stipulated that executions be carried out with “ultra-short-acting” drugs. Legislators changed the law in 2007 but stipulated that inmates sentenced to death can choose the manner of execution in effect when they were convicted.

Judge Jon Sogn said he would rule as quickly as he could. He gave the state until Wednesday to seek more time or submit additional testimony.

A Montana court ruled in 2015 that pentobarbital was not “ultra-short-acting,” but several other states, including Georgia, Missouri and Texas, use it in executions.

Pentobarbital was used last year when South Dakota executed Rodney Berget, who killed a prison guard during a 2011 escape attempt. Berget was pronounced dead 12 minutes after the lethal injection began, and a transcript released afterward said Berget asked after the injection was administered: “Is it supposed to feel like that?” That prompted a national group that studies capital punishment to call on the state to release more details about the drug used.

Rhines lost two other appeals to delay his execution last week. In those appeals, he argued that he should be able to meet with mental health experts to prepare a clemency application and that the state’s execution policies don’t follow the state’s rule-making requirement.

An exact date for Rhines’ execution hasn’t been announced.

South Dakota man accused of assaulting 2 deputies

HUDSON, S.D. (AP) — A man from southeastern South Dakota faces charges of assault and resisting arrest after authorities say he assaulted two sheriff's deputies during a domestic dispute call.

The Lincoln County deputies were responding to the dispute last Thursday night outside of Hudson. Authorities say the deputies tried to arrest the 30-year-old suspect from Hudson on charges of simple assault domestic violence, but the man resisted.

Authorities say the suspect assaulted the deputies several times and swung a lamp at them. A stun gun was used on the man, but he wasn't able to be detained until Canton police and the South Dakota Highway Patrol assisted.

The Argus Leader reports the deputies were treated at a hospital for minor injuries.

Pats still No. 1; Saints, 49ers tied at 2nd in AP Pro32 poll

By SIMMI BUTTAR AP Pro Football Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Halfway through the NFL's regular season, teams are starting to get bunched together in the standings. And in the latest AP Pro32 poll .

The New Orleans Saints and San Francisco 49ers are tied for the second spot in the poll behind the defending champion New England Patriots.

The Patriots received 11 of 12 first-place votes for 383 points in balloting Tuesday by media members who regularly cover the NFL.

"The Patriots are making a case for one of the best teams in NFL history and one of the best defenses in NFL history," said Charean Williams of Pro Football Talk. "Can they rinse and repeat in the second half of the season?"

The Saints received the other first-place vote, and both New Orleans and the unbeaten 49ers have 366 points. The Saints have a bye this week and the 49ers will open Week 9 on Thursday night when they head to Arizona and take on Kyler Murray and the Cardinals.

"The 49ers haven't been this good since the glory days of (Joe) Montana, (Steve) Young and (Jerry) Rice," Newsday's Bob Glauber said.

There are three ties in the top half of the poll. The Indianapolis Colts and the Kansas City Chiefs, teams headed in opposite directions, are tied at No. 8. The Colts, who have won three in a row, moved up two places. The Chiefs, who have lost three of four, slipped a spot as they await the return of injured quarterback Patrick Mahomes.

The Dallas Cowboys and Buffalo Bills are tied for No. 12. The Cowboys kept their spot after their bye week while the Bills dropped four spots after being beaten at home by the Philadelphia Eagles.

NFC North rivals Green Bay and Minnesota are at Nos. 4 and 5, respectively. The Packers stayed put after topping the Chiefs on Sunday night, when Aaron Rodgers threw three touchdown passes.

"When Aaron Rodgers is on his game, like he was at Arrowhead Sunday evening, few quarterbacks in NFL history can match his artistry," said Ira Kaufman of Fox 13 in Tampa, Florida. "The Chiefs are still shaking their heads at some of those throws."

The Vikings switched spots with the Baltimore Ravens, who are coming off a bye and host the Patriots on Sunday night in one of the top matchups of Week 9.

"Can the Patriots slow down (Ravens quarterback) Lamar Jackson?" asked Fox Sports' John Czarnecki.

And the Vikings head to Kansas City on Sunday in another game featuring winning teams.

Russell Wilson and the Seattle Seahawks moved up two places to No. 7. And despite losing star defensive end J.J. Watt to a season-ending injury, the Houston Texans moved up four spots to round out the top 10. The Texans head to London to face the Jaguars on Sunday.

"Flying under the radar the past two weeks," Alex Marvez of Sirius XM said of Jacksonville. "Outcome of Sunday's game versus Houston will show just how real the Jaguars are."

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

Crash near Aberdeen came when plane hit tree at night

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — A small plane near Aberdeen that killed the pilot was caused when the plane hit a tree in wind and fog at night.

The National Transportation Safety Board's preliminary report Tuesday said the pilot, 70-year-old Gerald Seliski of Hecla, South Dakota, crashed about 10:30 p.m. on Oct. 9 soon after takeoff from Aberdeen Regional Airport.

The NTSB said Seliski did not have a pilot's certificate.

A hunter found the wreckage about 3 miles from the airport.

Dismemberment evidence allowed in murder trial

YANKTON, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota judge has ruled that dismemberment evidence can be used in the trial of a man accused of killing his girlfriend and dumping her remains in a river in Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

The attorney for 45-year-old Robert Falkenberg argued the evidence might prejudice a jury against his client who has pleaded not guilty to killing Tamara LaFramboise last March.

The nude torso of the 46-year-old Yankton woman was found in the Little River in Michigan's Menominee Township, near Falkenberg's family farm weeks later. Her head and hands had been removed and are still missing.

The Yankton Press and Dakotan says defense attorney Clint Sargent argued that the dismemberment was performed days after the murder and did not serve to show intent. Judge Cheryl Gering denied the motion Monday.

Information from: Yankton Press and Dakotan, <http://www.yankton.net/>

Strasburg, Nats top Astros 7-2, force World Series Game 7

By RONALD BLUM AP Baseball Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — It's been an unconventional road to Game 7 of the World Series for Stephen Strasburg and the Washington Nationals.

Seizing the October spotlight he missed out on as a youngster, Strasburg pitched another postseason gem into the ninth inning Tuesday night as the Nationals beat the Houston Astros 7-2 to tie this Fall Classic at 3-3.

Juan Soto ran all the way to first base with his bat following a go-ahead homer, the same way Houston slugger Alex Bregman did earlier.

Yep, these wild-card Nationals have matched the heavily favored Astros swing for swing, hit for hit — even home run celebration for home run celebration.

Now, it's onto a winner-take-all Game 7 on Wednesday night to decide the only Series in which the visiting team won the first six.

"It's weird, really. You can't explain it," Washington manager Dave Martinez said.

Adam Eaton and Soto hit solo homers off Justin Verlander in the fifth to help the Nationals overcome a 2-1 deficit. Anthony Rendon also went deep and drove in five runs.

"Maybe they enjoy our park and maybe we enjoy their park," said Rendon, who attended high school 4½ miles from Minute Maid Park. "We're not going to ask questions."

Max Scherzer, revitalized by an injection of painkiller, is primed to return from an irritated nerve in his neck to start Game 7 for Washington in a Series that's been all road, sweet, road.

Scratched from his scheduled Game 5 start only hours before the first pitch, Scherzer was warming up in the seventh inning Tuesday before Rendon's homer, then sat down as Martinez became the first manager tossed from a Series game since Atlanta's Bobby Cox in 1996.

"The cortisone shot worked. That relieved the pressure on the nerve, and then keep applying heat,"

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 19 of 51

Scherzer said. "Our chiropractor, he does amazing work. He was able to go in there and make adjustments. We did two treatments of it and really freed up the neck."

Zack Greinke will start for the Astros, who led the majors with 107 wins and are seeking their second title in three seasons.

"I wish it was in a National League park," Greinke joked, cracking a smile about his affinity for hitting.

Fired up after a disputed call at first base went against them in the seventh, the Nationals padded their lead moments later when Rendon hit a two-run homer off Will Harris. Martinez, still enraged at umpires, was ejected during the seventh-inning stretch, screaming as a pair of his coaches held him back while the crowd sang along to "Deep in the Heart of Texas."

Rendon added a two-run double off Chris Devenski in the ninth to just about seal it after Strasburg gutted through without his best fastball to throw five-hit ball for 8 1/3 innings. Washington pitching coach Paul Menhart told Strasburg after the first that he was tipping pitches. Strasburg allowed only three more hits.

"Started shaking my glove, so they didn't know what I was throwing," Strasburg said. "It's something that has burned me in the past, and it burned me there in the first."

Now the Nationals will attempt their ultimate comeback in a year when they were written off time after time, hoping for the first title in the 51-season history of a franchise that started as the Montreal Expos and the first for Washington since the Senators in 1924.

Visiting teams have won three straight Game 7s in the Series since the Cardinals defeated Texas at home in 2011.

"I don't think there's a person in the building that would have assumed that all road teams were going to win," Houston manager AJ Hinch said. "We've just got to make sure that last one is not the same."

Washington rebounded from a 19-31 start — the Nats were given just a 1.6% chance to win the Series on May 23 — to finish 93-69. They rallied from a 3-1 eighth-inning deficit against Milwaukee in the NL wild-card game, a two-games-to-one deficit vs. the Los Angeles Dodgers in the Division Series and a 2-1, fifth-inning deficit in Game 6 vs. the Astros.

Outscored 19-3 at Nationals Park while going 1 for 21 with runners in scoring position, the Nationals got the strong outing they needed from Strasburg, who allowed his only runs in the first inning, struck out seven and walked two while throwing 104 pitches.

"It was a mental grind out there, especially after the first," Strasburg said. "Just got to keep fighting."

Strasburg was memorably shut down by the Nationals in September 2012 to protect his arm in his first full season following Tommy John surgery, and Washington was beaten by St. Louis in the Division Series.

He improved to 5-0 with a 1.98 ERA in six postseason outings this October — five starts and one relief appearance — despite failing to get a swing and miss in the first two innings for the first time this year. Eight of his nine swings and misses overall came on breaking balls, and Strasburg escaped a two-on, two-out jam in the fourth by striking out Carlos Correa.

After George Springer's one-out double put runners at second and third in the fifth, José Altuve struck out on a curve in the dirt and Michael Brantley hit a hard grounder to second.

"He has an uncanny ability to slow the game down when he's under any duress," Hinch said about Strasburg.

Sean Doolittle got the final two outs as the Nationals bullpen headed into Game 7 relatively rested.

Verlander dropped to 0-6 with a 5.68 ERA in seven Series starts, a blemish on his otherwise sterling career.

"I didn't really have great feel for the off-speed stuff," he said. "The last inning just a poorly executed slider and then really just kind of a fastball up and in."

Martinez's ejection came after Trea Turner was called out for interference when he ran on the fair side of the foul line and knocked the mitt off first baseman Yuli Gurriel in the seventh following his slow roller. Washington was leading 3-2 at the time and would have had runners on second and third with no outs.

Martinez tried to protest the game. Joe Torre, MLB's chief baseball officer, said the long delay that followed — just over 10 minutes — was caused by umpires at Minute Maid Park consulting with the replay room in New York to confirm the decision on the field was not subject to a protest.

Rendon's RBI single through a shifted infield put the Nationals ahead in the first, but Houston needed just four pitches to tie the score. Springer lined a double off the left-field scoreboard, at 112 mph off the

bat the hardest-hit ball of the Series, and advanced on a wild pitch before scoring on Altuve's sacrifice fly. Bregman's third homer of the Series put the Astros ahead on Strasburg's 12th pitch. He carried his bat out of the batter's box and tried to hand it to first base coach Don Kelly, only for the bat to fall as Kelly stuck out his hand for a shake.

Strasburg called Bregman's antics "tired."

"I just let my emotions get the best of me and it's not how I was raised to play the game," Bregman said. "I'm sorry for doing that."

Eaton tied the score in the fifth when Verlander hung a slider. Soto, who turned 21 on Friday, followed with his third home run of the Series.

Soto, too, flipped the bat at his first base coach, Tim Bogar.

"I just thought it was pretty cool," Soto said when asked if he was mimicking Bregman. "I wanted to do it."

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

Lutheran sisters recall nursing those wounded at Berlin Wall

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Sister Brigitte Queisser walks slowly along the decaying remains of the Berlin Wall, its rusty rebar reinforcement exposed where the concrete has crumbled away. The 77-year-old pauses to catch her breath, opens a gate and steps from the former democratic West Berlin into what used to be the communist East.

What is a simple step today was a monumental feat for those who tried to escape Soviet-controlled East Berlin during the nearly three decades that the wall divided that part of the city from its free, western side. Some attempts were meticulously planned for months, others brazen and spontaneous.

Many succeeded flawlessly. But as a deaconess of the Lutheran Lazarus Order, Sister Brigitte witnessed first-hand the consequences for those who weren't able to pull it off quite so smoothly.

Directly across the street from the wall, on Bernauer Strasse, her order ran a clinic that provided immediate help to those who were injured trying to get through the barrier, with its watch towers and armed soldiers. The sisters also took care of burying those who died seeking freedom.

"Families were torn apart, people couldn't move freely from one neighborhood to the other anymore, many died trying to run away to the West," she said. As she thought back to those hard times, Sister Brigitte touched the silver cross dangling from a long necklace over her dark-blue habit.

"It was a nightmare," she said.

As Germany prepares to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall next month, it also commemorates those who were arrested, injured or died as they sought to escape by tunneling under the wall, swimming past it, and climbing or flying over it. At least 140 people died trying, according to the latest academic research.

The first iteration of the Berlin Wall was built in 1961, billed by East German leader Walter Ulbricht as an "anti-fascist protective wall" intended to keep his country secure. In reality, it was built to keep its citizens from fleeing to the West.

It stood for 28 years, until Nov. 9, 1989, a sinister presence that was seen as the front line and a symbol of the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union.

The Lazarus deaconesses were at the heart of it, their residence and clinic on Bernauer Strasse cut off from the order's cemetery by the wall itself.

"We took care of everybody in our first-aid station who was somehow injured," remembers 84-year-old Sister Christa Huebner. "Dead or alive, cut open, fractured, everything — we made sure they received first aid and also checked whether they had to be hospitalized."

Many of the sisters worked as nurses in the hospital. From its windows overlooking the wall, they witnessed daredevil escapes.

"I saw young men jumping from the roofs on the other side into the nets of the West Berlin firefighters;

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 21 of 51

other men roped down on clothes lines and came to us with their hands all bloody," Sister Christa said as she reminisced about those turbulent years while sitting with a handful of other retired women from her order in the mother house, which is still in the same complex where the clinic used to be.

"One time I saw how a manhole cover on the street opened from below and two people climbed out — they'd escaped underground through the canalization."

"But there were also those who weren't so lucky," she added. "We took care of those who died as well."

Cut off from the order's own graveyard, the sisters had to find a different burial place.

"Our graves were part of the death strip," said Sister Brigitte. "We couldn't take care of the graves any longer, police were patrolling there day and night."

Today, the deaconesses can again access their own cemetery and visit the graves of their sisters.

Standing under an old linden tree, Sister Brigitte looks at the marble gravestones marking the resting spots of her late companions. The faint sounds of school and tourist groups visiting where the wall used to stand tall drift over from Bernauer Strasse, now a major tourist attraction.

"I often thought, 'God, can you please take away this wall,'" Sister Brigitte says. "When it finally happened, it was like a fulfillment — but at the same time it was also beyond comprehension."

She added: "It was a miracle."

Follow AP's full coverage of the 30th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall at <https://www.apnews.com/FalloftheBerlinWall>

Trump's Rust Belt revival is fading. Will it matter in 2020?

By JOSH BOAK and JOHN SEEWER Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio (AP) — President Donald Trump once promised that coal and steel would be the beating heart of a revived U.S. economy — a nostalgic vision that helped carry him to victory three years ago in the industrial Midwest.

But a year away from Election Day, that promised renaissance is not materializing and both sectors are faltering in ways that are painfully familiar and politically significant.

Recent data show manufacturing jobs are disappearing across Pennsylvania, Michigan and Ohio, all states critical to Trump's reelection chances. On Tuesday, Murray Energy, a major mining firm with close ties to the president, became the latest of many coal companies to file for bankruptcy this year, rattling communities across Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky. The news followed recent layoffs at a prominent steel manufacturer in northeastern Ohio and General Motors' final decision this fall to shutter its massive plant at Lordstown, Ohio.

The turmoil in the manufacturing and mining sectors threatens to undermine Trump's claim to a booming economy — the bedrock of his and his Republican allies' campaign strategy — in places where it matters most. While Trump's economy is benefiting high-tech manufacturing and energy sectors in other regions, the manufacturing slump across the Rust Belt may test whether Trump can retain his appeal to blue-collar workers without having fully delivered on his promise to fatten their bank accounts.

"I don't think that Ohio is just a lock in the Republican's column, nor do I think that blue-collar voters are settled on who they're likely to select," said Robert Alexander, a political scientist at Ohio Northern University. "There is a lot of economic angst still in the state."

Recent elections haven't shown that angst to be aimed at Republicans. After Trump won Ohio by 12 percentage points — the largest margin of any presidential candidate since 1988 — Republicans fared better in Ohio than in many other states in last year's midterms, nabbing every statewide office but one. Their winning formula was based on overwhelming support from working-class, white voters in small communities where a single company can anchor the local economy.

Murray Energy is based in St. Clairsville, Ohio, a small city near the West Virginia and Pennsylvania borders in a county that voted for Trump over Democrat Hillary Clinton by a margin of 40 percentage points. But the company's footprint is far larger, including 17 mines across Alabama, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 22 of 51

Pennsylvania, Utah and West Virginia, as well as Colombia, South America.

The company's former CEO Bob Murray is a Trump donor and advocate for his company's interests. Murray openly pressured Trump to issue an emergency order that would have exempted his struggling company from environmental regulations he said were burdensome. Trump flirted with that idea but never approved it.

Murray said Tuesday the company was filing for Chapter 11 bankruptcy, a restructuring that puts at risk the incomes, pensions and health care benefits of roughly 7,000 workers.

Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren, a bankruptcy expert, seized on the news as evidence of Trump failing his voters.

"He made promises to working people all across this country that he would be there on their behalf. Instead he's been there for the lobbyists, he's been there for the giant corporations, he's been there to help make the rich richer and leave everyone else behind," she said.

Trump bounded into office promising to bring back "beautiful clean coal" and deliver a victory for every factory worker. The message helped him pull out victories in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Ohio, where scars from the Great Recession that technically ended in 2009 were still fresh.

For the first two years of his presidency, Trump oversaw an economic recovery that extended across sectors and regions — adding manufacturing and factory jobs in the Rust Belt and beyond.

But recent signs show that trajectory shifting downward quickly, fueled by a slumping global economy and the trade wars escalated by the Trump administration.

So far this year, Ohio has shed 2,400 factory jobs. Michigan has lost 6,200. Pennsylvania has 9,100 fewer manufacturing workers. West Virginia employers have cut 400 mining jobs. And Kentucky has let go of 600 mine workers.

General Motors struck a devastating blow to Ohio by ending more than 50 years of car manufacturing at assembly plant near Youngstown, a labor stronghold where Trump surprised Democrats by winning half the vote in 2016. But for every GM-scale closure, there are other, lower-profile layoffs in other states.

Nearly 950 manufacturing jobs in Pennsylvania were lost in May when the cabinetmaker Wood-Mode shuttered. Bimbo Bakeries closed a plant in July in northern Pennsylvania that cost 151 jobs, according to filings with the state.

Earlier this month, Canton, Ohio-based Timken Steel ousted CEO Tim Timken, also a Republican donor, as the company's stock has plummeted over the past year.

Timken received \$4 million in cash as severance. The company eliminated 55 positions in July in order to save \$7 million annually next fiscal year, according to filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Separately, roughly 250 Timken Steel employees so far have received extended layoff notices, said Bob Harper, president of United Steelworkers 1123. Factories have been idled at times due to a lack of orders.

Each job at Timken Steel supports about five other jobs in the community, said Harper, who says he thinks the layoffs could turn voters there against Trump.

"Things are going to get worse," he said. "We're going to get hurt."

Timken's wife is Ohio Republican Party Chairwoman Jane Timken, a chief cheerleader for Trump's economic stewardship in the state. Asked about the layoffs and Ohio's economy, Jane Timken issued a statement touting Trump's record.

"President Trump is committed to bringing good paying manufacturing jobs back to Ohio and the Midwest," she said, citing statistics largely shaped by Great Recession layoffs that preceded Trump by seven years. "Since he became president, he has brought over 14,500 manufacturing jobs back to Ohio. Compare that to President Obama who only brought 11,700 manufacturing jobs to Ohio during his entire administration. ... Democrats can cry economic wolf, but Ohioans know the truth."

It's far from clear that Ohioans are poised to blame Trump for the economic blows.

In Ohio, Dan Wade has worked at Timken Steel for the the past 19 years. He was temporarily laid off last week, but says he expects to go back in a few days. He blames the company's troubles on management, not Trump.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 23 of 51

"I'm going to vote for him again. I like him, I like his attitude," Wade said.

Timken retiree Joe Hoagland, who didn't vote Trump and won't in 2020, said he sees no evidence that Trump has been a boon for manufacturing.

"I don't see any revitalization," Hoagland said. "When you talk about bringing employment back, you can't just all of a sudden make the happen."

Boak reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Andrew Welsh-Huggins in Columbus, Ohio, and Anthony Izaguirre in Charleston, West Virginia, contributed to this report.

Threat to US elections not limited to Russia in 2020

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Russia interfered in the 2016 election and may try to sway next year's vote as well. But it's not the only nation with an eye on U.S. politics.

American officials sounding the alarm about foreign efforts to disrupt the 2020 election include multiple countries in that warning. Concerns abound not only about possible hacking of campaigns, but also about the spread of disinformation on social media and potential efforts to breach voting databases and even alter votes.

The anxiety goes beyond the possibility that U.S. adversaries could directly affect election results: The mere hint of foreign meddling could undermine public confidence in vote tallies — a worrisome possibility in a tight election.

"Unfortunately, it's not just Russia anymore. In particular, China, Iran, a couple of others, studied what the Russians did in 2016," said James Lewis, a cybersecurity expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington.

U.S. intelligence agencies reported Russian, Chinese and Iranian influence operations targeting last year's midterms, and a senior FBI official recently singled out Beijing as a particular source of concern. Meanwhile, Microsoft recently reported that Iranian hackers had targeted an unidentified presidential campaign along with government officials, journalists and prominent expatriate Iranians.

Any foreign effort to interfere in the 2020 election won't necessarily mirror Russia's attack in 2016, when Kremlin-linked military intelligence officers hacked Democratic emails and shared them with WikiLeaks to try to help Republican Donald Trump defeat Democrat Hillary Clinton.

More likely are the social media campaigns, like the Russian-based one that shaped public opinion in the 2016 election and divided Americans on hot-button topics like race and religion. Facebook announced recently that it has removed four networks of fake, state-backed misinformation-spreading accounts based in Russia and Iran. The company said the networks sought to disrupt elections in the U.S., North Africa and Latin America.

A Senate Intelligence Committee report described Russia's social media activities as a "vastly more complex and strategic assault on the United States than was initially understood." A recent memo prepared by the FBI and Department of Homeland Security warned that Russia may use social media to exacerbate divisions within political parties during primaries or hack election websites to spread misinformation on voting processes.

Concerns about foreign influence coincide with stepped-up enforcement of a law requiring the registration with the Justice Department of lobbyists, media organizations and other entities that do the bidding of foreign government.

Special counsel Robert Mueller exposed through his investigation the unregistered, covert Russian campaign to spread disinformation on social media.

The Justice Department is concerned about China undertaking similar activities. Twitter said it has suspended more than 200,000 accounts that it believes were part of a Chinese government influence campaign targeting the protest movement in Hong Kong. The department last year also required China's state-owned television network, CGTN, to register.

"Make no mistake, China is aggressively pursuing foreign influence operations," Nikki Floris, an FBI deputy assistant director, said at a recent congressional hearing. "So as we roll into 2020, though Russia was certainly a threat in 2016 (and) 2018, and will continue to be so in 2020, we are also aggressively looking at China as well."

U.S. officials said the foreign influence campaigns didn't change midterm vote totals, but there's no question that concern remains for 2020. Besides the hacking and subsequent release of stolen emails, Russian agents in 2016 searched for vulnerabilities within election systems in all 50 states and breached the election systems of two Florida counties but don't appear to have done any damage.

America's adversaries might have a stake in the 2020 vote. Trump, for instance, speaks well of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un while deepening tensions with Iran by withdrawing the U.S. from a nuclear deal. He has also engaged China in a trade war.

But some experts are skeptical that those countries will use hacking to try to boost a particular candidate — or to influence the election at all. Much of their hacking has been tied to more narrow national interests.

China, for instance, has so far used its cyber capabilities for the purposes of espionage and intellectual property theft and to further its goal of challenging the U.S. role as a global economic superpower. The Justice Department in 2014 charged five Chinese military hackers with siphoning secrets from major American corporations.

Iranian hackers have attacked dozens of banks and a small dam outside New York City and, more recently, sought to pilfer sensitive information from hundreds of universities, private companies and American government agencies.

North Korea tends to focus its efforts on defectors, academics and others with a hostile relationship to the country, said Jung Pak, a Brookings Institution expert. It hacked Sony Pictures Entertainment and released the private emails of its executives in apparent retaliation for a Hollywood comedy that mocked Kim.

"We haven't really seen politically motivated attacks where they try to sway elections," said Matt Ha, a research associate at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies. "Right now, their main objective is the summits, the diplomacy, to try to gain as much as they can — gaining a lot for giving up nothing."

Even as other countries have bolstered their own capabilities, Russia's own decadeslong interest in American politics makes it the most challenging and realistic adversary, said Lewis, of CSIS.

"They're politically astute in a way that no other country can match, and that makes them the most formidable opponent," Lewis said. "They just know us really well."

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Army colonel says push to investigate Biden concerned him

By **LISA MASCARO, MARY CLARE JALONICK and COLLEEN LONG** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defying White House orders, an Army officer serving with President Donald Trump's National Security Council testified to impeachment investigators that he twice raised concerns over the administration's push to have Ukraine investigate Democrats and Joe Biden.

Alexander Vindman, a lieutenant colonel who served in Iraq and later as a diplomat, was the first official to testify who actually heard Trump's July 25 call with new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy. He reported his concerns to the NSC's lead counsel.

Vindman also told investigators Tuesday that he tried to change the White House's rough transcript of the call by filling in at least one of the omitted words, "Burisma," a reference to the company linked to Biden and his son, according to people familiar with his testimony. But Vindman was unsuccessful.

His concerns, though, were far bigger than the transcript. And lawmakers said his failed effort to edit it didn't significantly change their understanding of what transpired during Trump's call that sparked the impeachment inquiry.

Vindman's arrival in military blue, with medals, created a striking image at the Capitol as the impeachment inquiry reached deeper into the White House. He testified for more than 10 hours.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 25 of 51

"I was concerned by the call," Vindman said, according to prepared remarks obtained by The Associated Press. "I did not think it was proper to demand that a foreign government investigate a U.S. citizen, and I was worried about the implications for the U.S. government's support of Ukraine."

Vindman, a 20-year military officer, added to the mounting evidence from other witnesses — diplomats, defense and former administration officials — who are corroborating the initial whistleblower's complaint against Trump and providing new details ahead of a House vote in the impeachment inquiry.

"Every person has put it in higher resolution," said Rep. Denny Heck, D-Wash., during a break in the daylong session.

"That's the story: There's not like a new headline out of all of these," said Rep. Tom Malinowski, D-N.J. "Every single witness, from their own vantage point, has corroborated the central facts of the story we've heard."

The inquiry is looking into Trump's call, in which he asked Zelenskiy for a "favor" — to investigate Democrats — that the Democrats say was a quid pro quo for military aid and could be an impeachable offense.

With the administration directing staff not to appear, Vindman was the first current White House official to testify before the impeachment panels. He was issued a subpoena to appear.

Trump took to Twitter on Tuesday to denounce the probe as a "sham," adding: "Why are people that I never even heard of testifying about the call. Just READ THE CALL TRANSCRIPT AND THE IMPEACHMENT HOAX IS OVER!"

Vindman, who arrived in the United States as a 3-year-old from the former Soviet Union, said that it was his "sacred duty" to defend the United States.

Some Trump allies, looking for ways to discredit Vindman, questioned the colonel's loyalties because he was born in the region. But the line of attack was rejected by some Republicans, including Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, who said it was "shameful" to criticize his patriotism.

Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, called the slams on Vindman "absurd, disgusting and way off the mark. This is a decorated American soldier, and he should be given the respect that his service to our country demands."

The testimony came the day after Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced the House would vote on a resolution to set rules for public hearings and a possible vote on articles of impeachment.

Thursday's vote would be the first on the impeachment inquiry and aims to nullify complaints from Trump and his allies that the process is illegitimate and unfair.

White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said the resolution merely "confirms that House Democrats' impeachment has been an illegitimate sham from the start as it lacked any proper authorization by a House vote."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said he and other GOP lawmakers will review the resolution to see if it passes a "smell test" of fairness to Trump.

The session Tuesday grew contentious at times as House Republicans continued trying to unmask the still-anonymous whistleblower and call him or her to testify. Vindman said he is not the whistleblower and does not know who it is.

GOP Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio acknowledged Republicans were trying to get Vindman to provide the names of others he spoke to after the July 25 phone call, in an effort to decide whom to call to testify. "He wouldn't," Jordan said.

In his prepared remarks, Vindman testified that in spring of this year he became aware of "outside influencers" promoting a "false narrative of Ukraine" that undermined U.S. efforts, a reference in particular to Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani.

He first reported his concerns after a July 10 meeting in which U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland stressed the importance of having Ukraine investigate the 2016 election as well as Burisma, a company linked to the family of Biden, a 2020 Democratic presidential candidate.

Vindman says he told Sondland that "his statements were inappropriate, that the request to investigate Biden and his son had nothing to do with national security, and that such investigations were not something the NSC was going to get involved in or push."

That differs from the account of Sondland, a wealthy businessman who donated \$1 million to Trump's inauguration and testified before the impeachment investigators that no one from the NSC "ever expressed any concerns." Sondland also testified that he did not realize any connection between Biden and Burisma.

For the call between Trump and Zelenskyy, Vindman said he listened in the Situation Room with colleagues from the NSC and Vice President Mike Pence's office. He said he again reported his concerns to the NSC's lead counsel.

He wrote, "I realized that if Ukraine pursued an investigation into the Bidens and Burisma, it would likely be interpreted as a partisan play which would undoubtedly result in Ukraine losing the bipartisan support it has thus far maintained. This would all undermine U.S. national security."

Vindman served as the director for European affairs and a Ukraine expert under Fiona Hill, a former official who testified earlier in the impeachment probe. Hill worked for former national security adviser John Bolton.

He told investigators that Ukraine, in trying to become a vibrant democracy integrated with the West, is a bulwark against overt Russian aggression.

Vindman attended Zelenskyy's inauguration with a delegation led by Energy Secretary Rick Perry, and he and Hill were both part of a Ukraine briefing with Sondland that others have testified irritated Bolton at the White House.

"I am a patriot, and it is my sacred duty and honor to advance and defend OUR country, irrespective of party or politics," wrote Vindman, who was wounded in Iraq and awarded a Purple Heart.

"For over twenty years as an active duty United States military officer and diplomat, I have served this country in a nonpartisan manner, and have done so with the utmost respect and professionalism for both Republican and Democratic administrations," he wrote.

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Padmananda Rama, Matthew Daly, Laurie Kellman, Eric Tucker and Alan Fram contributed to this report.

Californians struggle with winds, fires, blackouts

By JANIE HAR and JOCELYN GECKER Associated Press

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. (AP) — Californians on Wednesday found themselves facing winds, wildfires and darkness from yet another power outage that hit more than 1 million people.

Frustration and anger mounted across Northern California as Pacific Gas & Electric, the state's largest utility, began its third round of sweeping blackouts in a week aimed at preventing its electrical equipment from being fouled by wind-whipped branches or toppling and sparking wildfires.

Meanwhile, fires continued to burn at both ends of the state.

PG&E said Tuesday's blackouts would affect about 1.5 million people in some 30 counties including the Sierra foothills, wine country and San Francisco Bay Area. They included 1 million still without power from a shut-off over the weekend.

With no electricity for the fourth straight day Tuesday, chef and caterer Jane Sykes realized she would have to throw out \$1,000 worth of food, including trays of brownies, cupcakes and puff pastry.

She also had little hope of getting a good night's sleep — there was no way to run the machine she relies on to counter her apnea.

"I don't think PG&E really thought this through," she lamented.

PG&E officials said they understood the hardships caused by the safety blackouts but continued to insist they were necessary.

In the wine country, firefighters on Tuesday coped with 30-mph (48.28-kph) gusts while tackling a wildfire that has burned 86 homes and charred an area more than twice the size of San Francisco. About 90,000 buildings remained threatened. More than 150,000 people were under evacuation orders.

The winds were expected to ease in the north Wednesday but red flag conditions would remain because of hot, dry weather.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 27 of 51

Meanwhile, ferocious Santa Ana winds returned to Southern California, where a fire that erupted Monday in the tony Brentwood area of Los Angeles has destroyed a dozen homes.

About 9,000 people, including Arnold Schwarzenegger and LeBron James, remained under evacuation orders.

That fire was caused when a dry branch from a eucalyptus tree was flung 30 feet (9 meters) by high winds into a city Department of Water and Power line, which short-circuited and sparked, the utility and Fire Department announced Tuesday.

The power line had been operating safely and the DWP had cut away brush and trees from around the line, officials said.

Mayor Eric Garcetti called it an "act of God."

The National Weather Service called an extreme red flag warning for much of Southern California through Thursday evening, with some wind gusts reaching 80 mph (128.74 kph). It could be the strongest wind event in years.

Coupled with tinder-dry brush and low humidity, they could blow the smoldering fire back to life and spread embers to start new blazes, authorities warned.

Southern California Edison, which had previously made safety shutoffs and then restored power, warned that it could black out more than 300,000 customers, or some 600,000 people.

Also Tuesday, Edison announced in a quarterly earnings report that it was "likely" its equipment caused last year's Woolsey Fire, which killed three people and destroyed hundreds of homes in a swatch stretching from north of Los Angeles south through Malibu to the sea.

No deaths were reported from the current fires but weekend gusts may have claimed three lives. A 55-year-old homeless woman was crushed by a falling tree during high winds Sunday at a Santa Cruz campsite and a couple was killed the same day in a remote area of Madera County when a tree fell on their Jeep, which then crashed.

Across Northern California, people who weren't facing another day as fire refugees were worried about charging cellphones and electric vehicles, finding gasoline and cash, staying warm and keeping their food from spoiling.

Some ended up at centers set up by PG&E where people could go to power their electronics and get free water, snacks, flashlights and solar lanterns.

In Placer County, Angel Smith relied on baby wipes and blankets to keep her 13-month-old son Liam warm and clean. The family has been without power since Saturday night and cannot draw well water without electricity.

She ran a cord from her neighbors' generator to keep her phone and tablet charged so the two could watch movies. Temperatures were expected to drop below freezing overnight in parts of Northern California.

"The hardest part about this for me has been making sure I keep my son warm as it gets cold here," Smith said.

PG&E, which is in bankruptcy after its equipment was blamed for a string of disastrous fires over the past three years, including a blaze that all but destroyed the town of Paradise and killed 85 people, has said its foremost concern is public safety.

But Gov. Gavin Newsom and top utility regulators have accused the company of mismanaging its power system and failing for decades to make the investments needed to ensure it's more durable. He and others have also complained that the utility has botched the outages by not keeping the public adequately informed.

PG&E Corp. President Bill Johnson says he talked to Newsom Tuesday and told him he agreed with his suggestion that the company give credits to customers who've been hit by pre-emptive power shut-offs. Newsom had suggested \$100 per household, or \$250 per business.

Johnson said the utility has agreed to provide a "one-time bill credit" for people impacted by an Oct. 9 power cutoff that affected some 2 million people. But he didn't confirm a figure, saying the mechanics had yet to be worked out.

"We have agreed to move forward with a one-time bill credit for customers impacted by that event."

For migrants, stopover in Yemen often means rape and torture

By MAGGIE MICHAEL Associated Press

RAS AL-ARA, Yemen (AP) — Zahra struggled in the blue waters of the Gulf of Aden, grasping for the hands of fellow migrants. Hundreds of men, women and teenagers clambered out of a boat and through the surf emerging, exhausted, on the shores of Yemen.

The 20-year-old Ethiopian saw men armed with automatic rifles waiting for them on the beach and she clenched in terror. She had heard migrants' stories of brutal traffickers, lurking like monsters in a nightmare. They are known by the Arabic nickname Abdul-Qawi — which means Worshipper of the Strong.

"What will they do to us?" Zahra thought.

This story is part of an occasional series, "Outsourcing Migrants," produced with the support of the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting.

She and 300 other Africans had just endured six hours crammed in a wooden smuggling boat to cross the narrow strait between the Red Sea and the gulf. When they landed, the traffickers loaded them into trucks and drove them to ramshackle compounds in the desert outside the coastal village of Ras al-Ara.

There was Zahra's answer. She was imprisoned for a month in a tin-roofed hut, broiling and hungry, ordered to call home each day to beseech her family to wire \$2,000. She said she did not have family to ask for money and pleaded for her freedom.

Instead, her captors raped her. And they raped the 20 other women with her — for weeks, different men all the time.

"They used each of the girls," she told The Associated Press. "Every night there was rape."

With its systematic torture, Ras al-Ara is a particular hell on the arduous, 900-mile (1,400 kilometer) journey from the Horn of Africa to oil-rich Saudi Arabia. Migrants leave home on sandaled feet with dreams of escaping poverty. They trek through mountains and deserts, sandstorms and 113-degree temperatures, surviving on crumbs of bread and salty water from ancient wells.

In Djibouti, long lines of migrants descend single file down mountain slopes to the rocky coastal plain, where many lay eyes on the sea for first time and eventually board the boats. Some find their way safely across war-torn Yemen to Saudi Arabia, only to be caught and tossed back over the border. The lucky ones make it into the kingdom to earn their livings as a servant and laborers.

But others are stranded in Yemen's nightmare — in some measure because Europe has been shutting its doors, outsourcing migrants to other countries.

The European Union began paying Libyan coast guards and militias to stop migrants there, blocking the other main route out of East Africa, through Libya and across the Mediterranean to Europe. The number of Mediterranean crossings plummeted — from 370,000 in 2016 to just over 56,000 so far this year.

Meanwhile, more than 150,000 migrants landed in Yemen in 2018, a 50% increase from the year before, according to the International Organization for Migration.

This year, more than 107,000 had arrived by the end of September, along with perhaps tens of thousands more the organization was unable to track — or who were buried in graves along the trail.

And European policies may be making the Yemen route more dangerous. Funded by the EU, Ethiopia has cracked down on migrant smugglers and intensified border controls. Arrests of known brokers have prompted migrants to turn to unreliable traffickers, taking more dangerous paths and increasing the risk of abuses.

Many of those migrants end up in Ras al-Ara.

Nearly every migrant who lands here is imprisoned in hidden compounds while their families are shaken down for money. Like Zahra, they are subjected to daily torments ranging from beatings and rapes to starvation, their screams drowned out by the noise of generators or cars or simply lost in the desert.

"Out of every thousand, 800 disappear in the lockups," said a humanitarian worker monitoring the flow

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 29 of 51

of migrants.

Traffickers who torture are a mix of Yemenis and Ethiopians of different ethnic groups. So victims cannot appeal to tribal loyalties, they are tortured by men from other groups: If the migrants are Oromia, the torturers are Tigrinya.

At the same time, because the three main ethnic groups don't speak each others' languages, Yemeni smugglers need translators to convey orders to the migrants and monitor their phone conversations with their families.

The AP spoke to more than two dozen Ethiopians who survived torture at Ras al-Ara. Nearly all of them reported witnessing deaths, and one man died of starvation hours after the AP saw him.

The imprisonment and torture are largely ignored by Yemeni authorities. The AP saw trucks full of migrants passing unhindered through military checkpoints as they went from the beaches to drop their human cargo at each desert compound, known in Arabic as a "hosh."

"The traffickers move freely, in public, giving bribes at the checkpoints," said Mohammed Said, a former coast guard officer who now runs a gas station in the center of town.

From Ras al-Ara, it's nearly 50 miles in any direction to the next town. Around 8,000 families live in a collection of decaying, one-story stone houses beside dirt roads, a lone hotel and two eateries. The fish market is the center of activity when the daily catch is brought in.

Nearly the entire population profits from the human trade. Some rent land to traffickers for the holding cells, or work as guards, drivers or translators. For others, traffickers flush with cash are a lucrative market for their food, fuel or the mildly stimulant leaves of qat, which Yemenis and Ethiopians chew daily.

Locals can rattle off the traffickers' names. One of them, a Yemeni named Mohammed al-Usili, runs more than 20 hosh. He's famous for the red Nissan SUV he drives through town.

Others belong to Sabaha, one of the biggest tribes in southern Yemen, some of whom are famous for their involvement in illicit businesses. Yemenis call the Sabaha "bandits" who have no political loyalties to any of the warring parties.

Many traffickers speak openly of their activities, but deny they torture, blaming others.

Yemeni smuggler Ali Hawash was a farmer who went into the human smuggling business a year ago. He disparaged smugglers who prey on poor migrants, torturing them and holding them hostage until relatives pay ransom.

"I thought we need to have a different way," he said, "I will help you go to Saudi, you just pay the transit and the transportation. Deal."

The flow of migrants to the beach is unending. On a single day, July 24, the AP witnessed seven boats pull into Ras al-Ara, one after the other, starting at 3 a.m., each carrying more than 100 people.

The migrants climbed out of the boats into the turquoise water. One young man collapsed on the beach, his feet swollen. A woman stepped on something sharp in the water and fell screeching in pain. Others washed their clothes in the waves to get out the vomit, urine and feces from the rugged journey.

The migrants were lined up and loaded onto trucks. They gripped the iron bars in the truck bed as they were driven along the highway. At each compound, the truck unloaded a group of migrants, like a school bus dropping off students. The migrants disappeared inside.

From time to time, Ethiopians escape their imprisonment or are released and stagger out of the desert into town. Eman Idrees, 27, and her husband were held for eight months by an Ethiopian smuggler. She recalled the savage beatings they endured, which left a scar on her shoulder; the smuggler received \$700 to take her to Saudi Arabia, but wouldn't let her go, because "he wanted me."

Said, the gas station owner, is horrified by the evidence of torture he has seen, so he has made his station and a nearby mosque into a refuge for migrants. But locals say Said, too, profits from the trafficking, selling fuel for the smugglers' boats and trucks. But that means the traffickers need him and leave him alone.

On a day when the AP team was visiting, several young men just out of a compound arrived at the gas station. They showed deep gashes in their arms from ropes that had bound them. One who had bruises from being lashed with a cable said the women imprisoned with him were all raped and that three men

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 30 of 51

had died.

Another, Ibrahim Hassan, trembled as he showed how he was tied up in a ball, arms behind his back, knees bound against his chest. The 24-year-old said he was bound like that for 11 days and frequently beaten. His torturer, he said, was a fellow Ethiopian but from a rival ethnic group, Tigray, while he is Oromo.

Hassan said he was freed after his father went door to door in their hometown to borrow money and gather the \$2,600 that the smugglers demanded.

"My family is extremely poor," Hassan said, breaking down in tears. "My father is a farmer and I have five siblings."

Starvation is another punishment used by the traffickers to wear down their victims.

At Ras al-Ara hospital, four men who looked like living skeletons sat on the floor, picking rice from a bowl with their thin fingers. Their bones protruded from their backs, their rib cages stood out sharply. With no fat on their bodies, they sat on rolled-up cloth because it was too painful to sit directly on bone. They had been imprisoned by traffickers for months, fed once a day with scraps of bread and a sip of water, they said.

One of them, 23-year-old Abdu Yassin, said he had agreed with smugglers in Ethiopia to pay around \$600 for the trip through Yemen to the Saudi border. But when he landed at Ras al-Ara, he was brought to a compound with 71 others, and the traffickers demanded \$1,600.

He cried as he described how he was held for five months and beaten constantly in different positions. He showed the marks from lashings on his back, the scars on his legs where they pressed hot steel into his skin. His finger was crooked after they smashed it with a rock, he said. One day, they tied his legs and dangled him upside down, "like a slaughtered sheep."

But the worst was starvation.

"From hunger, my knees can't carry my body," he said. "I haven't changed my clothes for six months. I haven't washed. I have nothing."

Near the four men, another emaciated man lay on a gurney, his stomach concave, his eyes open but unseeing. Nurses gave him fluids but he died several hours later.

The torment that leaves the young men and women physically and mentally shattered also leaves them stranded.

Zahra said she traveled to Yemen "because I wanted to change my life."

She came from a broken home. She was a child when her parents divorced. Her mother disappeared, and her father — an engineer — remarried and wanted little to do with Zahra or her sisters. Zahra dropped out of school after the third grade. She worked for years in Djibouti as a servant, sending most of her earnings to her youngest sister back in Ethiopia.

Unable to save any money, she decided to try her luck elsewhere.

She spoke in a quiet voice as she described the torments she suffered at the compound.

"I couldn't sleep at all throughout these days," as she suffered from headaches, she said.

She and the other women were locked in three rooms of the hut, sleeping on the dirt floor, suffocating in the summer heat. They were constantly famished. Zahra suffered from rashes, diarrhea and vomiting.

One group tried to flee when they were allowed to wash at a well outside. The traffickers used dogs to hunt them down, brought them back and beat them.

"You can't imagine," Zahra said. "We could hear the screams." After that, they could only wash at gunpoint.

Finally, early one morning, their captors opened the gates and told Zahra and some of the other women to leave. Apparently, the traffickers gave up on getting money out of them and wanted to make room for others.

Now Zahra lives in Basateen, a slum on the outskirts of southern Yemen's main city, Aden, where she shares a room with three other women who also were tortured. .

Among them is a 17-year-old who fidgets with her hands and avoiding eye contact. She said she had been raped more times than she can count.

The first time was during the boat crossing from Djibouti, where she was packed in with more than 150 other migrants. Fearing the smugglers, no one dared raise a word of protest as the captain and his crew raped her and the other nine women on board during the eight-hour journey.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 31 of 51

"I am speechless about what happened in the boat," the 17-year-old said.

Upon landing, she and the others were taken to a compound, where again she was raped — every day for the next two weeks.

"We lived 15 days in pain," she said.

Zahra said she's worried she could be pregnant, and the 17-year old said she has pains in her abdomen and back she believes were caused by the rapes — but neither has money to go to a doctor.

Nor do they have money to continue their travels.

"I have nothing but the clothes on me," the 17-year old said. She lost everything, including her only photos of her family.

Now, she is too afraid to even leave her room in Basateen.

"If we get out of here," she said, "we don't know what would happen to us."

Basateen is filled with migrants living in squalid shacks. Some work, trying to earn enough to continue their journey.

Others, like Abdul-Rahman Taha, languish without hope.

The son of a dirt-poor farmer, Taha had heard stories of Ethiopians returning from Saudi Arabia with enough money to buy a car or build a house. So he sneaked away from home and began walking. When he reached Djibouti, he called home asking for \$400 for smugglers to arrange his trip across Yemen. His father was angry but sold a bull and some goats and sent the money.

When Taha landed at Ras al-Ara, traffickers took him and 50 other migrants to a holding cell, lined them up and demanded phone numbers. Taha couldn't ask his father for more money so he told them he didn't have a number. Over the next days and weeks, he was beaten and left without food and water.

One night, he gave them a wrong number. The traffickers flew into a rage. One, a beefy, bearded Yemeni, beat Taha's right leg to a bloody pulp with a steel rod. Taha passed out.

When he opened his eyes, he saw the sky. He was outdoors, lying on the ground. The traffickers had dumped him and three other migrants in the desert. Taha tried to jostle the others, but they didn't move — they were dead.

A passing driver took him to a hospital. There, his leg was amputated.

Now 17, Taha is stranded. His father died in a car crash a few months ago, leaving Taha's sister and four younger brothers to fend for themselves back home.

Taha choked back tears. In one of their phone calls, he remembered, his father had asked him: "Why did you leave?"

"Without work or money," Taha told him, "life is unbearable."

And so it is still.

Protests in Iraq and Lebanon pose a challenge to Iran

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and JOSEPH KRAUSS Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — The day after anti-government protests erupted in Iraq, Iranian Gen. Qassim Soleimani flew into Baghdad late at night and took a helicopter to the heavily fortified Green Zone, where he surprised a group of top security officials by chairing a meeting in place of the prime minister.

The arrival of Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force and the architect of its regional security apparatus, signaled Tehran's concern over the protests, which had erupted across the capital and in Iraq's Shiite heartland, and included calls for Iran to stop meddling in the country.

The protests in Iraq and Lebanon are fueled by local grievances and mainly directed at political elites, but they also pose a challenge to Iran, which closely backs both governments as well as powerful armed groups in each country. An increasingly violent crackdown in Iraq and an attack by Hezbollah supporters on the main protest camp in Beirut have raised fears of a backlash by Iran and its allies.

"We in Iran know how to deal with protests," Soleimani told the Iraqi officials, according to two senior officials familiar with the meeting who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the secret gathering. "This happened in Iran and we got it under control."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 32 of 51

But nearly a month later, the protests in Iraq have resumed and demonstrations continue in Lebanon, both directed at governments and factions allied with Tehran. The protests threaten Iran's regional influence at a time when it is struggling under crippling U.S. sanctions.

The day after Soleimani's visit, the clashes between the protesters and security forces in Iraq became far more violent, with the death toll soaring past 100 as unidentified snipers shot demonstrators in the head and chest. Nearly 150 protesters were killed in less than a week.

During renewed protests this week, men in black plainclothes and masks stood in front of Iraqi soldiers, facing off with protesters and firing tear gas. Residents said they did not know who they were, with some speculating they were Iranians.

"Iran is afraid of these demonstrations because it has made the most gains in the government and parliament through parties close to it" since the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq in 2003, said Hisham al-Hashimi, an Iraqi security analyst. "Iran does not want to lose these gains. So it has tried to work through its parties to contain the protests in a very Iranian way."

It hasn't worked.

The protests in Iraq resumed Friday after a brief hiatus, with protesters massing in Baghdad's Tahrir Square and clashing with security forces as they tried to breach barricades on a bridge leading to the Green Zone, the seat of the government and home to several embassies. In southern Iraq, protesters have attacked and torched the offices of political parties and government-backed militias allied with Iran.

In a country that is OPEC's second-largest oil producer, impoverished residents complain that powerful Shiite militias tied to Iran have built economic empires, taking control of state reconstruction projects and branching into illicit business activities.

"All the parties and factions are corrupt, and this is connected to Iran, because it's using them to try and export its system of clerical rule to Iraq," said Ali al-Araqi, a 35-year-old protester from the southern town of Nasiriyah, which has seen especially violent clashes between protesters and security forces.

"The people are against this, and that is why you are seeing an uprising against Iran," he said.

Overnight Tuesday, masked men who appeared to be linked to Iraq's security forces opened fire on protesters in Karbala, a holy city associated with the martyrdom of one of the most revered figures in Shiite Islam. At least 18 protesters were killed and hundreds were wounded in bloodshed that could mark an ominous turning point in the demonstrations. In Baghdad, protesters burned an Iranian flag. Days earlier, protesters had gathered outside the Iranian Consulate in Karbala, chanting "Iran, out, out!"

In Lebanon, hundreds of thousands of people have taken to the streets, demanding the resignation of a government dominated by pro-Iran factions. As in Iraq, the protests are focused on local grievances.

"The protests in both Iraq and Lebanon are primarily about local politics and a corrupt political class that has failed to deliver," said Ayham Kamel, the Middle East and North Africa practice head at Eurasia Group.

The protests "showcase the failure of the proxy model where Iran is able to expand influence but its allies are unable to effectively govern," Kamel said.

Lebanese protesters have only rarely called out Iran and its main local ally, the militant Hezbollah group, but they have focused much of their rage on Lebanon's president and foreign minister, who come from a Christian party closely allied with Hezbollah.

A common chant, "All means all," implies that none of Lebanon's factions, including Hezbollah and its allies, are beyond reproach.

Last week, fistfights broke out at a main rally when protesters chanted against Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah, who announced at around the same time that he was withdrawing his supporters from the protests. He said unspecified foreign powers were exploiting the protests to undermine his group, warning that such actions could plunge the country back into civil war.

On Tuesday, Hezbollah supporters rampaged through the main protest camp in central Beirut. Shortly thereafter, Prime Minister Saad Hariri, a Western-backed leader who had reluctantly partnered with the pro-Iran factions in a national unity government, resigned. The protesters returned to the square by sun-down, cheering their first victory since the demonstrations began Oct. 17.

Hezbollah is the most powerful armed force in Lebanon and was alone in refusing to disarm after the 1975-1990 civil war. It justifies its arsenal by saying it's needed to defend the country from Israel, which occupied southern Lebanon from 1982 to 2000.

Hezbollah sent thousands of fighters to neighboring Syria to help defeat the uprising against Syrian President Bashar Assad, another key Iranian ally. Iraq's powerful Iran-backed militias, initially mobilized to battle the Islamic State group, have also fought alongside Assad's troops. And Iran violently suppressed its own pro-democracy protests, known as the Green Movement, after the disputed 2009 presidential election.

Iran has been largely silent on the protests, while expressing support for both governments, as well as Hezbollah. Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi has offered Tehran's "deep regret" about the scores of protesters killed in Iraq.

"We are sure that the Iraqi government, nation and clerics can overcome these problems," he said.

Krauss reported from Beirut. Associated Press writer Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran, contributed to this report.

Asian shares mostly lower following Wall Street losses

By **ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer**

BANGKOK (AP) — Shares fell in Asia on Wednesday after weak earnings for technology and media companies led stocks lower on Wall Street.

The modest pullback came a day after the S&P 500 hit an all-time high. Reports that China and the U.S. may not reach a trade agreement in time to sign a deal next month at a regional summit put a damper on sentiment.

Investors were cautious ahead of a policy announcement later Wednesday by the Federal Reserve, which is expected to cut interest rates again.

Japan's Nikkei 225 index lost 0.5% to 22,867.33. Sydney's S&P ASX 200 sank 0.8% to 6,689.20. In South Korea, the Kospi declined 0.7% to 2,079.40. Hong Kong's Hang Seng dropped 0.3% to 26,713.55 while the Shanghai Composite index gave up 0.4% to 2,941.78.

India's Sensex gained 0.5% to 40,027.88. Shares also rose in Taiwan and Southeast Asia.

"Asia markets can be seen going into the ... session with a mixed tone, waiting with bated breath for the Fed release amid the lack of releases in the Asia session," Jingyi Pan of IG said in a commentary.

Overnight, a wobbly day of trading ended with modest losses in New York.

Health care stocks jumped on stronger-than-expected reports from drugmakers, but losses by internet and media companies held the market in check.

The S&P 500 slipped 0.1% to 3,036.89, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average dropped 0.1% to 27,071. The Nasdaq composite slid 0.6% to 8,276.85. Smaller companies fared better than the rest of the market. The Russell 2000 index rose 0.3% to 1,577.07.

Hopes that the U.S. and China can make progress on their trade dispute, or at least stop making it worse have recently buoyed share prices.

White House spokesman Judd Deere told reporters Tuesday that both sides were working to finalize a deal, aiming for a signing by President Donald Trump and China's leader Xi Jinping next month at a Pacific Rim summit in Chile.

But various officials have indicated an agreement might not be ready in time.

Lower interest rates have also spurred market gains.

Most investors expect the Federal Reserve to cut short-term rates by a quarter of a percentage point on Wednesday. It has cut rates twice since the summer to shield the U.S. from the impact of the trade war and a slowing global economy.

Treasury yields dipped ahead of the decision. The yield on the 10-year Treasury slid to 1.83% from 1.85% late Monday. The two-year yield, which is more sensitive to moves by the Fed, fell to 1.63% from 1.64%.

Company earnings reports have also helped lift the market. With nearly half of the companies in the S&P 500 having reported results for the July-September quarter, the index is on pace to report a profit drop of 3.5% from the prior year, according to FactSet.

That's not as bad as the roughly 4% decline that analysts were expecting on the eve of earnings reporting season, but it would be the first time that profits dropped for three straight quarters since 2015-2016.

Analysts say the sharpest earnings declines in the third quarter will come from energy companies, raw-material producers and technology companies. Wall Street is expecting stronger growth, meanwhile, from companies that do most of their business domestically, such as utilities and real-estate companies.

Over the long term, stock prices tend to track the path of corporate profits.

Benchmark crude oil fell 27 cents to \$55.28 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It gave up 27 cents to settle at \$55.54 a barrel on Tuesday.

Brent crude oil, the international standard, declined 18 cents to \$61.05 a barrel.

The dollar fell to 108.85 Japanese yen from 108.88 yen on Monday. The euro was flat at \$1.1111.

AP Business writers Alex Veiga and Damien J. Troise contributed.

Student performance lags on Nation's Report Card

By JEFF AMY and CAROLYN THOMPSON Associated Press

ATLANTA (AP) — America's eighth graders are falling behind in math and reading, while fourth graders are doing slightly better in reading, according to the latest results from the Nation's Report Card .

But there were some exceptions to the findings, which also showed declines among fourth graders in math.

Mississippi and the District of Columbia showed gains, along with some other big-city school districts.

Nationwide, a little more than a third of eighth graders are proficient in reading and math. About a third of fourth graders are proficient in reading, while more than 40% of fourth graders are proficient in math.

"This country is in a student achievement crisis, and over the past decade it has continued to worsen, especially for our most vulnerable students," Education Secretary Betsy DeVos said.

The nationwide test is given to a random sampling of students in the fourth and eighth grades every two years.

Students made big gains in math in the 1990s and 2000s but have shown little improvement since then. Reading scores have risen a little since the tests began in 1992.

The decline in both reading and math performance among eighth grade students preparing to enter high school was especially concerning, authorities said.

"Eighth grade is a transitional point in preparing students for success in high school, so it is critical that researchers further explore the declines we are seeing here, especially the larger, more widespread declines across states we are seeing in reading," Peggy Carr, associate commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics told reporters during a conference call.

Both low- and high-achieving eighth graders slipped in reading, but the declines were generally worse for lower-performing students.

Carr said it's up to researchers and other to figure out why scores fell. "The assessment is designed to tell you what, not why," she said.

DeVos pointed to a widening achievement gap between the highest- and lowest-performing students and used the results to push for expanded school choice, including her proposals for federal tax credits for donations made to groups offering scholarships for private schools, apprenticeships and other educational programs.

"It's the only way to bring about the change our country desperately needs," she said.

Daniel Willingham, a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia, said it's hard to find a coherent story across different state and local school districts, but that he hoped the results would "spur us to do something a little more vigorous."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 35 of 51

"We've just absolutely stalled," Willingham said.

One theory is that decreased performance is a residue of trauma suffered by families and spending cuts by school districts during the Great Recession. Michael Petrilli, president of education reform group the Thomas Fordham Institute, has pointed to data showing that performance has risen and fallen on the test in the past in sync with the economy.

"What we saw is that great calamity had lingering impacts," Petrilli said. He said that could also be why "we'd be seeing particularly disappointing results at the lowest end of the spectrum."

Officials noted gains in Mississippi, where for the first time in the test's history, fourth graders scored above the national average in math and at the national average in reading. The state remained behind national averages in eighth grade but continued to improve in math and held its ground in reading despite nationwide losses.

"Our achievement is at an all-time high in Mississippi," said state Superintendent Carey Wright.

The state has been among a number with a heavy focus on improving early literacy, but Wright said the state also has devoted resources to helping teachers improve math instruction after it adopted new standards.

"When you improve kids' reading ability, it's not surprising that kids' math ability falls in line," Wright said.

The nation's large-city public schools — they educate more poor students and English language learners — also saw good news in the results. Big-city schools still performed below the nation as a whole, but further narrowed the gap.

One of those big-city districts highlighted as making gains was the District of Columbia, where Carr said gains have outpaced the nation over the past decade.

In the last 20 years, the achievement gap between big-city schools and the nation has narrowed by about 50 percent in reading and math, the Council of the Great City Schools said. The schools are now about five to eight points below national averages on NAEP's 500-point scale.

"We still have more to do, but the era of poor performance in our nation's urban public-school systems has ended, and it has been replaced by results, accountability and promise," the council's executive director, Michael Casserly, said in a news release.

Thompson reported from Buffalo, New York.

Follow Jeff Amy on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/jeffamy> .

Fed is expected to cut rates but may offer little guidance

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Federal Reserve is set to cut its benchmark interest rate Wednesday for a third time this year to help sustain the U.S. economic expansion in the face of widespread trade tensions and slower global growth.

But the Fed's policymakers will likely frustrate anyone who is hoping for a clear signal about what they may do next. The central bank may prefer instead to keep its options open, economists say.

Analysts have forecast that the Fed will reduce the short-term rate it controls — which influences a broad range of consumer and business loans — by one-quarter percentage point year to a range of 1.5% to 1.75%. A third cut would nearly reverse the four rate hikes that the Fed made last year in response to a strengthening economy.

That was before rising global risks led the Fed to change course and begin easing credit. Lower rates are intended to encourage more borrowing and spending.

Chairman Jerome Powell has said that the central bank's rate reductions are intended as a kind of insurance against threats to the economy, notably from President Donald Trump's trade war with China and weaker growth in Europe and Asia. Powell has pointed to similar rate cuts in 1995 and 1998 as precedents; in both cases, the Fed cut rates three times.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 36 of 51

The key issue at this week's meeting is whether the Fed has taken out enough insurance. Powell and most other Fed officials credit their rate cuts with lowering mortgage rates, boosting home sales and generally keeping the economy on track.

The Fed will also consider the consequences of a decline in expectations for inflation. Lower inflation expectations can be self-fulfilling. That represents a problem for the Fed because its preferred inflation gauge has been stuck below its 2% target for most of the past seven years.

In the meantime, Trump, via Twitter, has renewed his attacks on the Fed for not lowering its benchmark rate closer to zero. Trump has contrasted the Fed's actions unfavorably with central banks in Europe and Japan, which have slashed their rates into negative territory.

Though Trump has suggested that this puts the United States at a competitive disadvantage, most economists regard negative interest rates as a sign of weakness.

Some international tensions have eased since the Fed's last meeting in mid-September, which might suggest that further rate cuts are less necessary. The U.S. and China reached a temporary trade truce earlier this month and are working on a preliminary agreement that could be signed by Trump and President Xi Jinping in November.

It's not clear, though, how meaningful any such agreement might be, and Trump hasn't dropped his threat to impose new tariffs on Chinese goods on Dec. 15.

Another source of international tension has been Brexit, which has also eased. The European Union agreed Tuesday to delay the deadline for Britain's exit from the trade bloc to Jan. 31 from Oct. 31. That postpones what could have been a disruptive exit, right after the Fed meeting concluded, that would likely have damaged the U.K. and European economies.

The U.S. economy is still growing, and hiring remains steady, though there have been signs of a slow-down in recent data.

Americans cut back on spending at retailers and restaurants last month, a worrisome sign because consumer spending is the leading source of economic growth. Still, consumer confidence remains high, and shoppers could easily rebound in the coming months.

And businesses have reduced their spending on industrial machinery and other equipment, mostly because the U.S.-China trade war has made them reluctant to commit to big purchases. The tit-for-tat tariffs between the U.S. and China, the world's two largest economies, have also reduced U.S. exports.

Earlier Wednesday, the government will issue its first estimate of how the economy fared in the July-September quarter, and most economists have forecast that it will be relatively weak. The Atlanta Federal Reserve Bank projects that the economy expanded at just a 1.7% annual rate in the July-September quarter, which would be the second-slowest quarterly growth in nearly four years.

The job market remains sturdy, with the unemployment rate at just 3.5%, the lowest in 50 years. Steady hiring and decent wage increases should help underpin consumer spending in the coming months, keeping the economy expanding. That could keep the Fed on the sidelines in future meetings.

The housing market has also improved, after slumping in 2018, thanks in part to the Fed's rate cuts. Mortgage rates have fallen more than a full percentage point from a year ago, on average, for a 30-year fixed rate loan.

That's helped boost sales of existing homes while sales of new homes have soared. Auto purchases, another interest rate-sensitive industry, have also picked up.

Biden's communion denial highlights faith-politics conflict

By MEG KINNARD and ELANA SCHOR Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — A Roman Catholic priest's denial of communion to Joe Biden in South Carolina on Sunday illustrates the fine line presidential candidates must walk as they talk about their faiths: balancing religious values with a campaign that asks them to choose a side in polarizing moral debates.

The awkward moment for Biden came during a weekend campaign swing through South Carolina, a pivotal firewall in his hopes to claim the Democratic presidential nomination. The former vice president on

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 37 of 51

Sunday visited St. Anthony Catholic Church in Florence, a midsize city in the state's largely rural northeast. As he frequently does on the trail, Biden — a lifelong Catholic — made a stop at a local parish, attending services without the press before stopping at other churches with reporters.

But the Rev. Robert Morey at St. Anthony opted not to serve communion to Biden. The priest said in a statement to media outlets that his decision was based on Biden's support of abortion rights, something Morey said the church cannot condone by way of sacrament.

The episode recalled the divisive debate that erupted in 2004, when then-senator and future Democratic presidential nominee John Kerry grappled with public warnings from several Catholic officials that abortion-rights supporters should not receive communion. As Biden joins other candidates in making his faith a key element of his pitch to 2020 voters, Morey's communion denial raises questions about whether other Democrats might face similar tests of their ability to balance personal beliefs and their public stances on key issues.

Biden's campaign has declined to comment on the situation. Asked about it Tuesday on MSNBC, the former longtime Delaware senator shifted to an overall discussion of his views on faith.

"I practice my faith," Biden told the network. "But I've never let my religious beliefs, which I accept based on church doctrine ... impose that view on other people."

The denial prompted Faithful America, a liberal-leaning grassroots Christian group, to launch an online petition calling on South Carolina's Catholic bishop to direct Morey to apologize to Biden and direct other priests in the state not to deny communion based on politics.

"Jesus said, 'Take, eat — when you do this, do this in remembrance of me.' He didn't say, 'Take, eat — but only if you agree with certain American political positions,'" the Rev. Nathan Empsall, an Episcopalian priest and Faithful America's campaigns director, said Tuesday, expressing displeasure about past threats to deny communion to Democratic politicians including Kerry and Virginia Sen. Tim Kaine.

What remains unclear is whether other priests might take a cue from Morey when it comes to Biden's stance on abortion, which the Catholic Church counts as a sin. Pope Francis has asserted church opposition against abortion, equating it to "hiring a hit man" to resolve a problem, but also suggested that communion should not be withheld from practicing Catholics based on a specific belief.

"The Eucharist ... is not a prize for the perfect but a powerful medicine and nourishment for the weak," Francis wrote in 2013.

John Carr, director of the Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life at Georgetown University, said that "it's a big loss for our faith and for our church, either way, when the Eucharist becomes a source of division instead of unity."

"In my view, denying communion to people for their public stances is bad theology, bad pastoral practice and bad politics," added Carr, who spent two decades as an adviser to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In addition to Kerry, Kaine faced a potential denial of communion in 2016 when he served as the Democrats' vice presidential nominee. Biden is the first Democratic presidential hopeful in 2020 to face pressure from his faith about his politics, but some of his rivals have staked out clear positions on issues that divide voters in their faiths. Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, who's Jewish, has called for conditioning U.S. aid to Israel, for example, while South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, an Episcopalian, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a United Methodist, have come out against threatening the tax status of churches that oppose same-sex marriage.

Biden's communion denial is also particularly impactful because of his campaign's heavy investment in South Carolina, including the hiring of the Rev. Michael McClain as its faith outreach director earlier this year. (Buttigieg's campaign, and that of New Jersey Sen. Cory Booker, also have hired dedicated faith advisers.)

McClain, pastor of historic Liberty Hill Missionary Baptist Church in Catawba, said his "task and duty" is to make Biden's introductions to faith leaders across the state, a job McClain said is made easier by Biden's own deeply held personal faith.

"It's not hard to present him to the faith community because they know him," McClain said.

Morey didn't immediately return phone and email messages Tuesday from The Associated Press. Biden

campaigned later Sunday at Hartsville's Jerusalem Baptist Church.

Schor reported from New York. Associated Press writer Bill Barrow contributed from Atlanta.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

Colonel testifies he raised concerns about Ukraine, Trump

By LISA MASCARO, MARY CLARE JALONICK and COLLEEN LONG Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Defying White House orders, an Army officer serving with President Donald Trump's National Security Council testified to impeachment investigators Tuesday that he twice raised concerns over the administration's push to have Ukraine investigate Democrats and Joe Biden.

Alexander Vindman, a lieutenant colonel who served in Iraq and later as a diplomat, is the first official to testify who actually heard Trump's July 25 call with new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy. He reported his concerns to the NSC's lead counsel.

Vindman also told investigators he tried to change the White House's rough transcript of the call by filling in at least one of the omitted words, "Burisma," a reference to the company linked to Biden and his son, according to people familiar with his testimony. But Vindman was unsuccessful.

His concerns, though, were far bigger than the transcript. And lawmakers said his failed effort to edit it didn't significantly change their understanding of what transpired during Trump's call that sparked the impeachment inquiry.

Vindman's arrival in military blue, with medals, created a striking image at the Capitol as the impeachment inquiry reached deeper into the White House. He testified for more than 10 hours.

"I was concerned by the call," Vindman said, according to prepared remarks obtained by The Associated Press. "I did not think it was proper to demand that a foreign government investigate a U.S. citizen, and I was worried about the implications for the U.S. government's support of Ukraine."

Vindman, a 20-year military officer, added to the mounting evidence from other witnesses — diplomats, defense and former administration officials — who are corroborating the initial whistleblower's complaint against Trump and providing new details ahead of a House vote in the impeachment inquiry.

"Every person has put it in higher resolution," said Rep. Denny Heck, D-Wash., during a break in the daylong session.

"That's the story: There's not like a new headline out of all of these," said Rep. Tom Malinowski, D-N.J. "Every single witness, from their own vantage point, has corroborated the central facts of the story we've heard."

The inquiry is looking into Trump's call, in which he asked Zelenskyy for a "favor" — to investigate Democrats — that the Democrats say was a quid pro quo for military aid and could be an impeachable offense.

With the administration directing staff not to appear, Vindman was the first current White House official to testify before the impeachment panels. He was issued a subpoena to appear.

Trump took to Twitter on Tuesday to denounce the probe as a "sham," adding: "Why are people that I never even heard of testifying about the call. Just READ THE CALL TRANSCRIPT AND THE IMPEACHMENT HOAX IS OVER!"

Vindman, who arrived in the United States as a 3-year-old from the former Soviet Union, said that it was his "sacred duty" to defend the United States.

Some Trump allies, looking for ways to discredit Vindman, questioned the colonel's loyalties because he was born in the region. But the line of attack was rejected by some Republicans, including Wyoming Rep. Liz Cheney, who said it was "shameful" to criticize his patriotism.

Sen. Mitt Romney, R-Utah, called the slams on Vindman "absurd, disgusting and way off the mark. This is a decorated American soldier, and he should be given the respect that his service to our country demands."

The testimony came the day after Speaker Nancy Pelosi announced the House would vote on a resolu-

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 39 of 51

tion to set rules for public hearings and a possible vote on articles of impeachment.

Thursday's vote would be the first on the impeachment inquiry and aims to nullify complaints from Trump and his allies that the process is illegitimate and unfair.

White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham said the resolution merely "confirms that House Democrats' impeachment has been an illegitimate sham from the start as it lacked any proper authorization by a House vote."

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell said he and other GOP lawmakers will review the resolution to see if it passes a "smell test" of fairness to Trump.

The session Tuesday grew contentious at times as House Republicans continued trying to unmask the still-anonymous whistleblower and call him or her to testify. Vindman said he is not the whistleblower and does not know who it is.

GOP Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio acknowledged Republicans were trying to get Vindman to provide the names of others he spoke to after the July 25 phone call, in an effort to decide whom to call to testify. "He wouldn't," Jordan said.

In his prepared remarks, Vindman testified that in spring of this year he became aware of "outside influencers" promoting a "false narrative of Ukraine" that undermined U.S. efforts, a reference in particular to Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani.

He first reported his concerns after a July 10 meeting in which U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland stressed the importance of having Ukraine investigate the 2016 election as well as Burisma, a company linked to the family of Biden, a 2020 Democratic presidential candidate.

Vindman says he told Sondland that "his statements were inappropriate, that the request to investigate Biden and his son had nothing to do with national security, and that such investigations were not something the NSC was going to get involved in or push."

That differs from the account of Sondland, a wealthy businessman who donated \$1 million to Trump's inauguration and testified before the impeachment investigators that no one from the NSC "ever expressed any concerns." Sondland also testified that he did not realize any connection between Biden and Burisma.

For the call between Trump and Zelenskyy, Vindman said he listened in the Situation Room with colleagues from the NSC and Vice President Mike Pence's office. He said he again reported his concerns to the NSC's lead counsel.

He wrote, "I realized that if Ukraine pursued an investigation into the Bidens and Burisma, it would likely be interpreted as a partisan play which would undoubtedly result in Ukraine losing the bipartisan support it has thus far maintained. This would all undermine U.S. national security."

Vindman served as the director for European affairs and a Ukraine expert under Fiona Hill, a former official who testified earlier in the impeachment probe. Hill worked for former national security adviser John Bolton.

He told investigators that Ukraine, in trying to become a vibrant democracy integrated with the West, is a bulwark against overt Russian aggression.

Vindman attended Zelenskyy's inauguration with a delegation led by Energy Secretary Rick Perry, and he and Hill were both part of a Ukraine briefing with Sondland that others have testified irritated Bolton at the White House.

"I am a patriot, and it is my sacred duty and honor to advance and defend OUR country, irrespective of party or politics," wrote Vindman, who was wounded in Iraq and awarded a Purple Heart.

"For over twenty years as an active duty United States military officer and diplomat, I have served this country in a nonpartisan manner, and have done so with the utmost respect and professionalism for both Republican and Democratic administrations," he wrote.

Associated Press writers Zeke Miller, Padmananda Rama, Matthew Daly, Laurie Kellman, Eric Tucker and Alan Fram contributed to this report.

Anger mounts as utility imposes more blackouts in California

By JANIE HAR and JOCELYN GECKER Associated Press

SAN RAFAEL, Calif. (AP) — With no electricity for the fourth straight day Tuesday, chef and caterer Jane Sykes realized she would have to throw out \$1,000 worth of food, including trays of brownies, cupcakes and puff pastry.

She also had little hope of getting a good night's sleep — there was no way to run the machine she relies on to counter her apnea.

"I don't think PG&E really thought this through," she lamented.

Frustration and anger mounted across Northern California on Tuesday as the state's biggest utility, Pacific Gas & Electric, began another round of widespread blackouts aimed at preventing its electrical equipment from sparking wildfires in high winds.

Millions of people have been without power for days as fire crews raced to contain two major wind-whipped blazes that have destroyed dozens of homes at both ends of the state: in Sonoma County wine country and in the hills of Los Angeles.

Across Northern California, people worried about charging cellphones and electric vehicles, finding gasoline and cash, staying warm and keeping their food from spoiling. They donned headlamps at home and parked their cars outside inoperable automatic garage doors.

Some ended up at centers set up by PG&E where people could go to power their electronics and get free water, snacks, flashlights and solar lanterns.

"There's a hidden cost," Sykes said. "Absolutely public safety above all else, but there's a big financial loss for my profession, having to throw away a lot of hard work."

PG&E said Tuesday's blackouts — the third round in a week — would affect about 1.5 million people in 29 counties, including 1 million still without power from a shut-off over the weekend. By 5 p.m. about 435,000 customers — or nearly 1.1 million people — were without electricity as restorations were made from Sunday's shut-off and new outages continued from Tuesday's wind event, the utility said.

The outages have made people like Linda Waldron, a mother of two who lives north of San Francisco in San Rafael, realize the things we take for granted.

She discovered she was low on gas and began to panic as she drove around looking for an open gas station. She wound up driving to San Francisco, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) away, before she found one. She also stocked up on cash after realizing she had only \$1 in her wallet.

"What if we needed to evacuate and I had no gas in the car?" she said as her 5-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son cavorted at a playground. "I didn't even think about gas and cash because I'm too busy with these guys."

In Placer County, Angel Smith relied on baby wipes and blankets to keep her 13-month-old son Liam warm and clean. The family has been without power since Saturday night and cannot draw well water without electricity.

She ran a cord from her neighbors' generator to keep her phone and tablet charged so the two could watch movies. Temperatures were expected to drop below freezing overnight in parts of Northern California.

"The hardest part about this for me has been making sure I keep my son warm as it gets cold here," Smith said.

In Mendocino County, officials say they are struggling to keep the public informed because they can't trust the information they're getting from PG&E.

"The issue isn't even all of the power shutoffs," said Carmel Angelo, the county's chief executive. "It's the lack of communication. It's letting people think they're getting their power back."

After the weekend shut-off, some people were led to believe the power would come back Monday and that the next round of outages would avoid Mendocino's most populous areas. But Angelo said she learned Tuesday that the outage was still in effect because of two damaged transmission lines dozens of miles away in Marin County.

If people knew the lights would be out for a week they could've planned accordingly, she said. It's been

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 41 of 51

especially troublesome for those who need oxygen. Some of the trucks that resupply oxygen have been caught in long delays for gas, and some patients have been admitted to the emergency room as a precaution, she said.

Mendocino residents Suzanne Lemley Schein and her husband, Glenn, lost power on Saturday and have been spending the time since playing backgammon by candlelight and going to bed early.

They haven't been able to rent out a studio on their property, or even offer it to wildfire evacuees, because it has no power or water.

She said she doesn't like "the power that PG&E has over all of us," she said. "This has crippled us in a lot of ways."

Sykes, the caterer, is among some people in well-to-do Marin County, north of San Francisco, who have been without power since Saturday.

She lives in San Rafael but works in San Francisco, so she has "civilization during the day," but she said it is eerie to drive along darkened highways. She hasn't opened her freezer since the outage and is not looking forward to it.

"I'm pretty sure it's not going to be salvageable," she said.

PG&E, which is in bankruptcy after its equipment was blamed for a string of disastrous fires over the past three years, including a blaze that all but destroyed the town of Paradise and killed 85 people, has said its foremost concern is public safety.

But Gov. Gavin Newsom and top utility regulators have accused the company of mismanaging its power system and failing for decades to make the investments needed to ensure it's more durable. He and others have also complained that the utility has botched the outages by not keeping the public adequately informed.

PG&E Corp. President Bill Johnson says he talked to Newsom Tuesday and told him he agreed with his suggestion that the company give credits to customers who've been hit by pre-emptive power shut-offs. Newsom had suggested \$100 per household, or \$250 per business. Johnson did not confirm a figure, saying only, "We agree with his suggestion. As to how that gets done, the mechanics, we'll settle that when we get through this."

PG&E said Monday its power lines may have started two smaller wildfires over the weekend in a part of the San Francisco Bay Area, where the utility had kept the lights on because it was not designated a high fire risk.

Lafayette resident Vicki McCaslin, 60, was evacuated during one of those fires and wasn't happy to have the power back on Tuesday morning.

"I'm scared to death," she said at a Starbucks in Lafayette, where people have gathered to charge phones over the past few days. "I don't want it on if there's strong winds tonight."

The California Public Utilities Commission plans to open an investigation that could result in fines against PG&E.

The commission said it also plans to review the rules governing blackouts, will look to prevent utilities from charging customers when the power is off and will convene experts to find grid improvements that might lessen shut-offs next fire season.

The state can't continue experiencing such widespread blackouts, "nor should Californians be subject to the poor execution that PG&E in particular has exhibited," PUC President Marybel Batjer said in a statement.

Gecker reported from Orinda, California. Associated Press writers Christopher Weber and Stefanie Dazio contributed from Los Angeles.

NCAA board approves athlete compensation for image, likeness

By RALPH D. RUSSO AP College Sports Writer

The NCAA took a major step Tuesday toward allowing college athletes to cash in on their fame, voting to permit them to "benefit from the use of their name, image and likeness."

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 42 of 51

The nation's largest governing body for college sports and its member schools now must figure out how to allow athletes to profit — something they have fought against doing for years — while still maintaining rules regarding amateurism. The NCAA Board of Governors, meeting at Emory University in Atlanta, directed each of the NCAA's three divisions to create the necessary new rules immediately and have them in place no later than January 2021.

Board chair Michael Drake, the president of Ohio State University, said the NCAA must embrace change and modernize "to provide the best possible experience for college athletes."

But such changes will come with limitations, he said.

"The board is emphasizing that change must be consistent with the values of college sports and higher education and not turn student-athletes into employees of institutions," Drake told The Associated Press.

A group of NCAA administrators has been exploring since May the ways in which athletes could be allowed to receive compensation for the use of their names, images and likenesses. The working group, led by Ohio State athletic director Gene Smith and Big East Commissioner Val Ackerman, presented a status report Tuesday to the university presidents who make up the Board of Governors.

Smith and Ackerman's group laid out principles and guidelines, endorsed by the board, to be followed as NCAA members go about crafting new rules and tweaking existing ones, including:

Some college sports leaders fear allowing athletes to earn outside income could open the door to corruption.

"One of the most distinctive things about college sports is this whole recruitment process," NCAA President Mark Emmert told the AP. "The whole notion of trying to maintain as fair a playing field as you can is really central to all this. And using sponsorship arrangements, in one way or another, as recruiting inducements is something everybody is deeply concerned about."

Ackerman and Smith said the challenges lie in determining what regulations need to be set in place; what markets athletes should be allowed to access; what entities and individuals they should be permitted to work with; and whether the schools themselves could provide funds to athletes through licensing deals.

The NCAA's move came a month after California passed a law that would make it illegal for NCAA schools to prohibit college athletes from making money on endorsements, autograph signings and social media advertising, among other activities.

"California has made it clear that we won't accept any arbitrary limitations on college athletes' right to their name, image, and likeness," state Sen. Nancy Skinner, who co-sponsored the bill, posted in Twitter.

The California law goes into effect in 2023. More than a dozen states have followed with similar legislation, some of which could be on the books as soon as next year.

"This is another attempt by the NCAA at stalling on this issue," said Ramogi Huma, executive director of the National College Players Association, an advocacy group.

It's hard to say exactly how much athletes could fetch on an open market for their names. It could range from a few hundred dollars for creating personalized video and audio greetings for fans through companies such as Cameo, to thousands of dollars for doing television advertisements for local businesses.

NCAA rules allow for an athletic scholarship that covers tuition, room and board, books and a cost-of-attendance stipend. The cost of attendance is determined by the institution using federal guidelines and generally ranges from \$2,000-\$5,000 per semester.

Gabe Feldman, director of the Tulane University sports law program, said the NCAA has taken an important step by recognizing its rules are antiquated.

"But the ultimate question is how are the rules modified to both allow college athletes to profit from their name, image and likeness while also being consistent with the collegiate model," Feldman said.

The NCAA has said California's law is unconstitutional, and any states that pass similar legislation could see their athletes and schools being declared ineligible to compete. But the board also said it hopes to reach a resolution with states without going to court.

In addition to pending state laws, North Carolina Republican U.S. Rep. Mark Walker has proposed a national bill that would prohibit the NCAA and its member schools from restricting athletes from selling

the rights to their names, images and likenesses to third-party buyers on the open market.

"We're going to continue to communicate with legislators at the state and federal level," Emmert said. "That's one of the things that the board is asking of me and my staff and the membership in general, and hopefully we can avoid anything that's a direct conflict with our state legislators."

Follow Ralph D. Russo at <https://twitter.com/ralphDrussoAP>

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

Papadopoulos seeks California seat left vacant by Rep. Hill

LOS ANGELES (AP) — George Papadopoulos, a former Trump campaign aide who was a key figure in the FBI's Russia probe, filed paperwork Tuesday to run for the U.S. House seat being vacated by Democrat Katie Hill.

Papadopoulos didn't immediately comment, but on Sunday he tweeted, "I love my state too much to see it run down by candidates like Hill. All talk, no action, and a bunch of sellouts."

Hill, whose district covers Los Angeles County, announced her resignation on Sunday amid an ethics probe into allegations she had an inappropriate relationship with a staff member.

She's admitted to a consensual relationship with a campaign staff member, but denied one with a congressional staff member, which would violate U.S. House rules. She's called herself the victim of revenge porn by an abusive husband she is divorcing.

Papadopoulos, meanwhile, was a key figure in the FBI's Russia probe into ties between Russia and the Trump campaign.

The FBI's counterintelligence investigation that later became the Mueller probe was triggered, in part, from a tip from an Australian diplomat who had communicated with Papadopoulos. Papadopoulos told the diplomat, Alexander Downer, in May 2016 that Russia had thousands of stolen emails that would be potentially damaging to Hillary Clinton.

His lawyers have sought a pardon from the president, though Papadopoulos contends that's unlikely to come to fruition.

In the last few months, he's been working on a working on a documentary series with his wife about their interactions with the special counsel's team. He's also on the board of advisers for a medical marijuana company that is hoping to help use cannabis to combat the opioid epidemic.

Papadopoulos was the first of five Trump aides to plead guilty as part of Mueller's investigation and admitted to lying to federal agents about his conversations with a professor. He also agreed to cooperate in Mueller's investigation. He wants the government to declassify material, including authorizations by the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court that he contends could prove he was unlawfully targeted.

Attorney General William Barr appointed a U.S. attorney who is conducting a criminal investigation examining origins of Mueller's probe. The current investigation is examining what led the U.S. to open a counterintelligence investigation into the Trump campaign and the roles that various countries played in the U.S. probe. Prosecutors are also investigating whether the surveillance and intelligence-gathering methods used during the investigation were legal and appropriate.

Papadopoulos enters a field of at least three other Republicans and one Democrat. The other Republicans are Navy veteran Mike Garcia, bank executive Angela Jacobs Underwood and Mark Cripe, who works for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. Former Republican Rep. Steve Knight, who lost the seat to Hill in 2018, is also considering running.

The seat was the last Los Angeles County seat to be held by Republicans before Hill's victory and was one of seven Democrats flipped last year.

State Assemblywoman Christy Smith is the only Democrat in the race so far. She quickly criticized Papadopoulos on Tuesday.

"If he pled guilty to lying to the FBI - how do we know he'll tell us the truth?" Smith tweeted. "We de-

serve someone from our community serving as our voice - not (Trump's) wannabe political hack!"

A special election to fill Hill's seat cannot be set by Gov. Gavin Newsom until she officially leaves Congress, which she has not done. It's possible there is no special election, depending on how long she waits to leave office. That would make the next election for the seat in November 2020.

Associated Press writer Michael Balsamo contributed to this report.

Chileans reject president's concessions, plan new protests

By MICHAEL WEISSENSTEIN and EVA VERGARA Associated Press

SANTIAGO, Chile (AP) — Thousands of Chileans filled a plaza in the capital Tuesday in the 12th day of demonstrations that began with youth protests over a subway fare hike and transformed into a leaderless national movement demanding greater equality and better public services in a country long seen as an economic success story.

A move to meet one of their demands - replacing Chile's dictatorship-era constitution - appeared to gain some momentum in the country's congress.

Marches began in the early afternoon and as the sun set, there was a festive atmosphere in Plaza Italia, a rallying point during the demonstrations. The protesters banged pots and pans, blew plastic whistles and waved the Chilean and Mapuche indigenous flags. Vendors sold snacks, jewelry, hats and t-shirts. The demonstrators, many in their 20s and 30s, pressed their call for changes to a market-dominant socio-economic model that has fully or partially privatized pensions, health and education. They hoisted signs calling for pension reform, an end to the private ownership of water rights or for the resignation of President Sebastián Piñera.

"There's an economic development system that's made us all accustomed to injustice, a profound dissatisfaction among the vast majority of people who feel that they aren't seeing the benefits of economic development," said Jorge Pinto, a 24-year-old student of public administration.

On several side streets the atmosphere was tenser, as groups of masked protesters set fire to garbage and trees in a local park, before they were chased off by police with tear gas and water cannon. Attempts to march to La Moneda, the presidential palace, were frustrated by police barricades.

Some demonstrators are angry about the retirement system, which forces Chileans to hand over 10 percent of their income to private fund managers and then receive pensions that barely cover a third of most people's monthly expenses. Others fume about a public health system that makes many wait months for an appointment with a specialist, or seek expensive private care.

Still others resent university loans that they are still paying into their 40s and 50s, even as 1% of the population earns 33 percent of the nation's wealth, making Chile the most unequal country in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development group of wealthy nations.

Virtually none have been satisfied by Piñera's response to the protests, which includes replacing eight ministers, calling for national dialogue, offering small increases in the minimum wage and the lowest pensions, higher taxes on the wealthy and decreases in the prices of medicine and electricity.

Piñera, a billionaire businessman who sees the private sector and economic growth as the keys to national success, may be hoping that his relatively minor concessions will calm the streets as protests approach the two-week mark, said Lucia Dammert, a sociologist and political scientist at the University of Santiago.

It remains uncertain if that will happen, Dammert said.

"It's really unclear what the government's strategy is. They find themselves facing a situation they weren't prepared for," she said. "This is a government with an intense focus on economic growth. ... They may be thinking that the streets will quiet down as time passes and people get exhausted."

Piñera's approval is at 14 percent, according to recent polls, but protests have focused mostly on replacing the constitution, saying its focus on prioritizing private control of virtually every aspect of the economy is the root of the country's problems, regardless of who's in power.

"His proposals are a joke; they're not really the solutions that the people want," said Lindsay Silva, a

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 45 of 51

24-year-old student working on a degree in physical therapy and health at the University of Santiago. "Inequality affects me every day because my family can't pay its bills and has to make big sacrifices in order for me to have opportunities."

Many protesters want a new constitution to replace the one that was written in 1980 under military dictator Augusto Pinochet and that creates the legal basis of Chile's market-driven system. That idea began to gain momentum Tuesday when the leader of one of the three parties that supports Piñera in congress came out in favor of reforming the constitution.

"The idea of changing the constitution, of eventually creating a new constitution, is getting ever stronger, and that's legitimate and must be discussed," said Congressman Mario Desborde, president of the National Renovation party. "If the constitution must be changed, it must be changed. ... I don't fear democracy in the slightest."

Six opposition parties control the House and Senate and favor changing the constitution but don't have enough votes between them to do that, making support from governing parties essential.

The opposition parties were holding meetings Tuesday to begin moving forward on constitutional reform. From afar, Chile has been a regional success story: Under democratically elected presidents on the left and right, a free-market consensus has driven growth up, poverty down and won Chile the region's highest score on the United Nations Human Development Index, a blend of life expectancy, education and national income per capita.

In 2010, Chile became the second Latin nation in the OECD, after Mexico. Next month, Piñera will host the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, followed by the 25th United Nations Climate Change Conference in December.

Piñera's proposals to calm the protests so far "are window dressing, because none of the things we've been fighting for has really been achieved," said Catalina Alfaro, 55, who hasn't been able to join the protests because she has been busy running a bakery she owns in western Santiago.

"Things in Chile could calm down if he says to our faces that we're going to change the constitution."

Social Development Minister said Sebastián Sichel said the government was asking municipalities to begin calling citizen forums as part of a national dialogue to develop concrete proposals for change out of the national protests.

He said that if citizens wanted a constitutional assembly, specially called to produce a new national charter, the government could support it.

"This can go where the citizens want it to," he said. "There are no barriers."

Associated Press journalist Marcos Sepulveda Loyola contributed to this report.

HBO orders 10 episodes of 'Game of Thrones' prequel

By LYNN ELBER AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — HBO is green-lighting a new "Game of Thrones" prequel after reportedly canceling another that starred Naomi Watts.

The cable channel said Tuesday that it's given a 10-episode order to "House of the Dragon," set 300 years before the original series that ended its eight-season run in May.

The prequel is based on George R.R. Martin's "Fire & Blood," HBO said. The new drama was co-created by Martin and Ryan Condal, whose credits include "Colony."

It will focus on House Targaryen, made famous in "Game of Thrones" by Emilia Clarke's Daenerys and her fearsome dragons.

"House of the Dragon" was announced by HBO programming president Casey Bloys during a presentation for HBO Max, the streaming service launching in May 2020. A spinoff of HBO megahit "Game of Thrones" would be a key attraction in the increasingly crowded streaming marketplace.

HBO declined comment on reports Tuesday that it had dropped another "Game of Thrones" prequel set thousands of years before the original. A pilot episode starring Watts had been filmed in Northern Ireland.

The straight-to-series order for "House of the Dragon," whether a sign of faith in the project or pressure to get it into production, avoids letting devotees of the fantasy saga down once more. Casting and an air date were not announced.

John Legend co-writes new take on 'Baby, It's Cold Outside'

NEW YORK (AP) — John Legend and Kelly Clarkson, his fellow coach on "The Voice," have joined forces on a reimagined version of the oft-criticized Christmas classic "Baby, It's Cold Outside."

The song, written by Frank Loesser in 1944, is a duet that has a man trying to convince a woman to stay overnight at his home on a cold winter's night. It's been a flashpoint of the #MeToo era, with foes calling it everything from sexist to an ode to date rape.

Legend and comedian Natasha Rothwell of HBO's "Insecure" wrote the new take, which includes Clarkson leading the lyrics:

"What will my friends think (I think they should rejoice)

If I have one more drink? (It's your body, and your choice.)"

Gone are such lines as, "Gosh, your lips look delicious," sung by the man, and "Say, what's in this drink?" by the woman.

The Grammy-winning Legend includes the song on a new expanded version of his first Christmas album, "A Legendary Christmas: The Deluxe Edition," out Nov. 8.

The original song won an Academy Award in 1949 after Esther Williams and Ricardo Montalban performed it in the film "Neptune's Daughter." Among the famous who have reprised it are Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Jordan, Amy Grant and Vince Gill, and Fantasia and CeeLo Green.

Lebanese prime minister quits amid anti-government protests

By ANDREA ROSA and BILAL HUSSEIN Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Lebanon's prime minister resigned Tuesday, bowing to one of the central demands of anti-government demonstrators shortly after baton-wielding Hezbollah supporters rampaged through the main protest camp in Beirut, torching tents, smashing plastic chairs and chasing away protesters.

The demonstrators later returned to the camp in time to hear the news that Prime Minister Saad Hariri said he was stepping down after hitting a "dead end" in trying to resolve the crisis, which has paralyzed the country for nearly two weeks. The protesters erupted in cheers at the news.

The resignation plunges Lebanon deeper into turmoil and uncertainty as it grapples with a severe economic and financial crisis that has led to a scarcity of hard currency and the local currency losing value for the first time in more than two decades. Lebanon is facing a deep-running fiscal crisis as it staggers under one of the highest debt ratios in the world — \$86 billion, or more than 150% of the country's gross domestic product.

The rampage by supporters of Hezbollah and Parliament Speaker Nabih Berri's Shiite Amal movement marked a violent turning point in the protests, which have called for the resignation of the government and the overthrow of the political class that has dominated the country since the 1975-1990 civil war and is blamed for the current economic crisis. The government is dominated by factions allied with Hezbollah, the most powerful armed group in the country.

Hariri had reluctantly worked with those factions as part of a national unity government that had failed to address an increasingly severe economic and fiscal crisis.

"I tried all this time to find an exit and listen to the voice of the people and protect the country from the security and economic dangers," Hariri said. "Today, to be honest with you, I have hit a dead end, and it is time for a big shock to confront the crisis."

Hariri's resignation fulfills a key demand of the protesters but plunges the country into even greater uncertainty, with no clear path toward the fundamental political change they are demanding. The economy, which was in the grip of a major fiscal crisis even before the protests began, is now at risk of collapsing,

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 47 of 51

with banks, schools and many businesses having been closed for two weeks.

A proposed tax on the WhatsApp messenger service ignited protests Oct. 17, sending hundreds of thousands of people into the streets in the largest demonstrations in more than a decade. The protests soon widened into calls for the overthrow of the political elites who have ruled the country since the 1975-1990 civil war.

Similar demonstrations erupted in Iraq this month, calling for the overthrow of the political class that became entrenched after the 2003 U.S.-led invasion. The protests there have been much more violent, with security forces firing tear gas and live fire. At least 240 people have been killed.

Lebanon's protests were largely peaceful, with only occasional minor scuffles with security forces, but that changed early Tuesday, when groups of men began confronting protesters who were blocking roads.

The men initially presented themselves as disgruntled residents frustrated by the country's paralysis, but they later could be heard chanting, "At your service, Hussein," a Shiite religious slogan, and "God, Nasrallah, and the whole Dahiyeh," referring to Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah and the group's stronghold in the southern suburbs of Beirut.

They launched their attack about midday on the main protest camp in Beirut where demonstrators have been staying for nearly two weeks. The rallies swell at night, but there were only a few dozen protesters in the square when the Hezbollah supporters arrived.

Soldiers and riot police initially moved in to separate the groups but were unable to prevent the Hezbollah supporters from storming Martyrs' Square in central Beirut, the main protest site. Hezbollah supporters lashed out at reporters covering the melee, kicking some of them and reaching for their cameras.

It was unclear how many people were wounded. Fights broke out in places and security forces could be seen beating some people with batons.

The protesters armed themselves with wooden batons and metal poles as the Hezbollah supporters approached but fled when the counterdemonstrators arrived in larger numbers. Security forces later fired tear gas to disperse them, but only after they had destroyed and set fire to several tents.

Nasrallah had criticized the protests last week, accusing unspecified foreign powers of exploiting them to undermine his group and saying they threatened to drag the country into civil war.

Hezbollah was the only armed group in Lebanon to maintain its weapons after the civil war, saying they were needed to defend the country from Israel, which occupied parts of southern Lebanon from 1982 until 2000. Hezbollah later fought Israel to a stalemate during a ferocious monthlong war in 2006.

Hezbollah is widely seen as being more militarily powerful than even the Lebanese armed forces.

It was not clear if Hezbollah directly ordered Tuesday's attack, but the group has not disavowed the behavior of its supporters. It was an ominous sign, raising the possibility that one or more of Lebanon's many sectarian factions could resort to violence as the crisis deepens.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres urged all sides to avoid violence and for security forces to show restraint, saying he hoped for a political solution that would "preserve stability and peace," his spokesman said.

"We're fully opposed and strongly opposed to all attacks that impede the peaceful protests that are underway," said the spokesman, Farhan Haq.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo called on "Lebanon's political leaders to urgently facilitate the formation of a new government that can build a stable, prosperous, and secure Lebanon that is responsive to the needs of its citizens."

"The peaceful demonstrations and expressions of national unity over the last 13 days have sent a clear message. The Lebanese people want an efficient and effective government, economic reform, and an end to endemic corruption," Pompeo said in a statement.

Groups of protesters eventually returned to the main squares and began repairing their tents, while others went back to blocking the roads. They could be heard chanting one of the main slogans of the protests, "All means all," which is seen as referring to all of Lebanon's political factions, including Hezbollah and its allies.

The protesters welcomed Hariri's resignation, but it's unclear what comes next. He could stay in office

as a caretaker prime minister, with the pro-Iran factions strengthened.

Lebanon has gone through long periods of paralysis before. A complex power-sharing arrangement distributes power and high offices among Shiites, Sunnis and Christians. That has prevented the country from sliding back into civil war but has spawned networks of patronage and nepotism, and has made it virtually impossible for the government to take major decisions or even provide reliable public services.

The protesters have called for sweeping change to the political system that would produce non-sectarian governments capable of addressing the country's many challenges.

Associated Press writers Sarah El Deeb and Joseph Krauss contributed.

Amazon hopes \$1.5 mil elects pro-business Seattle leaders

By GENE JOHNSON Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Brian Sweeney has a long list of complaints about Amazon, from the way it treats warehouse workers to the low taxes it pays and its effort to win concessions from cities to bring in jobs. So when he learned the online retail giant had poured \$1 million into remaking the Seattle City Council with more business-friendly candidates, he pulled out his wallet.

The New York resident sent \$15 to socialist council member Kshama Sawant, a target of the online retail giant. While that doesn't compare to Amazon's unprecedented spending Oct. 14, about 1,900 others also have donated to Sawant since then, her campaign says. It's a dramatic rise in support and a reflection of the risk Amazon is taking as it splashes into the politics of its liberal hometown.

Many in Seattle aren't happy with the council, but they also may not like a company headed by the world's richest man, Jeff Bezos, trying to influence their vote. As historic income inequality fuels homelessness and soaring housing prices, some progressives elsewhere don't like it either.

"Amazon could do this in hundreds of places around the country with all the money they're not paying in taxes," said Sweeney, a 28-year-old software engineer turned carpenter in Valley Stream, New York.

With seven of the nine Seattle council seats in play Nov. 5, business interests see an opportunity to shift city leadership closer to the political center and away from a bent to potentially tax big companies to fund homeless services or improve public transit.

The council is officially nonpartisan, but Republicans stand little chance of getting elected in Seattle, and many of the business-backed candidates are moderate to progressive Democrats. The race will decide whether the council is dominated by socialists and extremely liberal Democrats or more centrist ones.

"We are contributing to this election because we care deeply about the future of Seattle," Amazon spokesman Aaron Toso said in a statement. "We believe it is critical that our hometown has a City Council that is focused on pragmatic solutions to our shared challenges in transportation, homelessness, climate change and public safety."

Progressive Democratic presidential candidates Elizabeth Warren and Bernie Sanders are among those accusing Amazon of trying to buy the council.

The elections come a year after a political debacle that damaged the council's popularity. The leaders unanimously passed the "Amazon tax," designed to make lucrative companies contribute more to affordable housing for the homeless.

It repealed the tax after a revolt from Amazon, which would have had to pay around \$11 million a year and threatened to halt its growth in the city. The company said Seattle didn't need more money and that it was "highly uncertain whether the City Council's anti-business positions or its spending inefficiency will change for the better."

The debate helped cement Amazon's awakening to local politics as the council's popularity slipped, especially over its handling of homelessness. Four council members decided not to seek re-election.

There's been little progress in the four years since the city declared a homelessness crisis. Many business interests support "sweeps" of homeless camps accompanied by teams to help people get services.

Liberal council members, including Sawant, say the sweeps are inhumane and don't work. She wants

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 49 of 51

money for tiny-house villages.

Meanwhile, some in Sawant's district say she's more interested in building a national socialist movement than responding to their concerns. A large portion of her donations come from out of state.

Sawant helped make Seattle the first big city to adopt a \$15-an-hour minimum wage. She frequently says people must choose sides in "class warfare" and has warned that a win by Amazon would embolden corporate interests to fight efforts to make the rich pay more in taxes or spread progressive policies like tenants' rights and paid sick leave laws.

The two liberal, vocally pro-union council members who are not up for re-election, Teresa Mosqueda and Lorena Gonzáles, didn't endorse Sawant in the primary.

But after Amazon weighed in, both enthusiastically endorsed her last week. She's running against Egan Orion, director of an annual gay pride festival in Seattle.

Gonzáles said Amazon's support might swing Orion's positions.

"When there's that much money being offered, there will be a quid-pro-quo expectation," she said. "Amazon has plenty of access to the council already. What they want is elected officials who are going to bend to their will."

At a recent debate, Orion pointed to his work in the LGBTQ community and with small businesses, saying, "That narrative does not match the person that I am or the way I am running this campaign."

He describes himself as a progressive but says more can be accomplished by negotiating with business leaders than by demonizing them.

Amazon gave \$1 million this month to the Seattle Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce's political action committee, bringing its total contributions to the PAC this year to \$1.5 million — a huge amount for a local election. Starbucks, Expedia and a development company started by late Microsoft founder Paul Allen also have contributed.

"Generally, folks have seen a council that talks a lot about progress on homelessness, on reducing traffic, on helping with our increasingly unaffordable housing stock, and they really just haven't seen progress," PAC executive director Markham McIntyre said. "With taxes going up year after year, they get frustrated when they're not seeing results."

So far, independent spending in the council races has reached more than \$3.5 million.

Labor groups also are spending heavily, including Civic Alliance for a Progressive Economy, which is backed by progressive Amazon investor Nick Hanauer and has raised nearly \$500,000. The PAC of the hotel workers union Unite Here has raised even more.

State Sen. Reuven Carlyle, a Seattle Democrat, said he didn't know what effect Amazon's spending will have on the election but that he understood its desire to "rebalance" the council.

"They're showing that they care a lot about their hometown, just as labor cares a lot and social justice activists care a lot," Carlyle said.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Oct. 30, the 303rd day of 2019. There are 62 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Oct. 30, 1912, Vice President James S. Sherman, running for a second term of office with President William Howard Taft, died six days before Election Day. (Sherman was replaced with Nicholas Murray Butler, but Taft, the Republican candidate, ended up losing in an Electoral College landslide to Democrat Woodrow Wilson.)

On this date:

In 1735 (New Style calendar), the second president of the United States, John Adams, was born in Braintree, Massachusetts.

In 1961, the Soviet Union tested a hydrogen bomb, the "Tsar Bomba," with a force estimated at about

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 50 of 51

50 megatons. The Soviet Party Congress unanimously approved a resolution ordering the removal of Josef Stalin's body from Lenin's tomb.

In 1972, 45 people were killed when an Illinois Central Gulf commuter train was struck from behind by another train on Chicago's South Side.

In 1974, Muhammad Ali knocked out George Foreman in the eighth round of a 15-round bout in Kinshasa, Zaire (zah-EER'), known as the "Rumble in the Jungle," to regain his world heavyweight title.

In 1975, the New York Daily News ran the headline "Ford to City: Drop Dead" a day after President Gerald R. Ford said he would veto any proposed federal bailout of New York City.

In 1979, President Carter announced his choice of federal appeals judge Shirley Hufstедler to head the newly created Department of Education.

In 1985, schoolteacher-astronaut Christa McAuliffe witnessed the launch of the space shuttle Challenger, the same craft that would carry her and six other crew members to their deaths in Jan. 1986.

In 1995, by a razor-thin vote of 50.6 percent to 49.4 percent, Federalists prevailed over separatists in a Quebec secession referendum.

In 1997, a jury in Cambridge, Massachusetts, convicted British au pair Louise Woodward of second-degree murder in the death of eight-month-old Matthew Eappen (EE'-puhn). (The judge, Hiller B. Zobel, later reduced the verdict to manslaughter and set Woodward free.)

In 2001, Ukraine destroyed its last nuclear missile silo, fulfilling a pledge to give up the vast nuclear arsenal it had inherited after the breakup of the former Soviet Union.

In 2002, Jam Master Jay (Jason Mizell), a rapper with the hip-hop group Run-DMC, was killed in a shooting in New York. He was 37.

In 2005, the body of Rosa Parks arrived at the U.S. Capitol, where the civil rights icon became the first woman to lie in honor in the Rotunda; President George W. Bush and congressional leaders paused to lay wreaths by her casket.

Ten years ago: Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton was confronted repeatedly by Pakistanis as she ended a tense three-day tour of the country, chastised by one woman who said a U.S. program using aerial drones to target terrorists amounted to "executions without trial." Michelle Triola Marvin, who'd fought a landmark "palimony" case in the 1970s against former lover Lee Marvin, died in Malibu, California, at age 76.

Five years ago: Israel closed all access to Jerusalem's most sensitive religious site, revered by Jews as the Temple Mount and Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary, in a rare move that ratcheted up tensions after the attempted assassination of a Jewish religious activist and the killing of a Palestinian suspect in the case by security forces. Thomas Menino, Boston's longest-serving mayor, died at age 71.

One year ago: President Donald Trump and his wife Melania visited a Pittsburgh synagogue to pay homage to the 11 people slain there three days earlier; hundreds of protesters nearby shouted that the president was not welcome. With three funerals, Pittsburgh's Jewish community began burying its dead from the synagogue massacre. Notorious gangster James "Whitey" Bulger was found beaten to death at a federal prison in West Virginia; the 89-year-old former Boston crime boss and longtime FBI informant had been transferred there hours earlier.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Claude Lelouch is 82. Rock singer Grace Slick is 80. Songwriter Eddie Holland is 80. Rhythm-and-blues singer Otis Williams (The Temptations) is 78. Actress Joanna Shimkus is 76. Actor Henry Winkler is 74. Broadcast journalist Andrea Mitchell is 73. Rock musician Chris Slade (Asia) is 73. Country/rock musician Timothy B. Schmit (The Eagles) is 72. Actor Leon Rippey is 70. Actor Harry Hamlin is 68. Actor Charles Martin Smith is 66. Country singer T. Graham Brown is 65. Actor Kevin Pollak is 62. Rock singer-musician Jerry De Borg (Jesus Jones) is 59. Actor Michael Beach is 56. Rock singer-musician Gavin Rossdale (Bush) is 54. Actor Jack Plotnick is 51. Comedian Ben Bailey is 49. Actor Billy Brown is 49. Actress Nia Long is 49. Country singer Cassidy Osborn (SHeDAISY) (sh-DAY'-zee) is 43. Actor Gael Garcia Bernal is 41. Actor Matthew Morrison is 41. Business executive and presidential adviser Ivanka Trump is 38. Actress Fiona Dourif is 38. Actor Shaun Sipos (SEE'-pohs) is 38. Actor Tasso Feldman is 36. Actress Janel (juh-NEHL') Parrish is 31. Actor Tequan Richmond is 27. Actress Kennedy McMann is 23.

Groton Daily Independent

Wednesday, Oct. 30, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 121 ~ 51 of 51

Thought for Today: "There are things that are known and things that are unknown; in between are doors." — William Blake, English poet (1757-1827).

Copyright 2019, The Associated Press. All rights reserved.