

Groton Daily Independent

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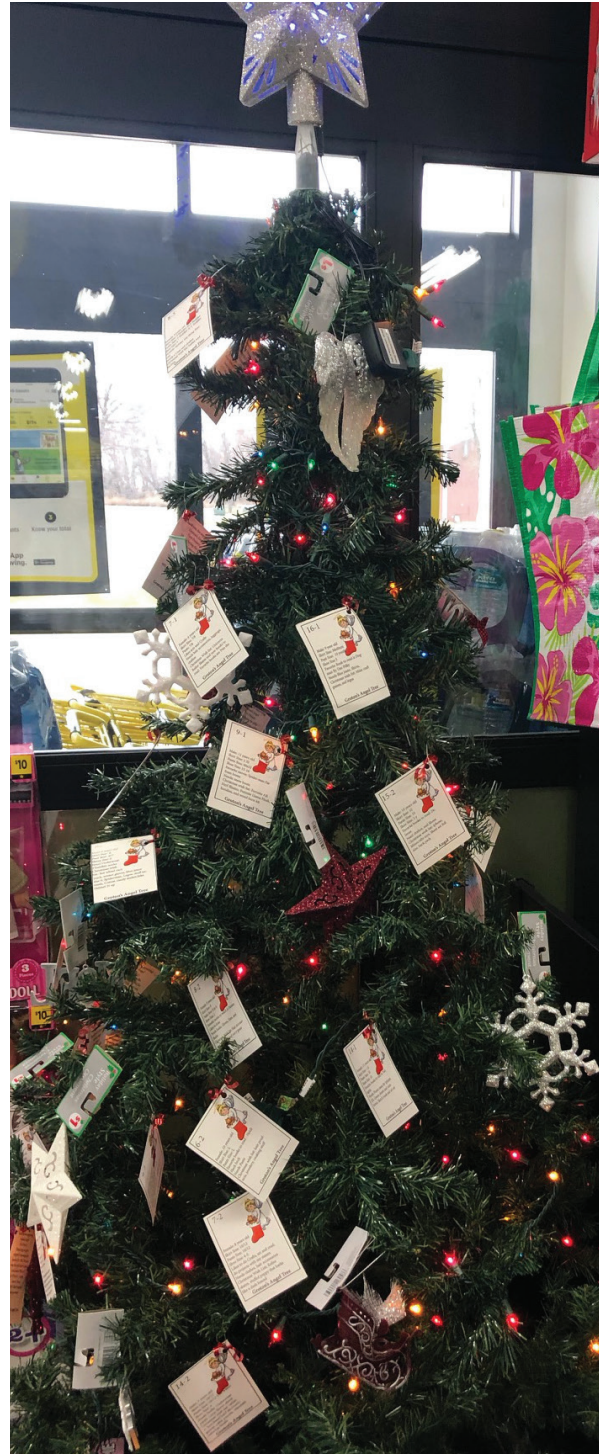


90th Birthday

**Ilse Cameron
will celebrate her
90th birthday
on December 5, 2019.**

**Greetings may be sent to
1324 12th Avenue SE, Apt #36
Aberdeen, SD 57401**

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



Angel Tree cards still available

Groton's Angel Tree is at two locations this year. There are still a lot of cards left on the trees at Lori's Pharmacy and Dollar General. Why not help make someone's Christmas extra special by buying a gift for that someone. Some families have to decide between paying the bills or buying Christmas presents. Recipients in the past have been very grateful for the area's generosity. For questions on the Angel Tree, call/text Tina Kosel at 605-397-7285.

Noise Induced Hearing Loss...What's That?

Of the 40 million people with hearing loss in the U.S., 25 percent of those, or 10 million, have lost their hearing as a result of exposure to excessive noise. But how much noise is too much?

Measured as decibels (dB), the acceptable manufacturing noise standard is to allow a daily exposure up to but not over 85 dB in an eight-hour period. More than that can cause permanent injury to our hearing. This is likely due to wear and tear on the tiny hairs that vibrate when sound is introduced. It's like a line of kids walking across one path on the grass day after day. A little is good, too much kills the grass.

The average conversation, for example, is usually around 50-60 dB, street noises at 70-80, and an operating lawnmower at about 90. Noise levels above 90 come from surprising places like screaming babies, convertibles driving at 60 mph, marching bands, leaf blowers, hand and hair driers, and those noisy electronically amplified concerts. Single loud sounds like gunfire at about 150 dB can also be damaging, but the time exposed to lower volumes are the most significant and unrecognized danger we face daily.

A recent social trend has created a new threat. Tuning out the world with ear buds, while turning up the tunes for hours, can be like riding on the two-cylinder John Deere tractor with no cab all day while cultivating corn. Those old two-cylinders were loud, and so it can be with ear buds! Ear bud volumes at 100 dB for as short as 15 minutes can damage hearing. Again, it's the volume multiplied by time that makes it so bad. One study showed that 97 percent of third graders had documented exposure to hazardous sound levels. Another showed that 12.5 percent of 6 to 19-year-olds in the U.S. already had hearing loss directly attributed to noise exposure.

What's more, if the volume is too loud, ear buds can be even more dangerous as they may prevent us from hearing the noises that help us avoid danger. For example, walkers, runners, and bicyclists need their ears to hear when a truck might be coming from behind.

Of course, it isn't just noise that can reduce our hearing. Infections, trauma, and even medications like antibiotics, chemotherapy drugs, or pain medications can do it too. Seek medical help if you notice your hearing is changing.

The bottom line: Protect your ears by avoiding exposure to too much noise, get help if your hearing changes and beware of ear bud risks.

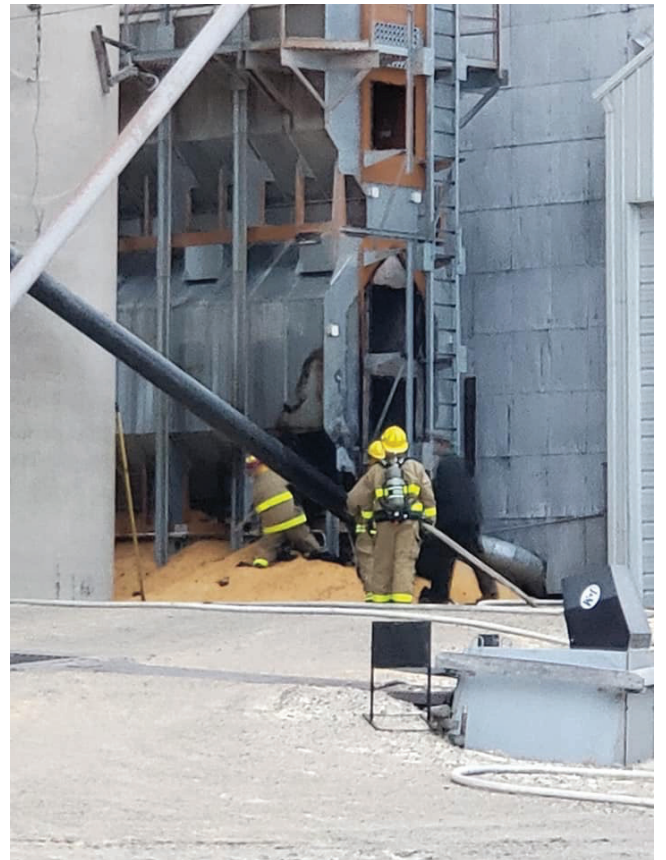


By Richard P. Holm, MD ~ Prairie Doc® Perspectives

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

Grain dryer fire in Stratford by Brown County Emergency Management

Fire crews from Stratford, Groton, and Warner were on the scene of a grain dryer fire in Stratford. Crews have contained the fire to the dryer. No injuries have been reported.



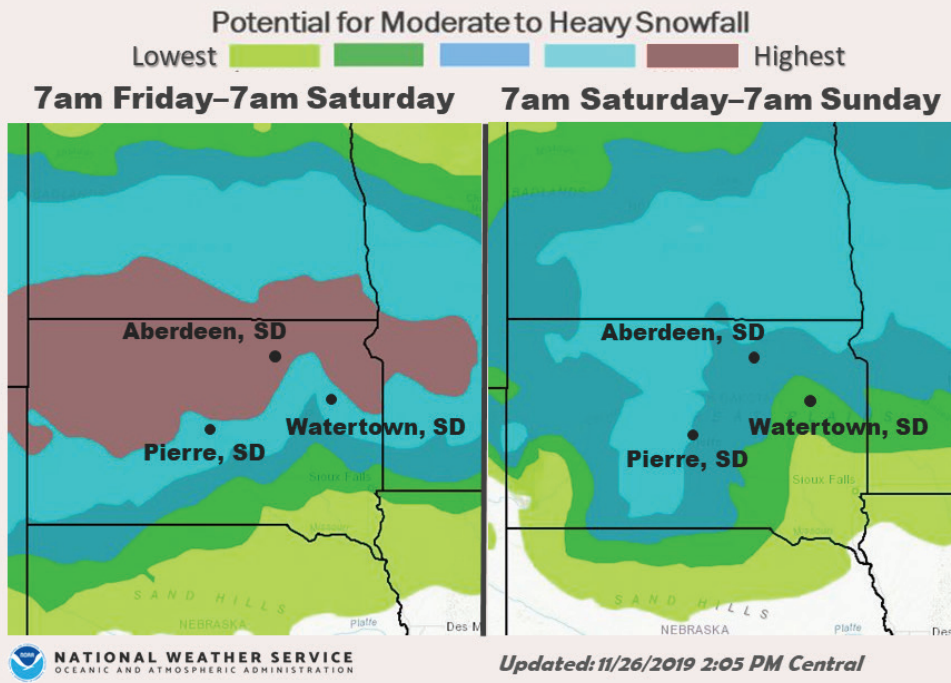
Wheeting is promoted

This was posted on John Wheeting's Facebook Page:

Very happy to announce that I've accepted the role as South Dakota Manager for Thunder Seed Company. Thunder Seed is owned by three Minnesota farm families, these families wake up every morning to face the same challenges my friends and customers face. As seedsmen they share my goals of providing products that perform at a high level, combined with good service and competitive prices. Thanks to my dealers and customers for their support over the years. Happy Thanksgiving!



Major Post-Thanksgiving Storm



Possible Outcome

- It is early for details, but...
- Precipitation may begin as freezing drizzle/mixed/rain Friday
- Moderate to heavy snow Friday evening and overnight
- Lull in snow *possible* Saturday
- The system exits Sunday morning, snow remains possible until then
- Gusty winds with blowing snow through much of event
- Over a foot of snow possible
- **Significant travel impacts are likely across the area**

Complicating Factors

- Timing and low track **will change**
- Snow timing and amounts for your area are dependent on above point

What You Can Do

- **Consider alternate travel plans, and have a winter survival kit prepared. Stay tuned to updates!**

Published on: 11/26/2019 at 9:06AM

First of all, Thanksgiving Thursday will be a little chilly (highs near or below 30 degrees) and may feature some light snow, with only minor accumulations possible. A potential winter storm then bears down on the Northern Plains Friday into Sunday morning, and significant travel impacts are likely across the region. Consider alternate travel plans while this forecast becomes more clear. There is a good deal of uncertainty at this time with how exactly this system will play out. A shift in the low track to the northwest will usher in warmer/drier air across eastern South Dakota for instance, meaning lesser snowfall totals there. Stay tuned to the latest forecast from your favorite trusted source!

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Today	Tonight	Thanksgiving Day	Winter Weather Advisory		Friday
Decreasing Clouds	Clouds	then Chance Snow	40%	40% 30%	50% → 80%
Today: Cloudy, then gradually becoming mostly sunny, with a high near 32. North northwest wind 10 to 17 mph.		Mix then Chance Freezing Drizzle	Chance Freezing Drizzle then Wintry Mix		
High: 32 °F	Low: 18 °F	High: 30 °F	Low: 28 °F	High: 35 °F	

Afternoon Highs Today

Valid: November 27, 2019

Dickinson	31°	Bismarck	31°	Jamestown	28°	Fargo	28°
Lemmon	29°	Mobridge	34°	Aberdeen	33°	Sisseton	30°
Buffalo	31°	Faith	31°	Faulkton	32°	Ortonville	30°
Rapid City	31°	Pierre	34°	Huron	33°	Watertown	29°
Chadron	31°	Wall	31°	Brookings	29°	Marshall	30°
Martin	29°	Murdo	33°	Chamberlain	34°	Sioux Falls	29°
Valentine	29°	Mitchell	33°	Pickstown	31°	Yankton	30°
				Sioux City	30°		

National Weather Service
Aberdeen SD
11/27/2019 05:42 AM CST

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weather.gov/Aberdeen

National Weather Service
Aberdeen, SD
11/27/2019 5:53 AM

Gusty Northwest Winds Today

A relative calm today, before the storm moves in. Quiet conditions leading to good travel conditions today.

Later This Week

Thursday	Friday	Saturday
27-34°	33-39°	30-39°

Published on: 11/27/2019 at 12:57AM

High pressure will gradually take hold today allowing for drier and more quiet conditions to return. Breezy northerly winds will continue to remain across eastern areas through the morning into the afternoon hours. Cool temperatures underneath mostly cloudy skies can be expected. A significant storm system moves in by the end of the week with the potential to produce rain, freezing drizzle or freezing rain and accumulating snowfall.

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Today in Weather History

November 27, 1960: An ice storm occurred from 40 miles on either side of a line from Pipestone to Brainerd, Minnesota. Power and communication lines were downed, leaving at least 22 communities isolated. Ice coating reported ranged from one half to three fourth of an inch at Lake Benton. Heavy snow fell in eastern North Dakota with blizzard conditions throughout the state. In South Dakota, this storm began as freezing rain on the 27th and remained largely as such in the southeast quarter of the state. The remainder of the experienced blizzard conditions with 5 to 10 inches of snow and winds gusting to 30 to 60 mph. These horrible caused extensive closing of schools and businesses, blocked highways, and disrupted telephone and power services. Slippery highways caused many auto accidents. Some loss of livestock was reported, such as 1,000 turkeys in Gettysburg. Restoration of telephone service alone was estimated to have cost \$210,000 and required up to three days after the storm.

November 27, 1983: A weekend storm that began with light snow on the 26th continued to gather strength, culminating in a blizzard that was accompanied by thunder and lightning during the evening hours on the 27th. The heaviest snowfall occurred from Marshall County SSE to Gregory County in South Dakota, with the heaviest snow falling as thunder snow showers. Snow amounts ranged from 4 to 18 inches. Strong winds up to 50 mph created near zero visibilities and difficult driving conditions as numerous roads drifted shut with up to eight-foot drifts. Numerous accidents ensued, with many people forced to stay overnight in their stranded vehicles. Airlines were forced to cancel all flights as airports were closed into midday on the 28th. Almost all schools and businesses were closed on the 28th and even on the 29th in many areas. Storm total snowfall amounts included 8 inches at Clark; 7 inches at Artichoke Lake, Bryant 1NE, Clear Lake, Victor 4 NNE, and Browns Valley; 6 inches at Wheaton, Wilmot, and Harrold 12 SSW; 5 inches at Kennebec, Sisseton, and Mellette 4W; 4 inches at Watertown, Highmore 1W, Murdo, Redfield, Waubay, Ashton 2S, and Britton; and 3 inches at Aberdeen, Castlewood, Columbia 8N, Onida 4NW, and Pierre.

November 27, 1994: Low pressure developed over eastern Colorado late Saturday the 26th and strengthened over Kansas early on the 27th. By late in the day on the 27th, the low pressure system had developed into the first winter storm for Minnesota. By the early morning hours of the 28th, a swath of snow in excess of 6 inches had blanketed much of southwest through central into northeast Minnesota.

Snowfalls of 6 inches or more occurred south of a line from Gunflint Lake in Cook County to near Ortonville in Big Stone County and along and north of a line from near Blue Earth in Faribault county to Red Wing in Goodhue county. The snow closed the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport for a short time on the 27th, and contributed to hundreds of accidents and at least three fatalities. The greatest snowfall was 14.1 inches in Duluth. In addition, very strong east winds gusted over 50 mph in Duluth causing blizzard conditions. The high winds brought waves in excess of 16 feet crashing against the Lake Superior shoreline in Duluth, covering the Duluth Canal Park Lake Walk with extensive debris. A buildup of ice and snow in combination with strong winds resulted in numerous downed power lines in southeast Minnesota. Widespread heavy snow fell over mostly the eastern half of South Dakota on November 27-28. Peak accumulations were 10 inches at Sioux Falls and 9 inches at Howard and near Canton. Damage resulted mainly from numerous minor traffic accidents. Storm snowfall amounts in this area included 8 inches at Eureka; 7 inches at Victor 4NNE, Leola, Onaka 2N, Roscoe, Faulkton, Columbia 8N, Aberdeen, and Selby; 6 inches at Redfield, Mellette 4W, Bryant 1NE, Blunt, Wheaton, and Raymond 3NE; 5 inches at Pollock, Miller, Milbank 2SSW, Ipswich, Harrold 12SSW, Eagle Butte, Clark, Artichoke Lake, and Onida 4NW; 4 inches at Mobridge, Timber Lake, McIntosh 6SE, Conde, Clear Lake, Pierre, and Ashton 2S; 3 inches at Sisseton, Webster, Waubay, Summit 1W, Presho 7NW, Kennebec, Highmore 1W, Gann Valley 4NW, Castlewood, Browns Valley, Watertown, and Wilmot.

November 27, 1701: Anders Celsius, the astronomer who invented the Celsius, often called the centigrade thermometer scale was born on this date.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 33 °F at 1:52 AM

Low Temp: 30 °F at 8:07 PM

Wind: 20 mph at 3:37 PM

Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 70° in 1914

Record Low: -18° in 1985

Average High: 33°F

Average Low: 13°F

Average Precip in Nov.: 0.66

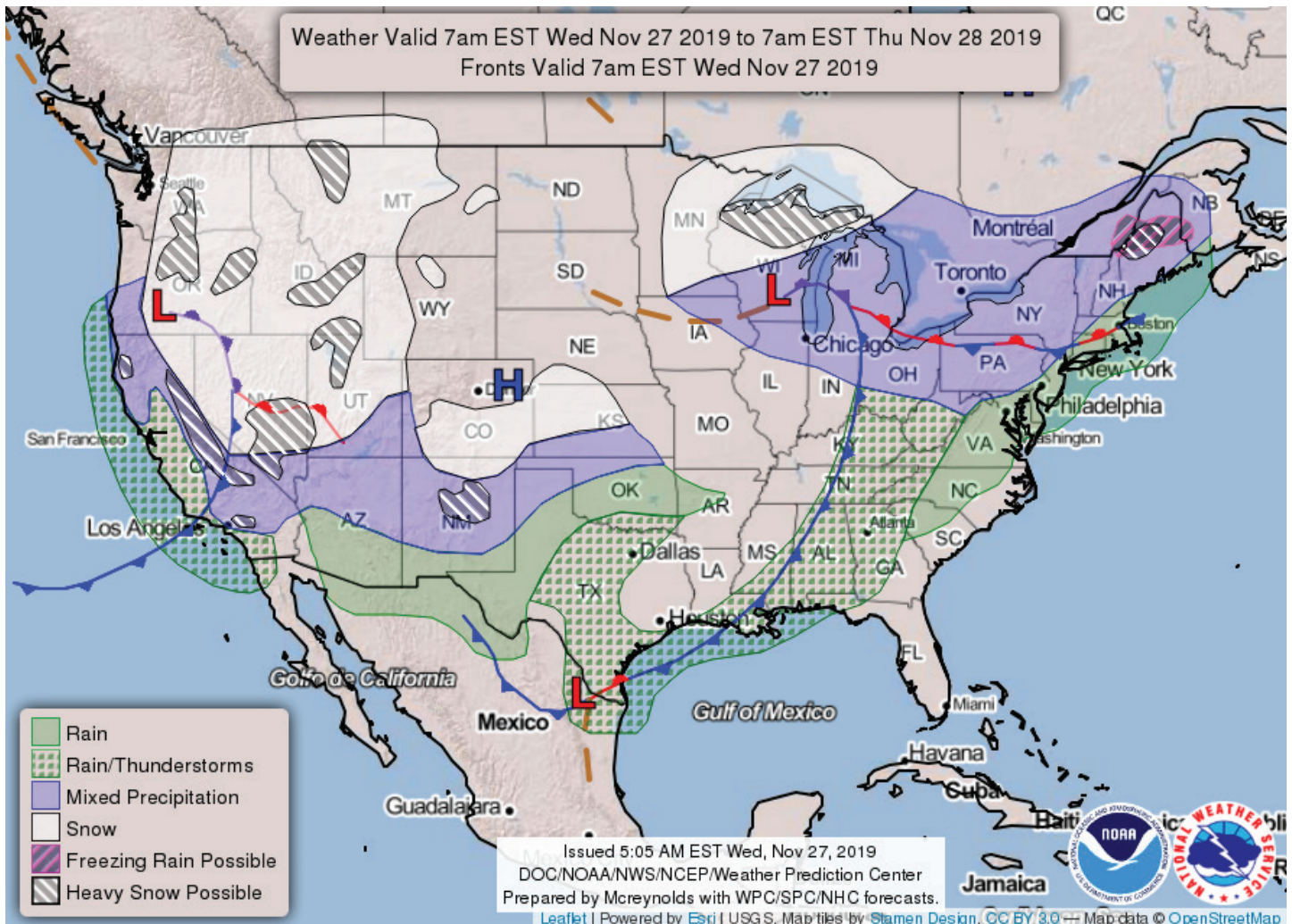
Precip to date in Nov.: 0.38

Average Precip to date: 21.13

Precip Year to Date: 26.95

Sunset Tonight: 4:54 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:49 a.m.





WARM WORDS AND A SINCERE SMILE

Years ago at a missionary conference in London, a gracious man with an inviting smile noticed a young boy standing alone looking puzzled. Softly he asked, "Would you like to be a missionary?"

"Oh yes," he answered, "yes, I would!" he replied quickly.

And he did. He became one of the world's most famous missionaries as well as an explorer in Africa. Years later, David Livingstone said, "It was that smile, that gentle question, and expression of kindness that led me to become a missionary."

It is easy to overlook those who appear to be unimportant or seem to have no significance. They stand alone and lonely. Unwanted. We often consider them the "least in the Kingdom of God" – assuming that they have little worth in serving the Lord.

Jesus picked men to be His disciples who were considered "common, ordinary men." But those "common, ordinary men" preached sermons, wrote books, established the Church, grew the Kingdom and changed the world because someone said, "I need you!"

Prayer: Father, open our eyes to those around us who we may invite to work with us to reach the lost. We can all do more for You by inviting others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Matthew 28:19 Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 09/07/2019 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Saturday after Labor Day)
- 09/08/2019 Sunflower Classic at Olive Grove Golf Course
- 09/12/2019 St. John's Lutheran Luncheon
- 09/20/2019 Presbyterian Luncheon
- 09/28/2019 Granary Living History Fall Festival
- 10/11/2019 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
- 10/12/2019 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
- 10/31/2019 Trunk or Treat/Halloween on Main (Halloween)
- 11/09/2019 Legion Post #39 Turkey Shoot (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
- 12/07/2019 Olive Grove Golf Course Holiday Party
- 12/07/2019 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
- Bingo: every Wednesday at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/26/2020 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)
- 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m. Sharp (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
- 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
- 05/02/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Saturday in May)
- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)
- 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
Groton Hosting State B American Legion Baseball Tournament
- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest
- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)
- 11/14/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Mega Millions

08-27-29-38-43, Mega Ball: 13, Megaplier: 2

(eight, twenty-seven, twenty-nine, thirty-eight, forty-three; Mega Ball: thirteen; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$226 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$100 million

US travelers brace for snowy Thanksgiving, 'bomb cyclone'

By JEFF BAENEN, COLLEEN SLEVIN and DAVID KOENIG Associated Press

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — A storm packing heavy snow and high winds that wreaked havoc as it whipped through Colorado, Wyoming and Nebraska marched into the upper Midwest on Wednesday as anxious Thanksgiving travelers buckled up and barreled headlong into a busy, if not perilous, holiday week.

The wintry storm that left at least one person dead was expected to push eastward into South Dakota, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, while a "bomb cyclone" weather phenomenon was expected to simultaneously topple trees, knock out power and dump snow as it rolled into California and Oregon.

The one-two punch made for a double whammy of early wintry weather that threatened to scramble plans for millions of people nationwide during one of the busiest travel weeks of the year.

Minnesotans prepared Wednesday for a winter-like blast that's expected to deliver heavy snow and powerful winds. The University of Minnesota Twin Cities campus canceled classes starting late Tuesday and was not expected to resume operations until Thursday. National Weather Service meteorologist Brent Hewett in Chanhassen, Minnesota, said the storm could dump 6 inches (15 centimeters) of snow in central and southern Minnesota, while some areas could see 9 to 12 inches (22.9 to 30.5 centimeters).

Western and northern Wisconsin could be buried beneath 8 to 12 inches (20 to 30.5 centimeters) of snow, with 12 to 15 inches (30.5 to 38 centimeters) of lake-effect snow near Lake Superior. A raw, blustery day is forecast Wednesday, with winds up to 35 mph (56 kph). Forecasters said another storm could arrive this weekend, just as people are returning from Thanksgiving.

"It's one of those things, you couldn't make it up if you tried," Hewett said of back-to-back storms falling around the holiday.

On Tuesday, weather-related damage was widespread nationwide. Authorities on both sides of the California-Oregon border reported numerous crashes and closed roads. The National Weather Service urged people to wait to travel for the holiday until the weather improved.

At Denver International Airport, about 10 inches (25 centimeters) of snow mixed with winds that limited visibility prompted the cancellation of about 30% of the airport's average daily 1,600 flights.

The storm dumped nearly 3 feet (1 meter) of snow in parts of northern Colorado and closed long stretches of highways there and in Wyoming. One person was killed, and two others were injured when a tractor-trailer jackknifed and was hit by two other trucks on Interstate 70 near the Colorado ski town of Vail.

The system eventually moved east, allowing the Denver airport to begin returning to normal.

Southwest Airlines canceled about 200 flights. Spokesman Brad Hawkins said it would take "a couple of days" to get stranded passengers on other flights because there are few during the pre-Thanksgiving travel crush. That makes it hard for airlines to rebook passengers.

About 1,100 people spent the night at the airport, including many cadets from the Air Force Academy near Colorado Springs who either missed flights or wanted to get to the airport before road conditions

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deteriorated, airport spokeswoman Alex Renteria said.

Among them was cadet Sadie Luhman, whose trip to the airport took three hours — twice the normal driving time. She got to the airport at 1 a.m., 10 hours before her scheduled flight to Chicago for Thanksgiving.

"I just wanted to beat the storm. We kind of left in the middle of it so it kind of didn't work, but we got here," she told Denver news station KCNC-TV.

Airport workers handed out blankets, diapers, baby formula, toothbrushes and toothpaste to passengers who camped out on floors and in chairs.

Many government offices closed in the Denver area and Cheyenne, Wyoming, along with colleges and schools not already on holiday break. In Nebraska, several school districts canceled classes Wednesday, and the southwestern city of Sidney had received about 8 inches (20 centimeters) of snow.

But Tuesday wasn't a snow day for everyone. Carli Webber cleared snow off her car and braced herself for her commute to a call center near Denver's Union Station.

"I am not like a lot of people and cannot work from home, so I have no choice but to go," she said.

Blizzard and wintry weather warnings extended into the Great Lakes states with the storm bringing high winds and snow to Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin and a chance of snow over the weekend for parts of New England, said Alex Lamers, a National Weather Service meteorologist.

"That could be a coast-to-coast storm," he said.

The storm was expected to dump snow on the airport in Minneapolis, where Delta Air Lines is the major carrier, but most was expected to fall overnight when few flights were scheduled.

Delta prepared by filling de-icing tanks, calling in extra flight dispatchers and operations employees, and having some of its 20 in-house meteorologists focus on the Minneapolis forecast.

"The timing is very helpful," said Erik Snell, a Delta senior vice president who oversees operations. "It gives the airport time to clear the runways, although we'll have to watch the residual snowfall in the morning."

The storm system could mean disappointment for fans of the larger-than-life balloons flown at Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York.

Organizers were preparing for the possibility of grounding the iconic balloon characters because of 40-50 mph (64-81 kph) gusts in the forecast. Rules put in place after several people were injured by a balloon years ago require lower altitudes or full removal if sustained winds exceed 23 mph (37 kph) and gusts exceed 34 mph (54 kph). The decision will be made on parade day.

The second storm began hitting the West Coast of the U.S., bringing snow to the mountains and wind and rain along the coasts of California and Oregon.

Multiple roads were closed in southern Oregon due to downed trees and power lines and blizzard-like driving conditions and others were reduced to a single lane, the Oregon Department of Transportation said.

The bomb cyclone — a rapid drop in air pressure — could bring waves of up to 35 feet (11 meters), wind gusts of up to 75 mph (120 kph) and heavy snow in the mountains.

Snow temporarily shut down part of Interstate 80 north of Lake Tahoe, near the Nevada-California line.

Angela Smith said the Oceanfront Lodge, a hotel she manages in Crescent City, in far Northern California, lost power briefly during rain and strong winds. She said the hotel is ready to withstand heavy downpours.

"It's blowing pretty good outside but because we're right on the coast, everything was built to ensure the safety of people," Smith said.

Forecasters warned of "difficult to impossible travel conditions" across much of northern Arizona later this week as that storm dumps about 2 feet (61 centimeters) of snow. The approaching storm accelerated the annual winter closure of the highway leading to the North Rim of the Grand Canyon by five days.

Slevin reported from Denver. Koenig reported from Dallas. Associated Press writers Thomas Peipert in Denver, Bob Moen in Cheyenne, Wyoming, Olga R. Rodriguez in San Francisco, Gillian Flaccus in Portland, Oregon, Scott Sonner in Reno, Nevada, and Paul Davenport in Phoenix contributed to this report.

One-two punch of storms threatens Thanksgiving travel in US

By COLLEEN SLEVIN and DAVID KOENIG Associated Press

DENVER (AP) — Heavy snow and wind shut down highways Tuesday in Colorado and Wyoming, closed schools in Nebraska and forced more than 1,000 travelers to sleep overnight in Denver's airport after hundreds of flights were canceled just as Thanksgiving travel moved into high gear.

The storm was heading to South Dakota, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, while a "bomb cyclone" weather phenomenon began toppling trees, knocking out power and dumping snow as it barreled into California and Oregon — making for a double whammy of early wintry weather.

Authorities on both sides of the California-Oregon border reported numerous crashes and closed roads. The National Weather Service urged people to wait to travel for the holiday until the weather improves.

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This version has been corrected to show that average number daily flights at Denver International Airport is 1,600, not 1,500.

Britton neighbors band together to help family with harvest

By ERIN BALLARD Aberdeen American News

ABERDEEN, S.D. (AP) — When it comes to taking care of their own, Britton might do it best.

It's been a difficult fall for the Zuehlke family, but thanks to some very generous neighbors in northeast South Dakota, the harvest is one less thing they have to worry about.

"It's been breathtaking, utterly amazing to see how this community has pulled together," said Laura Peterson, a farm marketing consultant at Hurley & Associates Agri-Marketing in Britton. "It truly is an 'it takes a village' type mentality."

Britton-Hecla junior quarterback Trevor Zuehlke has been recovering at Avera McKennan Hospital in Sioux Falls since suffering a serious head injury during an Oct. 18 game at Warner.

Zuehlke's family has remained at his side throughout the process, sharing any new information on CaringBridge, an online social network that allows family members and loved ones to provide updates on medical conditions and others to send messages of support or make donations.

It's meant that Kurt Zuehlke, Trevor's father, hasn't been able to give the harvest his full, undivided attention.

So, the community came to the rescue, the Aberdeen American News reported.

"It's small-town America," said Nate Dinger, one of more than three dozen farmers who showed up to help. "It's just one of them things. You just join hands and do it together."

It all started from a Facebook post from Denver Nickeson, who asked on Nov. 21 if anyone would be willing to support him in finishing up the Zuehlke farm harvest. The response was quick and copious — almost more than Nickeson could keep up with.

"The power of social media kind of stepped in there," he said. "It was great."

Peterson helped organize much of what Nickeson couldn't from the field, such as coordinating meals

and funneling contributions. Like most in the Britton community, Peterson knows the Zuehlkes personally and jumped at the chance to get involved.

"They're a wonderful family," she said. "They would be the first ones to lend a hand and offer help."

It took 16 semis, six combines, four grain carts and countless pickup trucks to harvest nearly 600 acres of corn over two days. Nickeson estimates about 30 people worked in the field over the weekend, but that's not even close to the actual amount that reached out to him offering assistance, he said.

Some donated machinery, others donated food. But the generosity extended far beyond northeast South Dakota — Nickeson said he had one farmer from Wisconsin call to contribute fuel for the effort.

The local elevator also got involved, offering to dry the Zuehlke corn free of charge. The gesture is especially significant considering how much moisture the area has gotten since last year's snowy winter.

"For farmers, their mind instantly goes to helping with the crop," Peterson said. "And with this year being the struggle it has been, (the elevator) really pulled through in a way that will be hugely helpful for them."

Seeing how everyone came together is a good reminder that when it comes to life, the good always outweighs the bad, she said.

"That's just what rural America is about," she said. "It truly shows that the small town is one big family."

"Every guy I talked to said it just gave them goosebumps to see how cool it was," Nickeson said. "They all said it was the most fun they've ever had harvesting in the field."

It didn't take long for word to reach the Zuehlkes in Sioux Falls, who were blown away by the display of charity.

"Back home, numerous people teamed up today to help harvest a bunch of corn for us. Teamwork is the thing Trevor loves the most about the things he enjoys doing, whether it's sports or hunting with buddies or working in groups. What happened today will make Trevor so proud and happy, to see so many people working together for a common goal and accomplish so much," Kurt Zuehlke wrote in a Nov. 22 CaringBridge post.

"I don't have the words to thank everyone who participated, but from the videos I saw, it took a village of people to pull it all off, from the operators to the food providers to the fuel suppliers to the traffic directors to the mechanics and everyone in between. It is awesome to see the roles of everyone come together to operate as one. Trevor will love it! Thank you so very much!"

The Zuehlkes hope to transfer Trevor to Madonna Rehabilitation Hospital in Lincoln, Nebraska, as soon as the move is authorized by their insurance company, according to CaringBridge.

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

South Dakota man linked to Butina pleads guilty to fraud

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota man linked to a Russian agent said little Tuesday as he pleaded guilty to fraud charges unrelated to the agent's case.

Conservative political operative Paul Erickson admitted to a federal judge that he operated fraudulent investment schemes. Prosecutors say Erickson, who pleaded guilty to wire fraud and money laundering, bilked investors of more than \$1 million.

Erickson's onetime girlfriend is Maria Butina, who was deported last month to her native Russia after admitting that she sought to infiltrate conservative political groups to promote that country's agenda.

Erickson, 58, was originally charged with 10 counts of money laundering and one count of wire fraud. He pleaded guilty to the wire fraud charge, which prosecutors said involved a variety of business deals over 20 years, including developing elder care homes, a wheelchair that allowed a person to use the bathroom from the chair, and building homes in North Dakota's booming oil fields. Prosecutors said he falsely promised investors returns of up to 90% in as little as three months.

As part of the plea deal, prosecutors dropped all but one of the money laundering charges. The one he ultimately pleaded guilty to involved sending \$1,000 from his scheme to a person listed only as "M.B."

Erickson ignored a reporter who asked whether that was Butina.

At the hearing, Erickson quickly answered the judge's questions but volunteered little else about the charges.

Last week, Erickson's lawyer, Clint Sargent, noted that the deal would "resolve all charges" against Erickson over many years "and this ordeal for Mr. Erickson will come to an end."

Erickson came to the attention of the FBI in 2016 when a woman selling land in the North Dakota oil patch told law enforcement that he was using her investment idea to convince people to give him money.

Erickson is scheduled to be sentenced in March. Victims will have the opportunity to make statements at that hearing.

Federal prosecutors have indicated they will seek prison time. Erickson may also face up to \$500,000 in fines.

SD lawmaker who shared 'All Lives Splatter' meme resigns

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota lawmaker who came under fire two years ago when she shared an "All Lives Splatter" meme on Facebook has resigned.

Republican state Sen. Lyndi DiSanto of Box Elder submitted her resignation, a spokeswoman for Gov. Kristi Noem confirmed Tuesday. The Rapid City Journal reported that DiSanto posted a message on her personal Facebook page saying she's planning to move out of state by Jan. 1.

The Dakota War College political blog on Tuesday shared an image of DiSanto's Facebook post, which said she accepted a position with a real estate brokerage in Montana.

"This also means I have had to close some chapters here in South Dakota, but after some prayer and deep contemplation I believe this is where I am meant to be," DiSanto wrote.

DiSanto confirmed in a text message to The Associated Press she is joining the Montana brokerage and will no longer be a South Dakota resident.

DiSanto, who was known as "Lynne" for most of her political career, was elected to the South Dakota Senate last November after serving two terms in the state House.

In 2017, DiSanto faced calls to apologize after she shared a meme on Facebook depicting protesters being hit by a vehicle — less than a month after a driver rammed through counter-demonstrators at a white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, killing a woman.

Last summer, DiSanto was hit with a no-trespass order after a social media blowup with a constituent over her activism in a missing girl case. The constituent accused the lawmaker of using Serenity Dennard's disappearance for personal gain. Serenity was 9 when she walked away in February from the Black Hills Children's Home and remains missing despite multiple searches.

DiSanto launched a website and Facebook page about the case, prompting Box Elder resident Patricia Kassner to post messages accusing DiSanto of exploiting the girl's disappearance. After DiSanto replied that she'd stop by Kassner's to talk, Kassner obtained a no-trespass order from police. DiSanto told police her message was not meant as a threat.

Noem, a Republican, is considering potential appointees to serve the remainder of DiSanto's term, which runs through the end of 2020.

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

Report: Homelessness remains prevalent in Sioux Falls area

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Homelessness remains more prevalent in Sioux Falls than other similarly sized cities, despite the area's decadelong effort to eradicate it, according to a new report.

In 2005, Sioux Falls and Minnehaha County officials set out to eradicate homelessness by 2015 with the establishment of the Homeless Advisory Board. But the Augustana Research Institute's report shows that goal was not met.

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Sioux Falls had 219 homeless people for every 100,000 residents during a 2018 count. Boise, Idaho, had 173.3; Des Moines, Iowa had

163.5; and Sioux City, Iowa, had 214.8.

ARI director Suzanne Smith, who was the principal investigator assigned to the assignment, did not respond to a request for comment.

Despite the increase in homelessness, the report did find that homeless people in Sioux Falls are more likely to be sheltered compared to other communities. During the 2018 count, 184 homeless people in the city for every 100,000 residents were sheltered, according to HUD data.

The findings will be presented to city councilors and county commissioners Tuesday, the Argus Leader reported. The ARI will make recommendations to address homelessness and accessible and affordable housing.

Chellee Unruh, Sioux Falls' housing manager, said the recommendations will include how to assemble a new panel to address homelessness and housing that's more effective than the HAB.

Unruh noted that the new panel will also fall under the city's Affordable Housing Division, which will give it more budget authority.

"(HAB) would come up with a plan, but they didn't have a budget or any authoritarian influence to make things actually go forward," Unruh said. "Now that board will be able to leverage the funding sources from the housing division of the city."

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

Victims of crash near Tulare were 15, 18 years old

TULARE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Highway Patrol says the two people killed in a crash near Tulare were 15 and 18 years old.

The patrol says three other people were seriously injured in the two-vehicle crash Sunday evening on Highway 281. Authorities say the female teens were in a car that crossed the centerline and struck a pickup truck head on. The teens were pronounced dead at the scene.

The 28-year-old female driver of the pickup was taken to a hospital in Huron. Two male passengers, ages 29 and 65, were taken to the Huron hospital, then airlifted to Sioux Falls.

Oglala Sioux vice president impeached for malfeasance

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Oglala Sioux council has voted to impeach tribal Vice President Darla Black after three former employees accused her of creating an abusive and hostile workplace environment.

The council deliberated for about an hour Monday in a closed-door session at the Prairie Wind Casino. The vote came after hours of public testimony from Black and the three former workers. They claimed Black was verbally abusive and demeaning, texted them late at night and made them run errands that were not related to work.

The Rapid City Journal reports the council voted 16-2 with three abstentions to impeach Black for malfeasance, or abuse of public office. Council members then voted to install Tom Poor Bear as vice president. He ran against Black in 2018 after being ousted by her in 2016.

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

Universities closed as winter storm approaches

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Several universities are among schools closing in South Dakota ahead of snowstorm that's capable of dumping up to 10 inches of snow in the region.

The University of South Dakota, Augustana University and the University of Sioux Falls canceled classes Tuesday as the storm headed for the state.

National Weather Service hydrologist Mike Gillispie in Sioux Falls warned against traveling Tuesday. A winter storm warning was posted for southeastern South Dakota and into Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The storm was expected to move into southwestern Minnesota and western Wisconsin by late Tuesday afternoon. The weather service says up to a foot of snow could pile up before the storm moves out by midday on Wednesday.

Prosecutors want prison for South Dakota man linked to agent

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Federal prosecutors are seeking prison time for a longtime conservative operative who was linked to a Russian agent.

Paul Erickson is scheduled to appear before a federal judge Tuesday to plead guilty to wire fraud and money laundering. The charges are for fraudulent investment schemes he operated for many years, not his relationship with the agent.

Erickson also faces fines up to \$750,000, plus possible restitution to those he defrauded — though it's not clear if his victims will ever see any money.

Erickson has struggled to make court-mandated payments in the past. In 2016, he failed to make a \$20,000 payment that was part of a lawsuit settlement brought by an investor in a wheelchair scheme. His first lawyer in that litigation quit after Erickson's checks bounced. His second lawyer also withdrew, citing "a communication breakdown."

The alleged crimes are unrelated to the charges against Maria Butina, who was deported in October after admitting she sought to infiltrate conservative U.S. political groups and promote Russia's agenda. Erickson and Butina had a romantic relationship.

The money laundering charge centers on a \$100,000 loan that Erickson received to develop land in North Dakota. Prosecutors said he transferred \$1,000 of that money to a person listed as "M.B." in court documents.

Prosecutors said Erickson concocted multiple investment schemes from 1996 to August 2018, including recruiting investors for a string of elder care homes; developing a wheelchair that allowed a person to use the bathroom from the chair; and home-building in North Dakota's booming oil fields. He operated his schemes from Sioux Falls.

When federal prosecutors charged Erickson with 11 counts of wire fraud and money laundering in February, he initially pleaded not guilty. Erickson has agreed to change his plea to guilty on two of the charges.

One of the investors drawn into Erickson's real estate scheme was David Gillian, the husband of former State Department official Andrea Thompson. Before leaving the State Department in September, Thompson oversaw arms control negotiations with Russia. Gillian sent Erickson \$100,000 to invest in developing homes in North Dakota in 2017. He is currently suing Erickson over the payment.

Erickson's lawyer, Clint Sargent, declined to comment ahead of the change-of-plea hearing. Last week, Sargent noted that the deal would "resolve all charges" against Erickson over many years "and this ordeal for Mr. Erickson will come to an end."

Iran supreme leader claims protests a US-backed 'conspiracy'

By JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Iran's supreme leader on Wednesday claimed without evidence that recent protests across the Islamic Republic over government-set gasoline prices rising were part of a "conspiracy" involving the U.S., as authorities began to acknowledge the scale of the demonstrations.

Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei made the comment while addressing members of the Revolutionary Guard's all-volunteer Basij force, which help put down the demonstrations.

Meanwhile, one lawmaker was quoted as saying authorities arrested more than 7,000 people over the protests while a security official claimed demonstrators attempted to take over Iranian state television.

Iran's government still hasn't offered any statistics on injuries, arrests or deaths in the protests and security crackdown that followed government-set gasoline prices rising Nov. 15. Amnesty International says it believes the violence killed at least 143 people, something Iran disputes without offering any evidence

to support its claims.

In his comments reported by state media, Khamenei said the Iranian people extinguished "a very dangerous deep conspiracy that cost so much money and effort." He praised the police, the Guard and the Basij for "entering the field and carrying out their task in a very difficult confrontation."

Khamenei, who has final say on all matters of state, described the protests as being orchestrated by "global arrogance," which he uses to refer to the U.S. He described America as seeing the price hikes as an "opportunity" to bring their "troops" to the field but the "move was destroyed by people."

Wednesday marks the 40th anniversary of the creation of the Basij. Videos from the protest purport to show plainclothes Basij officials and others on motorcycles beating and detaining protesters.

Meanwhile, the moderate news website Entekhab quoted Hossein Naghavi Hosseini, a member of parliament's national security and foreign policy committee, as saying more than 7,000 people had been arrested in the demonstrations. He did not elaborate.

Interior Minister Abdolreza Rahmani Fazli also claimed in an interview late Tuesday on state television that "some 500 people" tried to storm Iran's state television offices. He did not elaborate and no protests had been previously reported in the northern Tehran neighborhood home to the state broadcaster.

Fazli also estimated as many as 200,000 people took part the demonstrations, higher than previous claims. He said demonstrators damaged over 50 police stations, as well as 34 ambulances, 731 banks and 70 gas stations in the country.

"We have individuals who were killed by knives, shotguns and fires," he said, without offering a casualty figure.

Starting Nov. 16, Iran shut down the internet across the country, limiting communications with the outside world. That made determining the scale and longevity of the protests incredibly difficult. While home and office internet has been restored, access on mobile phones remains rare.

The gasoline price hike came as Iran's 80 million people have already seen their savings dwindle and jobs scarce under crushing U.S. sanctions. President Donald Trump imposed them in the aftermath of unilaterally withdrawing America from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers.

Judiciary Committee set to take over Trump impeachment probe

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee is set to take over the impeachment probe of President Donald Trump, scheduling a hearing for next week as they push closer to a possible vote on actual charges of "high crimes and misdemeanors."

The Judiciary panel scheduled the hearing as the separate Intelligence Committee on Tuesday released two last transcripts from its depositions, including from a White House budget official who detailed concerns among colleagues as Trump ordered them, through intermediaries, to put a hold on military aid to Ukraine.

Trump ordered the hold as he was pressuring Ukraine's president to investigate Democrats, the issue at the heart of the impeachment probe. Multiple government witnesses testified in impeachment hearings held by the Intelligence panel this month that Trump directed his personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani to take the lead on Ukraine policy and that Giuliani pushed an "irregular" diplomatic channel.

The Intelligence Committee is wrapping up the investigative phase of the probe and preparing its report for the next. Committee Chairman Adam Schiff has said the report could be released soon after the House returns from its Thanksgiving break.

The initial Judiciary hearing on Dec. 4, the day after lawmakers return, will feature legal experts who will examine questions of constitutional grounds as the panel decides whether to write articles of impeachment against Trump — and if so what those articles will be. Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., said Tuesday that his panel's hearing will "explore the framework put in place to respond to serious allegations of impeachable misconduct."

Democrats are aiming for a final House vote by Christmas, which would set the stage for a likely Senate

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trial in January.

Trump, meanwhile, tried to put distance between himself and Giuliani in a radio interview Tuesday. Asked by host Bill O'Reilly what Giuliani was doing on his behalf in Ukraine, Trump said, "I don't even know," adding that Giuliani had canceled one trip and had other clients as well.

Asked directly if he had directed Giuliani to go to Ukraine on his behalf, Trump said, "No."

In a phone call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on July 25, Trump had said several times he would have Giuliani contact Zelenskyy. "Rudy very much knows what's happening and he is a very capable guy," Trump said to Zelenskyy, according to a rough transcript released by the White House.

Trump and his lawyers are invited to attend the Judiciary hearing and make a request to question witnesses, according to Democratic rules approved by the House last month. The committee released a letter from Nadler to the Republican president, saying that he hopes Trump will participate, "consistent with the rules of decorum and with the solemn nature of the work before us."

It's unlikely that the president himself would attend, as Trump is scheduled to be overseas on Dec. 4 for a summit with NATO allies outside London — a split screen showing leadership that Trump's allies might find favorable. The Judiciary panel gave the White House until Sunday evening to decide whether Trump or his lawyers would attend.

If Democrats stay on schedule, the committee will introduce articles of impeachment, debate them and then hold a vote, a process that could take several days. If charges are approved by the end of the second week of December, the House could hold a formal impeachment vote the third week of the month just before leaving for the holidays.

The charges are expected to mostly focus on Ukraine. Democrats are considering an overall "abuse of power" article against Trump, which could be broken into categories such as bribery or extortion. That article would center on the Democrats' assertion, based on witness testimony, that Trump used his office to pressure Ukraine into politically motivated investigations.

Democrats are also expected to include an article on obstruction of Congress that outlines Trump's instructions to officials in his administration to defy subpoenas for documents or testimony.

Though several government officials called by Democrats cooperated with the committee, several key witnesses — including acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Energy Secretary Rick Perry and former National Security Adviser John Bolton — refused, following Trump's orders.

Lastly, Democrats could potentially include an obstruction of justice article based on special counsel Robert Mueller's report released earlier this year. Mueller said he could not exonerate Trump on that point, essentially leaving the matter up to Congress.

When and if the House approves articles of impeachment, the Republican-controlled Senate would be expected to hold a trial in early 2020. Unless political dynamics change drastically, Trump would have the backing of majority Republicans in that chamber and be acquitted.

It's still unclear how long a trial might last, what it would look like and who might be called as witnesses.

While the matter remains in the House, Schiff said in a letter to his colleagues on Monday that his committee "will continue with our investigative work" and could still hold depositions or hearings. But Schiff said it would not prolong a fight to obtain documents or testimony in court.

"The president has accepted or enlisted foreign nations to interfere in our upcoming elections, including the next one," Schiff said in the letter. "This is an urgent matter that cannot wait if we are to protect the nation's security and the integrity of our elections."

In a transcript of closed-door testimony released Tuesday, Office of Management and Budget official Mark Sandy, a career employee, told lawmakers that his office was notified as early as July 12 by the White House chief of staff's office that Trump was withholding the military aid. That was two weeks before Trump asked Ukrainian President Zelenskyy to investigate Democrats.

Sandy testified that Trump himself requested additional information about the aid on July 19 after seeing an unidentified "media report." The office then started the official process of withholding the money on July 25, the day of the call between Trump and Zelenskyy, Sandy said.

He testified that he raised concerns about the legality of the holdup, but wasn't given a reason until September, when he was told that Trump was concerned "about other countries not contributing more to Ukraine."

Sandy said that in late July, political appointee Michael Duffey took from him his role of approving spending, a decision Duffey told him involved Mulvaney. Sandy, who has worked at OMB for more than a decade, said he was unaware of a political appointee ever previously being given that responsibility.

He also testified that he knew of two people who left the agency who had voiced concerns over the handling of the Ukraine aid.

The intelligence panel also released a transcript of the deposition of State Department official Philip Reeker, who detailed concerns about the removal of U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch.

Associated Press writers Matthew Daly, Andrew Taylor, Alan Fram, Eric Tucker, Nancy Benac and Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Impeachment fight leaves voters cold in contested Wisconsin

By ALEXANDRA JAFFE Associated Press

RACINE, Wis. (AP) — There's not a lot that Republicans and Democrats in this political battlefield agree on, but the impeachment probe into President Donald Trump may have surfaced one: The public hearings aren't moving the needle.

"Everything they say, it's so repetitive. To me, it's like they're beating their heads against the wall," said Harry Rose, a 78-year-old retired factory worker and Trump supporter in Racine County, a swing county in the swing state of Wisconsin.

Nicole Morrison, a 36-year-old nurse who can't see herself voting for Trump in 2020, had a similar review.

"There's so much information that sometimes it's hard to decide which is the truth and which is just rumors," she said. "So I just don't pay attention to it."

After 30 hours of televised hearings, a dozen witnesses, at least a couple of major revelations and scores of tweeted rebuttals, voters in Wisconsin and nationwide aren't changing their minds about removing the Republican president. If they came into the inquiry defensive of Trump, they likely still are. And if they were inclined to think the president abused his power, they didn't need televised hearings to prove it.

"For the most part, most Americans already have pretty solidified views of the president," said Josh Schwerin, senior strategist for the Democratic super PAC Priorities USA. "There's a small segment of the population that can be moved, and they're not paying as close attention to the day-to-day ins and outs of the impeachment hearings."

It's a disappointing — if not unexpected — response for Democrats, who had hoped to use the hearings to sway public opinion. Without that backing, it's virtually impossible to imagine Republican senators voting to convict Trump.

It's also a reaction that leaves the political impact of this dramatic chapter in American history remarkably uncertain. If the division on the question holds, and independents remain disengaged, it is possible that impeachment and Senate trial may ultimately play little role in Trump's reelection bid next year.

Two polls released this week showed the public remains roughly evenly divided over whether Trump should be impeached and removed from office. Although there was a one-time increase in support after the inquiry launched, polls have since remained stable.

A CNN survey conducted over the weekend showed 50% of Americans believe Trump should be impeached and removed from office, roughly the same as in late October and in late September. Meanwhile, Trump's job approval has remained steady. A Quinnipiac University survey of registered voters nationwide also conducted this past weekend found a similar split on whether Trump should be impeached and removed, and just 13% of those who have an opinion say they might change their mind.

In Wisconsin, views on impeachment appear to be slightly more negative. A Marquette University Law School poll of Wisconsin registered voters that was conducted during the first week of the impeachment

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hearings showed 47% of registered voters approve of the job Trump is doing, and more expressed opposition than support for impeachment and removal, 53% to 40%, figures largely unchanged from October.

The poll was conducted before U.S. Ambassador to the European Union Gordon Sondland and former top aide Fiona Hill offered testimony that largely corroborated allegations that Trump tried to pressure a foreign government into investigating his political rival Joe Biden.

The entrenched divisions are clear even in Racine County, a place with a history of shifting political winds. The county voted for Democrat Barack Obama in 2008 and 2012, and then swung to support Trump in 2016.

The county, just south of Milwaukee, is divided between the Democratic-leaning electorate in and surrounding Racine, and the more conservative electorate in the rural and suburban areas. Most of the county's residents worked white-collar jobs in 2019, like administrative services and sales, and the median household income was just under \$65,000, slightly above the state average.

If Democrats hope to win it back, they'll have to persuade voters like Jo-Ann Knutson to come back. The 70-year-old retiree lives in downtown Racine and voted for Trump in 2016 because she didn't like Democrat Hillary Clinton. She's been watching the impeachment hearings, but she's still not sure what to think.

Trump "is not my favorite person, and I don't care for how he talks about people, but I have not made a firm decision because I don't think all of the facts are out yet," she said.

Knutson remembered watching the impeachment proceedings for President Richard Nixon, when she said "you were sure" because there were taped recordings and other firsthand evidence of wrongdoing. Now, she thinks Democrats' case is based on overheard conversations — and she believes there's still a possibility Trump could be exonerated, she said.

Knutson said she has "no clue" who she'll vote for next year.

Morrison, the nurse, also says she's undecided, though she typically leans Democratic. Impeachment isn't swaying her, though, because she says she can't trust what she hears about the president anymore.

"I feel like we've been hearing since the second that he was elected president he needs to be impeached," she said. "So why waste my time to listen to it?"

Democrats will also have to reach some of their key constituencies that stayed home in 2016 — minorities and young voters. And there's some sign in Racine that the impeachment proceedings could have the opposite effect, if they further cement a sense of disillusionment with Washington.

Darius Nunn, the 40-year-old owner of Clarity Cutz, a barbershop that largely serves the city's black community, sometimes puts the news on the television in his shop, "but when it begins to get heated, we turn on some basketball."

On a recent day, the barbershop's TV showed a Chris Brown concert. Nunn said his clients are interested in what's going on in Washington but doubtful that Trump will experience any consequences for his actions — and he could see them staying home again next November.

"A lot of people (in 2016), they didn't have any faith in the voting system," he said. "To the urban community ... the disenfranchised people, they don't believe in the system at all. There's justice for few when there should be justice for all."

Republicans, meanwhile, will need to maintain their coalition of white working-class voters and suburban moderates to hold onto a swing state like Wisconsin. That means persuading those voters to focus on the economy.

There are signs of success for Republicans on that front. Several Republicans across Racine County said that though they didn't like Trump's tone and were tired of the controversies, they were happy with the economy — and expected nothing less from the president to begin with.

"He's probably guilty of something. ... I thought he might run into problems because it's just the way he is," said Scott Davis, a 67-year-old landscaper from Sturtevant, a manufacturing town that's a key base for Republican votes in the county.

But Davis said his business has flourished, and he lauded Trump's handling of the economy. Controversies or not, Davis said he sees no reason not to support the president in 2020.

"In a lot of ways, (Trump's) not suited to be president, but he's done a lot of good for the country," Davis said. "I would probably vote for him again, just because of the economy."

David Titus, a 68-year-old retired banker from just outside Racine, said Trump "runs his mouth too much," but he's still satisfied with the president's performance.

"I like what he's done. I don't like the way he's doing it," he said.

Titus predicted, however, that the impeachment proceedings could backfire. He said he's heard from others who are fed up of the fighting and just want the president to be allowed to do his job.

"I think the longer it goes, the worse it gets for the Democrats," he said.

Rescuers race to find Albania quake survivors

By **LLAZAR SEMINI** Associated Press

DURRES, Albania (AP) — Stopping at intervals to listen for the sounds of survivors, local and international rescue crews searched through the rubble of collapsed buildings Wednesday, a day after a deadly earthquake in Albania killed at least 26 people and injured more than 650.

Among those desperate for news was police officer Ajet Peci, who managed to emerge from the ruins of an apartment block that collapsed in the port city of Durres, killing his two adult daughters. His wife is still missing.

"How can I live?" Peci said, sobbing as he was consoled by neighbors, a bandage under his right eye and on a finger of his left hand. "I don't know what I did to make it out. I wish I had stayed with them."

Neighbors said only about four or five families were living in the five-story building at the time of the quake, as the owners of some of the apartments had emigrated.

Overnight, authorities said four more people had been confirmed dead, and one more death was reported early Wednesday afternoon, raising the death toll to 26, while more than 650 people were injured in the magnitude-6.4 quake that struck the country's coastal cities.

In Durres, Albania's second largest city, on the Adriatic Sea, residents slept in tents and cars and at a soccer stadium as powerful aftershocks from the earthquake continued. Others spent the night on open ground, huddling around fires to stay warm.

Rescuers continued to comb the rubble of a four-story villa that housed an extended family, looking for potential survivors. Locals said they believed about six people might still be in the collapsed structure.

Flags were flying at half-staff on public buildings around the country Wednesday as Albania observed a national day of mourning.

Prime Minister Edi Rama thanked neighbor Greece and other countries offering support.

"We feel good to not be alone and I'm very grateful to all our friends," Rama said late Tuesday, visiting Durres with Greek Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias.

Rescue teams and other disaster experts arrived from more than a dozen countries including France, Italy, Greece, Romania, Turkey, Serbia, and the United States.

In the nearby town of Thumane, Kristina Margjini also spent the night outdoors.

"The quake left us without shelter. Everything we have is destroyed: The apartment, windows, everything, and we cannot live there anymore," she said.

The quake in Albania Tuesday was followed by a smaller one in nearby southern Bosnia and a 6.1 magnitude temblor Wednesday off the coast of the island of Crete in Greece. No significant damage or injuries were reported from either quake.

Derek Gatopoulos and Elena Becatoros in Athens, Greece contributed to this report.

Follow Semini at: <https://twitter.com/lsemini>

Hong Kong police to enter campus to clear hazardous items

By EILEEN NG and KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong police said Wednesday that they will enter a blockaded university to clean up hazardous material before lifting a 10-day siege, after civilian search teams found no evidence of any protesters still holding out.

Police district chief Ho Yun-sing said safety teams comprising explosive disposal experts will move into Polytechnic University on Thursday morning to gather evidence and remove stockpiles of dangerous items including petrol bombs and corrosive liquid.

The decision came after university search teams completed a second day of combing the trash-littered campus and failed to find anyone left behind, Ho said. On Tuesday, one person was found — a young woman in weak condition.

“Our ultimate goal is to restore the safety of the campus and to reopen the campus as soon as possible,” Ho said, adding that university staff will assist in the cleanup.

The university earlier said in a statement that many laboratories and facilities on the campus had been vandalized, and that some chemicals and dangerous goods were missing.

Hardcore protesters occupied the campus nearly two weeks ago after blocking the Cross-Harbour Tunnel and set toll booths on fire during clashes with police. Some 1,100 protesters have left or were arrested by police.

The tunnel, which links Hong Kong Island to the rest of the city, reopened early Wednesday after a two-week closure, to commuters’ relief.

Calls for police to end their siege escalated after the pro-democracy camp won a stunning victory in local elections Sunday, delivering a stinging rebuke to city leader Carrie Lam’s tough line on the protests, which are in their sixth month.

Lam has offered no concessions, saying only that she would accelerate dialogue and look for ways to address societal grievances.

“Carrie Lam is the goddess of democracy. She has single-handedly motivated and galvanized us to fight for democracy,” an activist, who only gave her name as Tham, said mockingly during a Tuesday night rally at the Tsim Sha Tsui district.

Tham, who works in South Korea, said in an online livestream of the rally by the Apple Daily newspaper that she had returned to Hong Kong to cast her ballot.

Echoing what many protesters feel, she said the election outcome cannot be viewed as a victory, as the demonstrators’ demands — including free elections for the city’s leader and legislature and a probe into alleged police misconduct — have not been met.

“This election doesn’t mean anything because we have not achieved our goals,” she said.

A lull in violence that began days before the elections has continued as protesters in the largely leaderless movement weigh their next step amid Lam’s refusal to compromise. Small, peaceful rallies have popped up this week during lunchtime and at night in some areas.

Lam has said the central government in Beijing did not blame her for the election setback, which saw the pro-democracy bloc win control of 17 out of 18 district councils. While it may have reflected unhappiness with the government’s handling of the unrest, she said Tuesday that it also showed that many people want an end to the violence.

Lam said she hopes to resume her community dialogue and will set up an independent review committee to find solutions to deep-seated societal issues.

Some analysts said Lam has lost all credibility with the election loss and Beijing could replace her before partial elections for legislature members next year.

The protests started in June over an extradition bill seen by protesters as an erosion of their freedoms promised when the former British colony returned to Chinese control in 1997. The movement has since expanded into a protest over what they see as Beijing’s growing interference in the city.

Some analysts believe that China’s ruling Communist Party isn’t likely to soften its stand on Hong Kong, but it is treading cautiously amid trade talks with the United States. It also faces pressure from planned

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U.S. legislation that could derail Hong Kong's special trade status and sanction Hong Kong and China officials found to violate human rights.

President Donald Trump has been ambiguous over whether he will sign or veto the Hong Kong bill amid warnings of countermeasures from Beijing.

Trump told reporters Tuesday at the White House that his message to Hong Kong protesters is "We are with them." At the same time, he also cited his "very good relationship" with Chinese President Xi Jinping and said the U.S. was in the final stages of a trade deal.

Regardless, the bill will become law 10 days from the time of its passage last week without Trump's endorsement. If he vetoes it, Congress can also override it.

Associated Press videojournalist Joael Calupitan contributed to this report.

10 Things to Know for Today By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. IMPEACHMENT FIGHT NOT MOVING THE NEEDLE

Voter attitudes in the swing county of Racine in the swing state of Wisconsin echo public polls that suggest that, nationwide, impeachment is having little effect on President Trump.

2. IMPEACHMENT INQUIRY TAKING NEXT STEPS

The House Judiciary Committee intends to bring in legal experts to examine the constitutional grounds for Trump's impeachment when they meet next week.

3. 'I DON'T KNOW WHAT I DID TO MAKE IT OUT'

The death toll from a powerful earthquake in Albania rises to 25 overnight as rescue crews continue to search collapsed buildings for survivors.

4. PASS THE STUFFING, AND THE VITRIOL

Many families reflect the nation's divisions, setting up heated holiday debates in households with a taste for politics.

5. US TRAVELERS BRACE FOR SNOWY THANKSGIVING

A storm packing heavy snow and high winds marches into the upper Midwest as anxious Thanksgiving travelers buckle up and barrel headlong into a busy, if not perilous, holiday week.

6. WHO IRAN BLAMED FOR PROTESTS

Iran's supreme leader claims without evidence that recent demonstrations over government-set gasoline prices rising were part of a "conspiracy" involving the U.S.

7. BUDDHIST NATIONALISTS CLAIM VICTORY IN SRI LANKAN ELECTION

They are rejoicing over the election of the country's newest leader and hoping he ushers in another golden era for the nation's religious and ethnic majority.

8. NO CASH, NO PROBLEM

Cashless shoppers have a new option to give to The Salvation Army's red kettle campaign this year using their smartphone.

9. WHERE WINE INDUSTRY IS BECOMING A FORCE

Washington state now has 1,000 wineries — the United States' second-highest number after California — and more are on the way.

10. AN UPSET DECADES IN THE MAKING

Stephen F. Austin stuns Duke at the overtime buzzer, doing what no team outside the ACC had done in nearly 20 years — knock off the top-ranked Blue Devils at home.

On the Thanksgiving menu: Turkey, with a side of impeachment

By DAN SEWELL Associated Press

CINCINNATI (AP) — Some people heading to Thanksgiving gatherings predict it's not just the turkey that will get roasted.

Already polarized over Republican Donald Trump's presidency, Americans are deeply split on a looming historic impeachment. Many families reflect the nation's divisions, setting up heated holiday debates in households with a taste for politics.

Bryan Wright, of Cincinnati, said "impeachment will definitely come up" as a divisive topic at his extended family's holiday meal. With a family representing a range of viewpoints including Trump supporters, he and his mother have been texting about the impeachment debate they expect.

"We would openly talk about that ... but we have different ways of coming at it," he said.

Wright is a longtime advocate of welcoming immigrants and helps lead Cincinnati's efforts, something that relatives who support Trump's push for a border wall with Mexico chalk up to his "liberal brainwashing," he said.

Wright — whose wife, University of Cincinnati psychology professor Farrah Jacquez, is of Mexican descent — will gather with her family and his relatives at his parents' home in Florence, Kentucky, after hosting two recent Thanksgivings.

That included 2016, right after Trump's hard-fought election, when there was family drama over whether Trump-backing relatives from Tennessee would be willing to come to his house. They did but some voiced "some pretty awful views on immigrants and immigration," he said.

Alex Triantafilou, an attorney and chairman of Hamilton County's Republican Party, also expects impeachment to be on the table at the holiday feast hosted by an older brother. While the swing state of Ohio has been trending Republican, Democrats have turned the GOP tide in his county.

Triantafilou, who is critical of the Democratic-led impeachment proceedings, said that his family backs Trump for the most part but that more viewpoints have been added as it has grown with new in-laws and friends.

"If somebody comes in and they're not on the Trump train, so to speak, they get a little bit of an airing," he said, adding that it's "usually in fun."

But sometimes it goes past fun.

Wright recalls Thanksgivings with offensive comments that strained relations. Mindy Nagel, a physical therapist with liberal views, has unfriended her conservative brother on Facebook over his political posts and said she'll be "surrounded" by people who disagree with her politically at her in-laws' Thanksgiving.

"Politics is the elephant in the room," she said. Her hosts will probably turn off conservative Fox News while she's there, Nagel said, but there will likely be someone who "tries to stir the pot" by raising Trump and impeachment with her.

Elaine Swann, a Los Angeles-based etiquette coach, advises hosts to have a plan to deal with polarizing discussions amid "all this talk about impeachment" in the air, along with the aromas of oyster dressing and freshly baked pumpkin pies.

"I do think it's healthy for people to express themselves and to have those conversations," said Swann, who will host her family's Thanksgiving. "My advice is to take a route to allow some sort of platform, but with guidelines."

One tactic: sequester the debates. She'll have a room away from the dining table stocked with snacks for people who want to talk politics. She also suggests designating a calm family member as a combination moderator-peacekeeper.

Triantafilou, a former judge, said that role often falls to him, although he wouldn't mind taking a break from politics for the day.

"My preference would be to not have the conversations at Thanksgiving," he said. "I'd rather watch football and leave politics behind."

Swann, who will host around 30 people, said that if guests start tearing into one another like drumsticks,

"make sure that in your arsenal as a host you have some family-building activity to get everybody out of it." Games can be a good diversion or, Swann suggested, invite people to bring family photos to share that will stir warm memories.

If the debate starts getting out of hand Thursday, Wright said, someone will probably defuse things by asking: "How about those Bengals?"

Cincinnati's hapless pro football team is winless this season.

The bottom line, Swann said, is cherishing the time together.

"Although we may not agree politically, the one thing we are is family," she said. "The big takeaway that I encourage everyone to have is that love for family, because tomorrow is not promised to us, and you never know who is going to wake up the next day and who is not."

Wright will miss his uncle Tom Burnside, who died in 2018 after years of helping lead spirited discussions of politics "and B.S." that would go on into the wee hours. He and his pro-Trump uncle were on opposite ends of most political debates but would hear each other out.

"No one's hearts and minds were changed in these conversations," Wright said with a chuckle.

But Burnside knew how to get the final word: he'd leave behind pro-Trump mugs he sneaked into the cupboards of family critics.

Follow Dan Sewell at <https://www.twitter.com/dansewell>

Singer Goo Hara's death shines light on dark side of K-pop

By JUWON PARK Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — The death of South Korean singer and actress Goo Hara, whose body was found at her home in Seoul this week, has again shone a spotlight on pressures that stars, especially females, face in the cutthroat K-pop industry and in deeply conservative South Korean society.

Goo's death at age 28 came less than two months after the death of Choi Jin-ri, or Sulli, another K-pop star and Goo's close friend. Experts say both Goo and Choi faced extensive cyberbullying and sexual harassment from the public and media throughout their careers, which took a toll on their mental health.

Police say they are still investigating Goo's death and found a "pessimistic note" at her home.

Once popular mostly in Asia, K-pop has spread far beyond South Korea, thanks to wildly popular groups such as "BTS" and "Blackpink."

Goo debuted in 2008 as part of the five-member girl group Kara, which shot almost immediately to fame and helped pioneer the K-pop global phenomenon.

She later launched a successful solo career in South Korea and Japan.

Sulli began her career around the same time as Goo, debuting as a member of the girl band f(x) in 2009. She also had multiple acting roles after stepping away from her singing career.

Goo made headlines when she took her former boyfriend, Choi Jong-bum, to court last year. Choi claimed to have been assaulted by her, while Goo accused him of threatening to release a sex video of her.

During the dispute, Goo's Korean agency didn't renew her contract. A court sentenced Choi to 1 ½ years in prison on charges of coercion and assaulting and blackmailing Goo. The jail term was suspended, keeping him out of prison. Choi appealed and the trial is still ongoing.

K-pop is highly competitive, with dozens of groups debuting each year. Industry experts have long warned about the dark side of the scandal-ridden industry. Aspiring artists, as young as their early teens, train for years. Only a few debut and even fewer are commercially successful. The likelihood of their success increases if they sign with a handful of top entertainment agencies.

The industry is known to have strict rules for their stars — including dating bans, spartan training and diets, and sometimes slave-like and unfair contracts. Experts say the industry has additional requirements for its female artists, unspoken rules reflective of South Korea's patriarchal society.

Park Hee-A, a K-pop journalist and writer of "Interviews with K-pop Stars," said female stars are bound by rigid societal rules of femininity.

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"Some female idol members have gotten ostracized for not smiling in a television show and reading a book about feminism that contradicts male-dominated patriarchal South Korean society," Park told The Associated Press.

Expectations of purity and chastity govern women in South Korea. Goo faced a barrage of hate comments following media reports about the sex video despite her being the victim of revenge porn.

"The topic of sex is taboo in South Korea compared to western countries," said Tae-Sung Yeum, attending psychiatrist at Gwanghwamun Forest Psychiatric Clinic. "There's a high moral standard required, especially for female celebrities, because South Korea is a patriarchal society."

Sulli, Goo's long-time friend, also made headlines, often malicious and misogynistic, for speaking out about subjects such as ageism and feminism. She was criticized for wearing shirts without a bra, calling older male colleagues by their first names and openly supporting feminism.

Yeum said it's difficult for K-pop stars to seek professional help for depression, especially in a country where many people believe that psychiatric disorders can be "treated with one's will." He said multiple suicides in the industry stem from stars being plunged into a hypercompetitive system with a plethora of abuses from a young age.

When Sulli was found dead in her Seongnam home, Goo bid farewell to her friend in a live-streamed video. "I will live more diligently for you," Goo cried while apologizing for not being able to make it to her funeral.

Two days before Goo's death, she uploaded a final selfie on her Instagram with the caption, "Good night."

Stephen F. Austin stuns No. 1 Duke, 85-83 in OT

By JOEDY McCREARY AP Sports Writer

DURHAM, N.C. (AP) — With a breakaway layup at the overtime buzzer, Stephen F. Austin pulled off a shocker for the ages and did what no team outside the ACC had done in almost 20 years — topple mighty Duke at home.

The underdog Lumberjacks and their high-pressure defense took over at Cameron Indoor Stadium as No. 1 Duke lost its grip on everything: The ball, the game, its prized home-court winning streak and, ultimately, the nation's top ranking.

Stephen F. Austin stunned the Blue Devils 85-83 in overtime Tuesday night, with Nathan Bain's coast-to-coast layup just before time expired bringing a jarring end to Duke's 150-game home winning streak against nonconference opponents.

"I told our players, 'Banners can't beat us tonight,'" SFA coach Kyle Keller said. "The players have to beat us."

Representing the little-known Southland Conference, the Lumberjacks became the first non-Atlantic Coast Conference school to beat Duke at Cameron since St. John's in February 2000, and the second unranked squad to upset a No. 1 team on its home floor in two weeks after Evansville went into Rupp Arena and knocked off Kentucky 67-64.

Duke had the ball late in overtime, but Tre Jones missed a jumper with about 15 seconds left and Wendell Moore rebounded it for the Blue Devils. Hounded by the Lumberjacks' active defense, Jones threw a bounce pass toward the baseline that got broken up, and the ball kicked away from Matthew Hurt in a scramble with around three seconds to go.

Gavin Kensmil snatched it on the ground and passed from the seat of his pants to Bain, who split two Blue Devils players and went nearly the length of the floor for a buzzer-beating layup with Duke forward Jack White in futile pursuit.

"I looked up at the clock and saw I had 2.6 seconds, just going as fast as I can to lay it up. Like a layup drill. Prayed it would go in," Bain said. "I wasn't sure if the guy was going to foul me or not. Get it on the rim to give us a chance."

Kevon Harris scored 26 points and Kensmil added 15 for the Lumberjacks (5-1).

"It means the world," Harris said.

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Vernon Carey had 20 points and 11 rebounds for the Blue Devils (6-1), who committed 22 turnovers and shot just 11 of 24 from the free throw line in the second half.

Duke coach Mike Krzyzewski "told us at halftime about getting back" on defense, guard Cassius Stanley said. "It's kind of what we deserved. We didn't listen to him, and it hurt us eventually at the end."

Jones had 17 points and 12 assists — but also eight turnovers against a Stephen F. Austin defense that is the nation's best at generating takeaways. The Lumberjacks, who entered at No. 262 in Ken Pomeroy's efficiency rankings, lead Division I by forcing 25.8 turnovers per game — a huge challenge, it turned out, for a young Duke team that started four freshmen and a sophomore and has had issues taking care of the ball.

"Deny the ball, pressure teams, turn them over," Bain said. "People don't like pressure. Everyone wants to be comfortable, be able to see the floor. It's a winning formula — you deny passes, you pressure the ball, make people play 1-on-1, and that's hard. You can't do that for 40 minutes. You have to have some great lungs."

There were two ties and a lead change in the final minute of regulation, with Kensmil tying it at 81 on his layup with 19 seconds remaining. That left Duke with the last shot before OT, but after Jones missed a turnaround jumper with about four seconds left, the rebound was batted around to Stanley, whose jumper off the glass went off the rim at the buzzer.

BIG PICTURE

Stephen F. Austin: No question the Lumberjacks earned the biggest victory in program history. Bain, a fifth-year senior, was a freshman on the Thomas Walkup-led team that upset eighth-ranked West Virginia as a No. 14 seed in the first round of the 2016 NCAA Tournament.

"It doesn't get much bigger than this," Bain said. "But getting a win inside the NCAA Tournament, that's a different type of sweet. That's a different type of taste you want to have. We didn't get that last year."

Duke: This Duke team didn't have the feeling of invincibility that some of its predecessors had, in part because it committed at least 16 turnovers in three of its first six games. The Blue Devils' offense was completely flummoxed at times by the Lumberjacks' unrelenting pressure, and as a result, their run at No. 1 will end after two weeks. For the second straight season, they lost at home to an unranked opponent as the No. 1 team, with the Zion Williamson-led squad falling to Syracuse.

POLL IMPLICATIONS

Duke became the third No. 1 team to lose this season — and Thanksgiving hasn't even arrived yet. The defeat will surely cost the Blue Devils at least a few spots in the poll Monday.

STREAK STATS

Duke fell to 292-9 in nonconference home games under Krzyzewski, and this was the first such loss since an 83-82 setback against St. John's on Feb. 26, 2000. The defeat means the nation's longest such winning streak now belongs to Butler — which has 55 straight nonconference wins at Hinkle Fieldhouse.

UP NEXT

Stephen F. Austin: Visits Arkansas State on Saturday.

Duke: Plays host to Winthrop on Friday night.

More AP college basketball: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Amnesty: Egypt uses prosecution branch to crush dissent

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt's government is using a secretive judicial agency designed to fight terrorism to detain peaceful protesters, journalists and critics on trumped-up charges without trial, Amnesty International said in a report released Wednesday.

The 60-page report by the London-based rights group details how Egypt's Supreme State Security Prosecution, or SSSP, has become increasingly central to President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi's sweeping crackdown on dissent.

"In Egypt today, the Supreme State Security Prosecution has stretched the definition of 'terrorism' to

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encompass peaceful protests, social media posts and legitimate political activities," said Philip Luther, the group's Middle East and North Africa director.

Concertgoers were accused of terrorism for waving rainbow-colored flags. A journalist charged with "broadcasting false news" was detained repeatedly for three years. A human rights lawyer was arrested for joining a protest he says he didn't attend. Several Christians were imprisoned for "aiding a terrorist group," a reference to the outlawed Muslim Brotherhood organization.

"Ridiculous" prosecutions have proliferated, said report author Hussein Baoumi.

Citing these cases and over a hundred others, Amnesty International said the SSSP, a secretive agency comprised of just a few hand-picked judges, is abusing its legal powers as a counterterrorism branch to stifle political dissent.

"There's no judicial oversight. We're talking about a completely closed circuit," Baoumi said. "If these cases were referred to trial, people would be acquitted at once," as the state's accusations are based on confidential police reports, he added.

Egyptian security forces carried out a harsh crackdown in September to stamp out small but rare anti-government protests. The SSSP played a critical role in sweeping up thousands of people on charges of terrorism, the report said.

The prosecution agency renews people's detentions for months and years without evidence, denying them access to lawyers and a fair chance to appeal, it added.

Amnesty said SSSP investigations into allegations of torture and enforced disappearance by the police intelligence division amount to a whitewash. The SSSP routinely buries evidence of police abuse and gives credence to confessions extracted with torture, it said, drawing on court documents and interviews with dozens of witnesses.

Under el-Sissi, Egypt has seen a "meteoric rise" in cases prosecuted by SSSP, according to Amnesty. The report drew attention to the expansion of the branch's covert role since a court declared indefinite administrative detention unconstitutional in 2013.

There was no immediate comment from the government on Amnesty's report, but authorities have repeatedly denied charges of violations or police brutality. Authorities say they are fighting terrorism and have accused rights groups of working with foreign entities to undermine the state.

El-Sissi led the military's removal of the country's first democratically elected president in 2013 after his one-year rule proved divisive, sparking nationwide protests.

The general-turned-president has overseen an unprecedented political crackdown, silencing critics and jailing thousands.

"Our goal with this report is to make it very clear that when someone is accused of terrorism in Egypt, the international community cannot take it at face value," Baoumi told The Associated Press. "More likely, that person was arrested for peacefully expressing an opinion."

Late Tuesday, police made six new arrests — including three journalists — in central Cairo. Mohamed Saad Abdel Hafiz, a board member of Egypt's journalists' association, wrote a post on social media about the arrests, listing the journalists as Solafa Magdy, Hossam el-Sayyad and Mohamed Salah.

In Washington, a senior State Department official called on Egypt "to ensure journalists can work without threats of imprisonment and intimidation." Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs David Schenker told reporters Tuesday that "as part of our long-standing strategic partnership, we continue to raise the fundamental importance of respect for human rights."

For decades, the U.S. has been Egypt's largest weapons supplier, with over a billion dollars in military aid each year.

US criticizes China for abuses revealed by leaked cables

By MATTHEW LEE AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Secretary of State Mike Pompeo said Tuesday that a cache of leaked documents proves that Chinese authorities are engaged in massive and systemic repression of Muslims and other minorities in western China, as a number of foreign governments expressed serious concern about the scale of the campaign.

Pompeo said the documents underscored “an overwhelming and growing body of evidence” that China’s leaders are responsible for gross human rights violations in the Xinjiang region.

“They detail the Chinese party’s brutal detention and systematic repression of Uighurs and members of other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang,” Pompeo told reporters at a State Department news conference. “We call on the Chinese government to immediately release all those who are arbitrarily detained and to end its draconian policies that have terrorized its own citizens in Xinjiang.”

Pompeo’s comments come at a delicate time in U.S.-Chinese relations amid ongoing negotiations to end a trade war and U.S. concerns about the situation in Hong Kong, where pro-democracy protests have turned violent with clashes between police and demonstrators. Notably, his criticism was not accompanied by a warning about possible sanctions for the mass detentions, although U.S. lawmakers are pressing for penalties to be imposed.

“There are very significant human rights abuses,” Pompeo said. “It shows that it’s not random. It is intentional and it is ongoing.”

The leaked classified documents were provided to the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, which worked with The Associated Press and news organizations around the world to publish the material.

The documents, which include guidelines for operating detention centers and instructions for how to use technology to target people, reveal that the camps in Xinjiang are not for voluntary job training, as Beijing has claimed.

They show the camps are used for forced ideological and behavioral re-education. They also illustrate how Beijing uses a high-tech surveillance system to target people for detention and to predict who will commit a crime.

Voluntary job training is the reason the Chinese government has given for detaining more than a million ethnic minorities, most of them Muslim. But a classified blueprint leaked to the news organizations shows the camps are instead precisely what former detainees have described: forced ideological and behavioral re-education centers run in secret.

The documents lay out the Chinese government’s deliberate strategy to lock up ethnic minorities even before they commit a crime, and to rewire their thoughts and the language they speak.

The papers also show how Beijing is pioneering a new form of social control using data and artificial intelligence. Drawing on data collected by mass surveillance technology, computers issued the names of tens of thousands of people for interrogation or detention in just one week.

Pompeo said the documents should encourage other countries to come forward with their concerns. U.S. allies were among the first to step up.

“We have serious concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang and the Chinese government’s escalating crackdown, in particular the extra-judicial detention of over a million Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic minorities,” a British Foreign Office spokesperson said. “We want to see an end to the indiscriminate and disproportionate restrictions on the cultural and religious freedoms of Uyghur Muslims and other ethnic minorities in Xinjiang.”

German Foreign Minister Heiko Maas told the German China-Cables team that “if indeed hundreds of thousands of Uighurs are being detained in camps, then the international community cannot close their eyes.”

In Brussels, the European Commission said it was calling on China “to uphold its international and international obligations and to respect human rights including when it comes to the rights of persons belonging to minorities especially in Xinjiang but also in Tibet and we will continue to affirm those positions

in this context in particular.”

Japan’s foreign ministry said it believed “freedom, respect for fundamental human rights and the rule of law, which are the universal value in the international community, are guaranteed in China as well.”

Meanwhile, there were indications that China was moving to destroy documentary evidence of abuses.

A man now living in exile said a Uighur cadre he knew had reached out to him in October. The cadre, who manages paperwork at a community-level office in southern Xinjiang, said that recently the government had ordered all papers to be burned and destroyed.

“All the shelves are totally empty,” his friend said. The man declined to be identified out of fear of retribution to him or his family.

The man said papers stored in such offices are forms filled in by government workers monitoring everyone in the community, containing sensitive personal information such as marriage status, residence registration and whether they are detained. Information from the forms are inputted into a database in a separate room in the office, while the forms themselves are stored on shelves.

From modest beginnings, Washington now a force in wine world

By **NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS Associated Press**

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — When Craig and Vicki Leuthold opened the Maryhill Winery in 2001, there were about 100 wineries in the state of Washington.

That number has since exploded to more than 1,000 wineries this year, and the remarkable growth is likely to continue.

Maryhill Winery, just south of the remote town of Goldendale, is part of that growth. It has recently opened tasting rooms in Spokane and Vancouver, Washington, and is in the process of opening a tasting room in the Seattle suburb of Woodinville.

“Our timing was great,” said Craig Leuthold, whose winery produces 60 varieties. “Washington wine has really increased in popularity.”

Washington has become a force in the wine industry. The state has the nation’s second-highest number of wineries, after California. But California, which has around 3,700 wineries, remains much bigger than anyone else in the United States, selling more than \$40 billion worth of wine in this country.

Within the U.S., wines from California are the top sellers, followed by wines from Australia and Italy. Washington ranks fourth in the sources of wine sold in the U.S., said Steve Warner, president of Washington State Wine, the industry’s trade group.

“More Washington wine is sold in the United States than French wine,” he said.

The state’s wine industry generates about \$2.4 billion a year in revenues and contributes more than \$7 billion a year to the state’s economy, Warner said.

Washington’s wines are consistently top-ranked, he said.

“Washington has a higher percentage of 90-rated wines than other top wine-producing regions in the world,” Warner said, referring to the 100-point scale for rating wines. “We are competing against wine regions with 28 generations of winemakers, who were doing it before America was a country.”

Most of the industry’s success stems from the state’s climate and soils, Warner said. Wine grapes like long sunny days and cool nights, which the vineyards in the central and eastern part of the state enjoy.

The area also gets little rainfall compared with other grape-growing regions, which is a plus, he said.

Washington still has plenty of available land at reasonable prices in wine country, said Thomas Henick-Kling, director of the enology and viticulture program at Washington State University in Pullman.

The acreage dedicated to grapes for wine is rapidly expanding. Twenty years ago, there were 24,000 acres (9,713 hectares) of grapes. Today there are 59,000 acres (23,877 hectares) of vineyards.

Washington also has skilled farmers and winemakers, graduates of winemaking programs at numerous local colleges, Henick-Kling said.

There were about 20 wineries in 1981. That grew to 100 wineries by 2001, just over 500 by 2012 and just over 1,000 now, Warner said. Growth has been averaging more than 70 new wineries per year for

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the past seven years.

Washington's growth is no surprise, as the number of wineries and wine consumption continue to grow in the United States.

"The growth in wineries around the country is very exciting as wine sales continue to grow, particularly at the premium end," said Gladys Horiuchi of the Wine Institute, which represents California wineries.

Wine shipments to the United States from all foreign and domestic sources grew 1% in 2018. The Wine Institute said people are drinking more premium wine, which starts at \$8 per bottle.

The 1,000th active license was issued to Jens Hansen, owner of Uva Furem winery in Maple Valley. Hansen retired from the Air Force, moved to the Seattle area and decided to become a winemaker.

"I feel like the Washington wine community is a lot like the Air Force in that everyone looks out for each other," Hansen said.

About 70 grape varieties are grown in Washington, with the most popular reds being cabernet sauvignon and merlot. Chardonnay and white Riesling are the most common whites.

Most of Washington's wineries are fairly small. The owners "are passionate about wine and work full-time and crush grapes on weekends," Warner said.

There are a smaller number of midsize wineries that enjoy national distribution, plus a handful of industry giants like Chateau Ste. Michelle, he said.

More investors from outside the state are joining the industry, Warner said. It also helps that Washington has long had a lot of wealthy people who work for companies like Boeing, Microsoft and Amazon and have money to invest in the industry, he said.

Many of the state's best wineries are clustered around the old town of Walla Walla, which used to be known primarily for sweet onions and as home of the state penitentiary. Now it is home to world-class winemakers.

Warner expected the strong growth rate to continue.

"The line is not flattening," he said. "I wouldn't be surprised if we get to 2,000."

One factor that could limit growth is climate change, but Washington also seems fortunate there.

The mighty Columbia River, which irrigates much of wine country, is predicted to be a stable water supply for many years to come, Henick-Smith said.

Heat spikes in the summer might damage grapes, he said. But farmers are moving vineyards to higher elevations looking for cooler ripening weather.

"Here in Washington we're pretty stable," Henick-Smith said.

From modest beginnings, Washington now a force in wine world

By **NICHOLAS K. GERANIOS** Associated Press

SPOKANE, Wash. (AP) — When Craig and Vicki Leuthold opened the Maryhill Winery in 2001, there were about 100 wineries in the state of Washington.

That number has since exploded to more than 1,000 wineries this year, and the remarkable growth is likely to continue.

Maryhill Winery, just south of the remote town of Goldendale, is part of that growth. It has recently opened tasting rooms in Spokane and Vancouver, Washington, and is in the process of opening a tasting room in the Seattle suburb of Woodinville.

"Our timing was great," said Craig Leuthold, whose winery produces 60 varieties. "Washington wine has really increased in popularity."

Washington has become a force in the wine industry. The state has the nation's second-highest number of wineries, after California. But California, which has around 3,700 wineries, remains much bigger than anyone else in the United States, selling more than \$40 billion worth of wine in this country.

Within the U.S., wines from California are the top sellers, followed by wines from Australia and Italy. Washington ranks fourth in the sources of wine sold in the U.S., said Steve Warner, president of Washington State Wine, the industry's trade group.

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"More Washington wine is sold in the United States than French wine," he said.

The state's wine industry generates about \$2.4 billion a year in revenues and contributes more than \$7 billion a year to the state's economy, Warner said.

Washington's wines are consistently top-ranked, he said.

"Washington has a higher percentage of 90-rated wines than other top wine-producing regions in the world," Warner said, referring to the 100-point scale for rating wines. "We are competing against wine regions with 28 generations of winemakers, who were doing it before America was a country."

Most of the industry's success stems from the state's climate and soils, Warner said. Wine grapes like long sunny days and cool nights, which the vineyards in the central and eastern part of the state enjoy.

The area also gets little rainfall compared with other grape-growing regions, which is a plus, he said.

Washington still has plenty of available land at reasonable prices in wine country, said Thomas Henick-Kling, director of the enology and viticulture program at Washington State University in Pullman.

The acreage dedicated to grapes for wine is rapidly expanding. Twenty years ago, there were 24,000 acres (9,713 hectares) of grapes. Today there are 59,000 acres (23,877 hectares) of vineyards.

Washington also has skilled farmers and winemakers, graduates of winemaking programs at numerous local colleges, Henick-Kling said.

There were about 20 wineries in 1981. That grew to 100 wineries by 2001, just over 500 by 2012 and just over 1,000 now, Warner said. Growth has been averaging more than 70 new wineries per year for the past seven years.

Washington's growth is no surprise, as the number of wineries and wine consumption continue to grow in the United States.

"The growth in wineries around the country is very exciting as wine sales continue to grow, particularly at the premium end," said Gladys Horiuchi of the Wine Institute, which represents California wineries.

Wine shipments to the United States from all foreign and domestic sources grew 1% in 2018. The Wine Institute said people are drinking more premium wine, which starts at \$8 per bottle.

The 1,000th active license was issued to Jens Hansen, owner of Uva Furem winery in Maple Valley. Hansen retired from the Air Force, moved to the Seattle area and decided to become a winemaker.

"I feel like the Washington wine community is a lot like the Air Force in that everyone looks out for each other," Hansen said.

About 70 grape varieties are grown in Washington, with the most popular reds being cabernet sauvignon and merlot. Chardonnay and white Riesling are the most common whites.

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Myriad frustrations draw Colombians back onto streets

By CHRISTINE ARMARIO Associated Press

BOGOTA, Colombia (AP) — Colombians unhappy with President Iván Duque's response to nearly a week of boisterous protests are taking to the streets again Wednesday demonstrating over issues ranging from tax reform to shark hunting quotas in the biggest display of unrest the nation has seen in decades.

The daily protests jolting the South American country are proclaiming an unusually diverse set of complaints, though with one similar refrain: an opposition to a government that many believe only looks after the most privileged citizens.

"We feel defenseless to everything," Lucy Rosales, a pensioner walking in downtown Bogota, said Tuesday. "We don't feel like we have a voice that represents us. It's many things that they allowed to accumulate."

The new march comes a day after Duque's attempt to quell the unrest by holding talks with a protest steering group hit a snag when members of the National Strike Committee refused to be part of talks the president has called with all social sectors, creating new uncertainty about how long the already costly protests might drag on.

"The government has not been able to learn from the Chilean and Ecuadorian experiences," said Jorge Restrepo, an economics professor, referring to the recent mass demonstrations in both of those countries. "It has made very many mistakes."

The steering committee presented a 13-point list of demands Tuesday that asks Duque to withdraw or refrain from tax, labor and pension reforms. The labor and student unions leaders also want Duque to review free trade agreements, eliminate a riot police unit accused in the violent death of an 18-year-old student protester and fully implement the nation's historic peace accord with leftist rebels.

The organizers want the conservative president to create a separate, independent negotiation process specifically to discuss their demands. It was an idea his administration is at least initially unwilling to concede, contending a more democratic approach would be to involve all Colombians.

"The president has explained that the ideal is to have inclusive spaces, not exclusive ones," Vice President Marta Lucía Ramírez said.

Several protesters said they agreed with the National Strike Committee's decision not to participate in Duque's dialogue – which appears to take a page from French President Emmanuel Macron, who opened a "Great National Debate" to involve citizens in drafting reforms after months of angry protests in that country.

"Colombia is used to being lied to," said Ana Maria Moya, a student participating the protests. "One learns not to trust in words."

It remains unclear to what extent the National Strike Committee represents protesters in what has become a largely citizen-driven outpouring of discontent. An invitation to gather in a park or bang pots and pans quickly goes viral on WhatsApp and soon hundreds are filling neighborhoods with the angry sound of clanging metal and chants like "Get out Duque!"

"We're tired," Moya said. "We're saying, 'No more.'"

Various leaders have tried to capitalize on the momentum, but none yet has come out as the unequivocal voice of the protesters.

"There is a contest over the ownership of the protesters," Restrepo said. "I see students get out in the streets because they need more social mobility, higher levels of income, more opportunities at least in employment. But then the ones that claim they represent those students in the streets are the unions."

Colombia is widely considered in need of labor and pension reform. Few retirees currently have access to pensions, with the lowest-income earners the least likely to get one. Labor laws make it difficult to hire new employees. Even as the nation's economy grows at a healthy 3.3%, unemployment has risen to nearly 11%, the highest level since 2010, Restrepo said.

"I would characterize the demands of the National Strike Committee as highly conservative, regressive and counter-reformist demands," he said.

Nonetheless, the committee's message has resonated widely, tapping into the myriad frustrations of Colombians.

For some it is big-picture issues like not fully implementing accords, endemic corruption and persistent economic inequality. For others it is small indignities, like relatively pricey public transportation that is also slow and overcrowded.

One unusual sight in the protests has been that of giant plastic sharks, which at least one demonstrator always seems to be raising above the crowd, decrying a government decision allowing a certain amount of shark fishing.

"It's like all the groups are feeding off each other," said Gimena Sánchez-Garzoli, a human rights advocate with the Washington Office on Latin America.

Few expected that such a mixed bag of motivations could generate a prolonged protest, though many now think it could continue for some time.

The protest has already been costly. Four people have died, hundreds are injured and millions of dollars have been lost from businesses shuttering during demonstrations.

The patience of some Colombians is beginning to wear thin.

Julio Contreras, a deliveryman who was tear gassed while trying to get 20 kilos (44 pounds) of chicken to restaurants, said he is ready for the protests to be done.

"They're not letting us work," he said. "The students should be in the universities and not affecting us."

Associated Press writer Cesar Garcia contributed to this report.

Trump defends against impeachment at 'homecoming rally'

By JILL COLVIN Associated Press

SUNRISE, Fla. (AP) — Prompting a profane chant. Describing his own speeches as "ranting and raving." Advising the governor of Florida to not always wear a jacket so people know he's not fat.

Now a Florida man, President Donald Trump held what his campaign dubbed a "homecoming rally" near Miami Tuesday, continuing to lash out at the ongoing impeachment inquiry in a state that will be crucial to his 2020 reelection bid.

The rally was Trump's first in the state since he officially changed his residency last month from Trump Tower in New York to his Mar-a-Lago club in Palm Beach. He received a warm welcome from the roaring crowd at an arena in Sunrise.

"Welcome home to Florida," the state's Republican governor, Ron DeSantis, told him.

The House impeachment inquiry is entering its next phase after lawmakers last week completed their first round of public interviews concerning Trump's efforts to pressure Ukraine to investigate his political rivals. The House Intelligence Committee is now preparing a report on its findings, while the House Judiciary Committee is moving forward with its own hearings before it is expected to consider formal articles of impeachment.

Trump spent much of his rally railing against Democrats, accusing them of "trying to rip our nation apart" with investigations.

"First it was the Russia hoax," Trump said, "and now the same maniacs are pushing the deranged ... impeachment" narrative. He insisted yet again that he had done nothing wrong in his dealings with Ukraine and argued anew that Democrats are only trying to take him down because "they know that they cannot win the next election."

Still, Trump insisted that voters aren't being persuaded — despite polling to the contrary — and tried to assure his audience that "we won these last two weeks so solidly," despite damning public testimony and unflattering press reports.

"You see what's happening in the polls? Everybody said, 'That's really bulls---,'" Trump said, prompting a chant of the profanity to erupt from the crowd.

At the same time, Trump worked to butter up voters as he described his supporters as the "super elite."

"You people are successful as hell," he told them. "You're smarter. You're better looking. You're sharper."

Trump also spent time discussing recent controversies, including an unannounced trip he paid to Walter

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Reed National Military Medical Center on a Saturday this month.

Despite lingering questions about the visit, Trump assured the crowd that if he "didn't feel great," he "wouldn't be ranting and raving" to crowds so large.

He also complimented the state's governor, at one point commenting on his physique and suggesting he wear jackets less frequently.

Florida will be a crucial state for Trump as he tries to replicate his 2016 victory. He carried it by less than 2 percentage points then, defying expectations and paving the way to an electoral college victory.

"Less than one year from now I will join voters across the Sunshine State, my home, as we head to the polls," Trump told the crowd, predicting rosily that, "together, we will win back the House, we will hold the Senate and we will keep that beautiful, beautiful White House."

Throughout his presidency, Trump has spent many winter weekends and holidays in Florida, mingling with dues-paying members at Mar-a-Lago and golfing at the courses he owns nearby. Ethics experts have raised alarms at the arrangement, in which wealthy Americans and foreigners can quite literally buy access to the president of the United States.

Trump decided last month to officially change his residency to Florida after long claiming he'd been mistreated by New York officials investigating his conduct and railing against the state's management, including its high tax rate.

But not everyone was happy about his return.

About 200 anti-Trump protesters rallied on a street outside the BB&T Center before the president arrived, raising a helium-filled "Baby Trump" balloon as some chanted, "Lock him up."

Associated Press writers Kevin Freking in Washington and Terry Spencer in Sunrise, Florida, contributed to this report.

Democrats push impeachment to next phase with Dec. 4 hearing

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House Judiciary Committee is set to take over the impeachment probe of President Donald Trump, Democrats announced Tuesday, scheduling a hearing for next week as they push closer to a possible vote on actual charges of "high crimes and misdemeanors."

The Judiciary panel scheduled the hearing as the separate Intelligence Committee released two last transcripts from its depositions, including from a White House budget official who detailed concerns among colleagues as Trump ordered them, through intermediaries, to put a hold on military aid to Ukraine.

Trump ordered the hold as he was pressuring Ukraine's president to investigate Democrats — the issue at the heart of the impeachment probe. Multiple government witnesses testified in impeachment hearings held by the Intelligence panel this month that Trump directed his personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, to take the lead on Ukraine policy and that Giuliani pushed an "irregular" diplomatic channel.

The Intelligence Committee is wrapping up the investigative phase of the probe and preparing its report for the next. Committee Chairman Adam Schiff has said the report could be released soon after the House returns from its Thanksgiving break.

The initial Judiciary hearing on Dec. 4, the day after lawmakers return, will feature legal experts who will examine questions of constitutional grounds as the panel decides whether to write articles of impeachment against Trump — and if so what those articles will be. Judiciary Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., said Tuesday that his panel's hearing will "explore the framework put in place to respond to serious allegations of impeachable misconduct."

Democrats are aiming for a final House vote by Christmas, which would set the stage for a likely Senate trial in January.

Trump, meanwhile, tried to put distance between himself and Giuliani in a radio interview Tuesday. Asked by host Bill O'Reilly what Giuliani was doing on his behalf in Ukraine, Trump said, "I don't even know," adding that Giuliani had canceled one trip and had other clients as well.

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Asked directly if he had directed Giuliani to go to Ukraine on his behalf, Trump said, "No."

In a phone call to Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy on July 25, Trump had said several times he would have Giuliani contact Zelenskyy. "Rudy very much knows what's happening and he is a very capable guy," Trump said to Zelenskyy, according to a rough transcript released by the White House.

Trump and his lawyers are invited to attend the Judiciary hearing and make a request to question witnesses, according to Democratic rules approved by the House last month. The committee released a letter from Nadler to the president, saying that he hopes Trump will participate, "consistent with the rules of decorum and with the solemn nature of the work before us."

It's unlikely that the president himself would attend, as Trump is scheduled to be overseas on Dec. 4 for a summit with NATO allies outside London — a split screen showing leadership that Trump's allies might find favorable. The Judiciary panel gave the White House until Sunday evening to decide whether Trump or his lawyers would attend.

If Democrats stay on schedule, the committee will introduce articles of impeachment, debate them and then hold a vote, a process that could take several days. If charges are approved by the end of the second week of December, the House could hold a formal impeachment vote the third week of the month just before leaving for the holidays.

The charges are expected to mostly focus on Ukraine. Democrats are considering an overall "abuse of power" article against Trump, which could be broken into categories such as bribery or extortion. That article would center on the Democrats' assertion, based on witness testimony, that Trump used his office to pressure Ukraine into politically motivated investigations.

Democrats are also expected to include an article on obstruction of Congress that outlines Trump's instructions to officials in his administration to defy subpoenas for documents or testimony.

Though several government officials called by Democrats cooperated with the committee, several key witnesses — including acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney, Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Energy Secretary Rick Perry and former National Security Adviser John Bolton — refused, following Trump's orders.

Lastly, Democrats could potentially include an obstruction of justice article based on special counsel Robert Mueller's report released earlier this year. Mueller said he could not exonerate Trump on that point, essentially leaving the matter up to Congress.

When and if the House approves articles of impeachment, the Republican-controlled Senate would be expected to hold a trial in early 2020. Unless political dynamics change drastically, Trump would have the backing of majority Republicans in that chamber and be acquitted.

It's still unclear how long a trial might last, what it would look like and who might be called as witnesses.

While the matter remains in the House, Schiff said in a letter to his colleagues on Monday that his committee "will continue with our investigative work" and could still hold depositions or hearings. But Schiff said it would not prolong a fight to obtain documents or testimony in court.

"The president has accepted or enlisted foreign nations to interfere in our upcoming elections, including the next one," Schiff said in the letter. "This is an urgent matter that cannot wait if we are to protect the nation's security and the integrity of our elections."

In a transcript of closed-door testimony released Tuesday, Office of Management and Budget official Mark Sandy, a career employee, told lawmakers that his office was notified as early as July 12 by the White House chief of staff's office that Trump was withholding the military aid. That was two weeks before Trump asked Ukrainian President Zelenskyy to investigate Democrats.

Sandy testified that Trump himself requested additional information about the aid on July 19 after seeing an unidentified "media report." The office then started the official process of withholding the money on July 25, the day of the call between Trump and Zelenskyy, Sandy said.

He testified that he raised concerns about the legality of the holdup, but wasn't given a reason until September, when he was told that Trump was concerned "about other countries not contributing more to Ukraine."

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Sandy said that in late July, political appointee Michael Duffey took from him his role of approving spending, a decision Duffey told him involved Mulvaney. Sandy, who has worked at OMB for more than a decade, said he was unaware of a political appointee ever previously being given that responsibility.

He also testified that he knew of two people who left the agency who had voiced concerns over the handling of the Ukraine aid.

The intelligence panel also released a transcript of the deposition of State Department official Philip Reeker, who detailed concerns about the removal of U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine Marie Yovanovitch.

Associated Press writers Matthew Daly, Andrew Taylor, Alan Fram, Eric Tucker, Nancy Benac and Zeke Miller contributed to this report.

Trump tells impeachment jokes at annual turkey pardon event

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump couldn't resist riffing on the House impeachment inquiry Tuesday as he continued the tradition of pardoning a Thanksgiving turkey, generating holiday-season laughter at the expense of House Intelligence Committee Chairman Rep. Adam Schiff, one of his chief antagonists in Congress.

Trump joked that the pair of North Carolina-bred turkeys he was about to pardon had been raised to "remain calm under any condition," a trait that he said will be "very important because they've already received subpoenas to appear in Adam Schiff's basement on Thursday."

"It seems the Democrats are accusing me of being too soft on turkey," Trump told guests seated in the White House Rose Garden, where he was flanked by his wife, first lady Melania Trump. But he told the turkeys that, "unlike previous witnesses, you and I have actually met. It's very unusual."

Trump's Republican defenders in Congress had criticized Schiff for holding closed-depositions in a secure room in the basement of the Capitol Visitor Center, which Democrats said was necessary for the investigation. Trump has criticized the impeachment inquiry as both a "scam" and a "hoax."

Trump also has claimed to barely know some of the witnesses - including Gordon Sondland, Trump's ambassador to the European Union - who testified during public impeachment hearings chaired by Schiff, a California Democrat. Testimony from several officials showed that Sondland had been in frequent contact with Trump around the time Trump spoke with the president of Ukraine about doing a politically beneficial "favor."

Schiff is leading the House impeachment inquiry for his committee. Meanwhile, as the White House ceremony was about to begin, the House Judiciary Committee announced it has scheduled an impeachment hearing for Dec. 4, when Trump is expected to be in London for a NATO conference.

Trump's latest act of clemency benefited Butter, a 47-pound (21-kilogram) turkey granted a "full and complete" pardon. Trump said he was also sparing Butter's alternate, named Bread, who weighs 45 pounds (20 kilograms) from being served up on a Thanksgiving table.

Both gobblers will get to spend the rest of their lives on a farm at Virginia Tech in Blacksburg, Virginia.

Turning serious, Trump gave thanks for the "newfound prosperity and spirit" that he said is taking hold across the country and predicted "it's going to be a great Thanksgiving." He also expressed gratitude for U.S. service members who will spend the holiday stationed in hot spots around the world.

President George H.W. Bush established the annual turkey pardon tradition in 1989 by sparing a 50-pound (23-kilogram) bird.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

Calgary coach in limbo after allegedly using racial slurs

By JOHN WAWROW AP Hockey Writer

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Bill Peters' status as the Calgary Flames coach — and whatever future he might have in the sport — have been placed into question while the NHL and the team investigate allegations he directed racist slurs at a Nigerian-born player in the minors 10 years ago.

Asking for patience, general manager Brad Treliving said Tuesday that Peters remains with the Flames after the allegations raised by Akim Aliu on social media a day earlier. Peters, who has not commented, stayed at the team hotel and was not with the Flames as they practiced for Wednesday night's game in Buffalo.

Aliu alleged Peters "dropped the N bomb several times towards me in the dressing room in my rookie year because he didn't like my choice of music." It happened during the 2009-10 season while the two were with the Chicago Blackhawks minor-league affiliate in Rockford, Illinois.

Treliving called the alleged comments "repulsive."

"Allegations of this nature, we take very, very seriously. This is subject matter that has no place in our organization," Treliving said. "Now it's my job to find out exactly what's taken place."

He said he had spoken with Peters and has had two conversations with Aliu by phone. Treliving offered no timeline and later announced Peters would not be behind the bench against the Sabres. Associate coach Geoff Ward will handle the coaching duties in Peters' place.

The NHL called the alleged behavior "repugnant and unacceptable," but held off commenting pending further investigation.

Aliu has not returned messages left by The Associated Press, but he has since expanded on his allegations by telling Canada's TSN sports cable network that Peters made the remarks in Rockford's dressing room, calling out his choice of music with a brief tirade marked by profanities and the N-word in front of several teammates.

"He then walked out like nothing ever happened," Aliu said. "You could hear a pin drop in the room, everything went dead silent. I just sat down in my stall, didn't say a word."

Two of Aliu's teammates, Simon Pepin and Peter MacArthur, corroborated the story to TSN.

Aliu referred to former San Francisco 49ers quarterback Colin Kaepernick as a reason he stayed quiet for so long. Kaepernick has spent the past two-plus seasons out of football since he began kneeling during the national anthem at NFL games to protest police brutality and racial injustice.

"This isn't to the degree of Kaepernick by any means, but if you play the race card, it's most likely the end of your career," Aliu told TSN. "This isn't me being bitter. I sat on this a really, really long time. It broke my heart. I think it made my career go downhill before it started."

Flames players were blindsided by the allegations against the second-year coach. Defenseman Oliver Kylington, whose mother is Eritrean and father Swedish, said Peters has always treated him fairly, and yet respected Aliu for voicing his complaints.

"If he felt like those words have been said, I really respect that he's speaking out," Kylington said. "Words like that should never, ever be said."

Flames captain Mark Giordano called it "a really tough situation" for the individuals involved and franchise.

"I think we all know there's no place for any of that sort of stuff in society, but also you have to respect that the allegations are just that right now, and you've got to go through the process," Giordano said, saying the team attempted to focus on having a good practice as they try to bounce out of a 1-5-2 slump.

Peters led the Flames to a Pacific Division-leading 50-25-7 record last year following four seasons coaching the Carolina Hurricanes. The 54-year-old made the jump to Rockford after leading the Western Hockey League Spokane Chiefs to a Memorial Cup championship in 2008.

Acknowledging he rebelled against Peters, Aliu said the coach eventually asked Blackhawks executives John McDonough and Stan Bowman to send him to a lower minor league level. The Blackhawks issued a statement saying nothing had previously been brought to their attention regarding Peters and Aliu before Monday. The team added it had no effect on any player personnel decisions involving Aliu.

Aliu played under Peters during the 2008-09 and 2009-10 seasons. He was demoted to the Toledo Walleye of the ECHL during the 2009-10 season. Aliu, who was born in Africa but raised in Ukraine and Canada, later played seven NHL games over two seasons with Calgary.

The 30-year-old Aliu has had a transient career since being selected by Chicago in the second round of the 2007 draft.

He's not playing this season after appearing in 14 games with Orlando of the ECHL last year. The Solar Bears were Aliu's 11th team over a six-year span, which included stops in Russia, Sweden and Slovakia.

Aliu's tweet came after reports surfaced of how poorly Maple Leafs coach Mike Babcock dealt with his players in Toronto before he was fired several days ago. Forward Mitch Marner confirmed that during his rookie season Babcock asked him to rank Maple Leafs players in order of hardest to least-hardest working. Babcock then shared Marner's list with numerous players.

Aliu noted Peters was Babcock's protege.

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

Most people who fled California wildfire allowed to go home

By STEFANIE DAZIO and JOHN ANTCZAK Associated Press

GOLETA, Calif. (AP) — Most of the thousands of people who fled a raging California wildfire in the mountains north of Santa Barbara were told they could return home Tuesday as an approaching storm offered hope the flames would be doused.

About 4,000 of the nearly 5,500 evacuees were affected when authorities reduced the size of the evacuation zone.

The blaze had blackened more than 6.5 square miles (16.8 square kilometers) of the rugged Santa Ynez Mountains, but most of that acreage was scorched in its first hours Monday.

The fire was 10 percent contained by Tuesday evening and officials said about 2,400 homes and other buildings remained threatened.

Fire commanders described a fierce battle that saved homes as the blaze consumed brush in an area that hadn't burned in 29 years.

"We've had winds move up slope, down slope, across the slope," Santa Barbara County fire Battalion Chief Anthony Stornetta said.

An infamous 1990 wildfire in the same area destroyed more than 400 homes.

"It's just a hard, difficult piece of country to fight fire in and the weather is the most extreme anywhere around," said Jim Harris, Los Padres National Forest fire chief.

Rudy Gruber, 79, watched the smoke and flames from the top of a hill near his house in Santa Barbara.

Despite orders to evacuate, he said he decided not to leave because he didn't think the fire would cross a canyon to his home. Plus, it'd be tough to move his 50-pound tortoise, Amstel.

Even so, he's been prepared for about a year, packing photo albums, computers and a carrier for his cat Scooter.

Gruber, who's lived in the area since 1976, was facing his fifth fire but said he's only evacuated once, when he saw smoke in his neighborhood in 1978. He didn't see any this time, so he decided to stay put.

"We're better prepared than we used to be," Gruber said. "We've gone through it so many times now."

Helicopters dropped water on the fire during the night, and daylight allowed air tankers to drop long strips of fire retardant to box in the flames.

The fire began in Los Padres National Forest as winds gusted to 30 mph (48 kph) and higher.

Miryam Garcia, 21, and her mother, Norma Ramos, 47, fled their home as flames approached.

"I was just kind of praying that it didn't get to our house," Garcia said.

She and her mother stayed overnight with friends and then went to a Red Cross shelter at a community center in Goleta, west of Santa Barbara.

Red Cross official Tony Briggs said 34 people stayed overnight at the shelter, where face masks were

being handed out.

Fire officials said as much as an inch of rain was expected to hit the area by midnight.

The possible arrival of rain also posed hazards, ranging from shifting winds to debris flows from steep mountainsides.

Gruber said he's going to visit cousins in Orange County for Thanksgiving and isn't worried about his house.

"I'm counting on the rain to kind of snuff" out the fire, he said.

The dangerous cycle of fire and flood is a raw memory for many others in the region.

In January 2018, a downpour on burned slopes just east of Santa Barbara unleashed massive debris flows that devastated Montecito, killing 23 people and destroying homes.

Antczak reported from Los Angeles.

Palestinians protest US settlement decision in 'day of rage'

By MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Thousands of Palestinian protesters took part in a "day of rage" across the occupied West Bank on Tuesday, with some groups clashing with Israeli forces to protest the U.S. announcement that it no longer believes Israeli settlements violate international law.

Around 2,000 people gathered in the West Bank city of Ramallah by midday, where they set ablaze posters of U.S. President Donald Trump as well as Israeli and American flags. Schools, universities and government offices were closed and rallies were being held in other West Bank cities.

"The biased American policy toward Israel, and the American support of the Israeli settlements and the Israeli occupation, leaves us with only one option: To go back to resistance," Mahmoud Aloul, an official with Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah movement, told the crowd in Ramallah.

Demonstrators held signs reading: "Trump to impeachment, (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu to jail, the occupation will go and we will remain on our land."

At Israeli checkpoints near Ramallah, Bethlehem and Hebron, dozens of protesters threw stones at Israeli forces who responded with tear gas. There were no immediate reports of injuries.

Later in the evening, the Israeli military said it identified two rockets fired from the Gaza Strip at southern Israel. One was intercepted by an Iron Dome missile battery. It was the second such attack in as many days by Palestinian militants, and Israeli aircraft retaliated with attacks on several Hamas sites in Gaza. There were no reports of injuries.

The protests came just hours after the death of a Palestinian prisoner in Israeli custody following a battle with cancer. Organizers had said the demonstrations — which were planned before his death — would also call for the release of Sami Abu Diak, 35, to allow him to die at his family's side. Israeli officials denied the request.

Organized by Fatah, Tuesday's "day of rage" protested the Trump administration's announcement on Israeli settlements last week. The decision upended four decades of American policy and embraced a hard-line Israeli view at the expense of the Palestinian quest for statehood.

Israeli leaders welcomed the U.S. decision, while the Palestinians and most of the world say the settlements are illegal and undermine hopes for a two-state solution by gobbling up land sought by the Palestinians.

Israel says the fate of the settlements should be determined in negotiations, even as it steadily expands them.

Israel captured the West Bank and east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war and quickly began settling the newly conquered territory. Today, some 700,000 Israeli settlers live in the two areas, which are both claimed by the Palestinians for their state.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo announced last week that the U.S. was repudiating the 1978 State Department legal opinion.

That opinion had been the basis for more than 40 years of carefully worded U.S. opposition to settlement construction that had varied in its tone and strength, depending on the president's position. President Ronald Reagan, for instance, said settlements were not inherently illegal, though he called them unhelpful and provocative. Other administrations had called them "illegitimate" and "obstacles to peace."

Abu Diak, the Palestinian prisoner, died in an Israeli hospital early Tuesday, according to Israel's prisons service. In a statement, it said he was serving three life sentences for voluntary manslaughter and kidnapping, among other charges.

He was linked to the armed wing of Fatah and was arrested in the early 2000s, during the second Palestinian intifada, or uprising. He was allegedly involved in the killing of three Palestinians accused of collaborating with Israeli security forces.

The Palestinian Authority had reached out to European countries and the Red Cross to apply pressure on Israel to release him.

Previous deaths of terminally ill Palestinian prisoners have sparked protests and accusations of medical negligence on the part of Israeli authorities.

This story corrects the charges attributed to Abu Diak.

Hong Kong tunnel reopens, campus siege nears end

By EILEEN NG and KEN MORITSUGU Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — A major tunnel in Hong Kong reopened Wednesday morning and a weeklong police siege of a nearby university appeared to be winding down, closing one of the more violent chapters in the city's long-running anti-government protests.

The Cross-Harbour Tunnel, which links Hong Kong Island to the rest of the city, had been closed for two weeks after protesters blocked the approach with tons of debris and set the toll booths on fire.

A search of the Hong Kong Polytechnic campus the previous day found just one woman, in weak condition, and a senior university official said it's unlikely anyone else remains.

A few people might still be hiding in the warren of buildings on the urban campus, trying to avoid arrest. The search apparently didn't find a man who told reporters before dawn Tuesday that he is happy living at the university and "everyone can stop worrying about us."

Police have cordoned off the area to try to prevent anyone from escaping.

Polytechnic University Vice President Alexander Wai, who led a search of the campus by seven teams, said he couldn't rule out that some people remained, but "the possibility is not very high."

Attention in Hong Kong has shifted to city leader Carrie Lam's response to a major loss in local elections Sunday. The results were seen as a public rebuke of her tough line on the protests.

Lam, after issuing only a written statement Monday, offered no concessions to anti-government protesters, saying only that she would accelerate dialogue and identify ways to address societal grievances.

She said the central government in Beijing did not blame her for the election setback, and that while it may have reflected unhappiness with the government's handling of the unrest, it also showed that many people want an end to the violence.

"Let me just stress that after these five-six months, Hong Kong people have realized very clearly that Hong Kong could no longer tolerate this chaotic situation," Lam told reporters after a weekly meeting with advisers. "Please help us to maintain the relative calm and peace that we have seen in the last week or so and provide a good basis for Hong Kong to move forward."

Her refusal to compromise could spark more unrest at a time when the semi-autonomous Chinese territory has plunged into its first recession in a decade.

The streets around Polytechnic were the scenes of fierce clashes with police 10 days ago. Protesters used the campus as a base and shut down access to a major roadway under Hong Kong's harbor, setting the toll booths on fire.

The Cross-Harbour Tunnel will reopen Wednesday morning, earlier than expected, a senior city official

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announced.

The seven search teams went through most of the buildings on the Polytechnic campus, finding one woman who appeared physically weak, a university statement said.

Wai, the vice president, said she is over 18 and not a student of the university. A Red Cross first aid team gave her medical care, and counselors were trying to coax her to surrender.

Holdouts at the university had been trying to avoid arrest.

The search teams found gasoline bombs and other dangerous items, the Polytechnic statement said. The library was flooded, and the fuel tanks of cars had been forced open.

The university plans to resume the search in the morning, possibly with more people.

The pro-democracy bloc won control of 17 out of 18 district councils in Sunday's election, which was seen as a barometer of public support for more than five months of pro-democracy protests.

Lam said that when she withdrew an extradition bill in September that had sparked the protests, she also gave a detailed response to the protesters' other demands, including free elections for the city's leader and legislature and a probe into accusations of police brutality.

The government hopes to take advantage of the current lull in violence to accelerate public dialogue and set up an independent review committee to find solutions to deep-seated societal issues, she said.

"The next step to go forward is really, as you have put it, to engage the people. And we have started public dialogue with the community," Lam said. "But unfortunately, with the unstable environment and a chaotic situation, I could not do more on that sort of engagement. I hope that the environment will allow me to do it now."

Some pro-establishment figures have pointed fingers at Lam for their loss, while the pro-democracy camp has asked her to step down.

Protesters saw the extradition bill as an erosion of their rights promised when the former British colony returned to Chinese control in 1997. The demonstrations have since expanded into a protest over what they see as Beijing's growing interference in the city.

Some analysts said China's ruling Communist Party isn't likely to soften its stand on Hong Kong. Chinese media have muted reports on the poll outcome, focusing instead on how pro-Beijing candidates were harassed and the need to restore law and order.

Beijing is treading cautiously partly to avoid jeopardizing trade talks with the United States. It also faces pressure from planned U.S. legislation that could derail Hong Kong's special trade status and sanction Hong Kong and China officials found to violate human rights.

China's foreign ministry on Monday summoned U.S. Ambassador Terry Branstad for a second time to demand Washington block the bipartisan legislation on Hong Kong. Vice Minister Zheng Zeguangu warned that the U.S. would "bear all the consequences that arise" if the bill is signed by President Donald Trump.

Trump has not committed to signing it and has 10 days from the time of its passage last week to veto it. If he does not do so, it automatically becomes law. Congress could also override a veto with a two-thirds majority vote in both houses.

Trump told reporters Tuesday at the White House that his message to protesters is "We are with them."

Trump cited his "very good relationship" with Chinese President Xi Jinping and that the U.S. was in the final stages of an important trade deal.

Derek Mitchell, a former U.S. ambassador to Myanmar who heads the Washington-based National Democratic Institute, denied accusations that it had funded or supported the Hong Kong protesters. China has accused foreign forces and money of being a "black hand" behind the protests.

Mitchell, speaking in Hong Kong, said citizens had spoken "loudly and clearly" in the local election and that the government must respond to prevent the protests from sliding into an abyss.

"The ball is in the court of the government here and authorities in Beijing," he said.

In a boost to the city, Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba made a strong debut on the Hong Kong stock exchange on Tuesday, rising 6.6%. Alibaba's share sale of at least \$11.3 billion in its secondary listing is the world's biggest this year.

Associated Press video journalist Joael Calupitan contributed to this report.

Pennsylvania overhauls child sexual abuse laws

By **MARC LEVY** and **MARK SCOLFARO** Associated Press

READING, Pa. (AP) — Pennsylvania overhauled its child sexual abuse laws Tuesday, more than a year after a landmark grand jury report showed the cover-up of hundreds of cases of abuse in most of Pennsylvania's Roman Catholic dioceses over seven decades.

The central bill signed by Gov. Tom Wolf gives future victims of child sex abuse more time to file lawsuits and ends time limits for police to file criminal charges.

The grand jury report spurred many states to change their laws and others to begin similar investigations. Wolf said the new laws will help repair "faults in our justice system that prevent frightened, abused children from seeking justice when they grow into courageous adults."

The legislative package was based on recommendations in last year's report on six of eight dioceses in the state.

Wolf, a Democrat, also signed bills to invalidate secrecy agreements that keep child sexual abuse victims from talking to investigators, and to increase penalties for people who are required to report suspected abuse but fail to do so.

Wolf signed the bills at Muhlenberg High School near Reading, in the home district and high school of Democratic state Rep. Mark Rozzi, a champion of the legislation who has spoken publicly about being raped as a 13-year-old by a Roman Catholic priest.

"We know our work is not done today, it's going to continue," Rozzi said.

The grand jury report prompted a lengthy battle in the Legislature that pitted victims and their advocates who unsuccessfully sought the two-year window to file claims over past abuse against top Senate Republicans, who argued it would be unconstitutional. Senate Republicans, however, blocked it amid opposition by bishops and insurers, and as an alternative offered the slower process of amending the state constitution.

The multi-year amendment process has begun, but the bill must again pass both the House and Senate in the 2021-22 legislative session before voters will decide its fate in a statewide referendum.

Pennsylvania Attorney General Josh Shapiro, a Democrat, said the eliminated time limits meant prosecutors could file charges against only two priests after the report was issued. He said that if the new legislation had applied, some 100 priests could have been charged.

The report put the number of abusive clergy at more than 300, with most cases between 1970 and 2000. More than 100 of the priests had died.

Wolf and Shapiro urged lawmakers to take up legislation to allow the two-year window for lawsuits rather than wait for the amendment process to play out.

"By waiting, we are robbing the very victims who made this day possible, we are robbing them of the only closure before them," Shapiro said.

The main bill in the package ends any statute of limitations, in future cases, for criminal prosecution of major child sexual abuse crimes. Current law limits it to the victim's 50th birthday.

Victims would have until they turn 55 to sue, compared to age 30 in current law. Young adults ages 18-23 would have until age 30 to sue, where existing law gives them just two years.

Police could file criminal charges up to 20 years after the crime when young adults 18-23 years old are the victims, as opposed to 12 years after the crime for victims over 17 in current law.

About two dozen states have changed their laws on statutes of limitations this year, including neighboring New York and New Jersey, according to Child USA, a Philadelphia-based think tank that advocates for child protection.

In New Jersey, lawmakers expanded the civil statute of limitations from two to seven years. The bill opened a two-year window, which starts Dec. 1, to victims who were previously barred from suing by the statute of limitations. It also allows victims to seek damages from institutions.

New York raised the victim's age for which prosecutors can seek a felony indictment from 23 to 28.

The law also gave anyone a year starting in August to file child sex abuse lawsuits against individuals and institutions, and civil lawsuits going forward can be filed until the victim is 55, up from 23.

Scolforo reported from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Mike Catalini in Trenton, New Jersey, and Marina Vileneuve in Albany, New York, contributed.

Nancy Grace joins Fox Nation streaming service

By DAVID BAUDER AP Media Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Former CNN mainstay Nancy Grace is signing up for a crime show on Fox Nation, an illustration of how Fox News' streaming service has evolved counter to expectations one year into operation.

Cameras will show her delivering her podcast and SiriusXM radio show, "Crime Stories with Nancy Grace," five days a week. The program is modeled after her popular television series that ran on the HLN network for many years.

"We spotlight breaking crime and justice news, help find missing people, especially children, solve unsolved homicides and analyze clues left behind," Grace said.

Fox Nation, the streaming service available for \$65 a year, will begin offering "Crime Stories" in January.

The on-demand service recently announced that former CBS News correspondent Lara Logan will host a documentary series on media bias, immigration and other issues, and said more signings are in the works.

When Fox Nation began late last year, it was positioned as a place where potential subscribers could go if they didn't feel they were getting enough opinion programming on Fox News Channel. Instead, users were apparently getting their fill.

"In a weird way, what the traditional Fox audience wants is complementary to the channel but not more of the same," said John Finley, the Fox executive vice president who oversees the streaming service.

Perhaps the political climate has exhausted them, he said. Instead, he has found a hunger for "programming with Fox values but not necessarily politics," he said. That encompasses history, crime and lifestyle programming.

"What Made America Great," where "Fox & Friends" host Brian Kilmeade visits historical sites across the country, is one of the service's most popular programs. So is "Scandalous," a documentary series on controversial happenings in history. Abby Hornacek is a popular host, both with the series "PARK'D" in which she visits national parks and "Ride to Work," in which she accompanies Fox personalities in a show that recalls Jerry Seinfeld's "Comedians in Cars Getting Coffee," only without coffee stops and without the jokes.

Kilmeade said that he has found "What Made America Great" a fun change of pace and that he's been surprised by the reaction he gets.

"I was able to sit on Washington's head and look down," Kilmeade said, recalling one of his favorite stops, Mount Rushmore.

Finley said Fox is happy with the number of subscribers Fox Nation has after one year, although the company won't release any statistics. The market research firm Parks Associates estimates that it has between 200,000 and 300,000 subscribers.

For a niche product designed to attract a specific type of user — fans of the television network — that's pretty good, said Brett Sappington, senior research director at Parks Associates.

This past summer, Fox Nation also began streaming an audio broadcast of Fox News Channel programming a half-hour after appearing on television, which Finley estimated is usually watched by about 20 percent of the service's users.

This story has been updated to correct that the Fox News Channel telecast is a streamed audio broadcast a half-hour after appearing on television, not a streamed simulcast.

Chief: Officers 'basically ambushed' in South Texas shooting

By JAKE BLEIBERG Associated Press

Officers responding to a disturbance call early Tuesday in South Texas were "basically ambushed" by a man with a semi-automatic rifle who shot and injured one officer and two other people, the police chief said.

Cesar Terrazas, 22, was arrested after authorities in Laredo near the Mexico border say he fired dozens of rounds at officers responding before 6 a.m., and then broke into a home where he continued shooting. Terrazas faces a series of felony charges including attempted capital murder, aggravated assault and burglary.

"Our officers were basically ambushed," Police Chief Claudio Treviño Jr. said at an afternoon news conference. "This individual was ready to face them and ready to murder them."

A 33-year-old officer was hit in the leg, and a 21-year-old man and 53-year-old woman were shot inside the home, Treviño said. The seven-year police veteran was released from a hospital, and the other two victims were in stable condition.

Investigator Joe Baeza described the chaotic early-morning shootout in the border city of more than 261,000 people about 150 miles (241 kilometers) southwest of San Antonio. More than 70 rounds were fired, and Terrazas repeatedly reloaded his AR-style rifle, he said.

"It was pitch dark, midnight dark, and the officers start hearing fire coming at them and didn't know where it was coming from," Baeza said.

After opening fire on the officers on the city's north side, Terrazas made his way into a nearby home and continued shooting before being eventually arrested without injury, Baeza said.

It is unclear what led Terrazas to allegedly open fire on police. Baeza said investigators are still piecing together the crime scene but that Terrazas seems to have been motivated by "a bad break up that escalated to this point." Police declined to identify the two people who were shot inside the home, saying they are being treated as victims of domestic violence.

Terrazas has no previous criminal record, Baeza said.

Melania Trump defends rights of Baltimore teens to boo her

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

BALTIMORE (AP) — Melania Trump on Tuesday defended the rights of teenagers who booed her when she addressed them in Baltimore, a city her husband, President Donald Trump, has disparaged as "rat and rodent infested."

She traveled there to urge hundreds of middle and high school students to avoid misusing drugs, saying that would make it harder for them to achieve their life's goals. But her remarks drew a mix of boos and cheers, and the audience remained noisy throughout her five-minute address.

It is highly unusual for a first lady to be booed at a public appearance. Mrs. Trump released a statement hours after she had returned to the White House, defending the principle of freedom of expression while reaffirming her commitment to the issue that drew her to Baltimore.

"We live in a democracy and everyone is entitled to their opinion, but the fact is we have a serious crisis in our country and I remain committed to educating children on the dangers and deadly consequences of drug abuse," Mrs. Trump said.

The first lady has been using her prominence to spotlight programs she thinks can help young people, whether it's to teach them to be positive online or to avoid drug misuse and addiction.

She went to Maryland to address the Baltimore Youth Summit on Opioid Awareness, appearing on behalf of her "Be Best" youth campaign, which includes a focus on the U.S. epidemic of opioid misuse.

Students simultaneously booed and cheered her introduction.

When the audience remained rowdy after she began to speak, she interrupted her remarks to say, "Hello, everyone," before continuing.

The first lady said she wants to raise awareness about the opioid epidemic and help educate young people about living drug free.

"I am in this fight with you, and I am fighting for you," she said, and urged anyone struggling with addiction to ask someone for help.

"I know each one of you has hopes and dreams for the future, whether it is college, joining the military, or playing a sport. Your future will be determined by the choices you make," Mrs. Trump said. "Using drugs will only slow you down and prevent you from achieving those goals."

President Trump has had a difficult relationship with Baltimore.

In July, Trump labeled the city a "disgusting, rat and rodent infested mess," saying no human would want to live there.

The president also criticized U.S. Rep. Elijah Cummings, a Democrat who represented parts of the city in Congress for decades. At the time of his death in October, Cummings was a central player in multiple House investigations of Trump and his administration.

Trump refused to cooperate with the congressional inquiries.

He was met with protests in September, including by a giant inflatable rat, when he went to Baltimore to address a meeting of House Republicans.

The youth summit is sponsored by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration and actor Mark Wahlberg's youth foundation.

Follow Darlene Superville on Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/dsupervilleap>

Labour's Corbyn struggles to contain anti-Semitism charge

By GREGORY KATZ and PAN PYLAS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn struggled Tuesday to defuse harsh criticism about anti-Semitism leveled at both himself and the party by Britain's chief rabbi.

In what was arguably his most difficult day in the general election campaign so far, Corbyn faced a multitude of questions over Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis' damaging remarks in The Times newspaper.

The influential rabbi implied that Corbyn was unfit for high office and that Labour's efforts to tackle anti-Semitism were a "mendacious fiction." The "overwhelming majority" of Britain's Jews, he added, were "gripped by anxiety" about Corbyn's possible election.

"A new poison, sanctioned from the top, has taken root in the Labour Party," he said.

While voicing his disapproval of all forms of racism, including anti-Semitism, Corbyn declined repeatedly to apologize during a prime-time BBC interview for any anti-Semitism that has occurred in the Labour Party over the past few years.

"We will not allow anti-Semitism in any form in our society because it is poisonous and divisive, just as Islamophobia or far-right racism is," Corbyn said in the interview with the veteran BBC broadcaster Andrew Neil.

Corbyn insisted he had "strengthened" Labour's processes on how to deal with anti-Semitism in the party since a written warning was given to a member who questioned the number of people who died in the Holocaust.

"There are a very, very small number of people in the Labour Party that have been sanctioned as a result of complaints about their anti-Semitic behavior," Corbyn said. "As far as I'm concerned one is one too many and I've ensured action (has been) taken on that."

The ongoing questions about anti-Semitism have damaged traditionally strong ties between Britain's Jews and the Labour Party, prompting many members to quit the party in disgust. Anti-Semitism is cited as one of the main reasons by many people as to why they won't vote for Labour in the Dec. 12 general election.

The rabbi's broadside represented a break from his traditional position of not commenting on party politics. Though Corbyn has been repeatedly criticized for tolerating anti-Jewish comments from party members, he's not faced anything quite so acute from someone in the Jewish community's hierarchy.

At a campaign event earlier, Corbyn sought to allay concerns by insisting that if he becomes prime minister, he wants to lead a government that has an "open door" to all faith leaders.

He said he would invite Mirvis and other religious leaders "to come talk to us about what their concerns are" and said no community would feel at risk because of their faith.

Corbyn, 70, has long been a champion of Palestinian rights and critical of the Israeli government. He has at times appeared to be sympathetic to the grievances of groups such as Hamas and Hezbollah.

The rabbi's damaging column was published on the day Labour was launching its "race and faith" platform as part of its campaign to win voters with its views on tolerance and equality.

The left-wing party pledged in its platform to teach children about the legacy of the British empire, including slavery and colonialism, and also says it will treat attacks on places of worship as a specific aggravated offense.

Outside the launch event, protesters put up anti-Labour posters including one that read, "a vote for Labour is a vote for racism."

Mirvis' was not echoed by the whole Jewish community.

Alf Dubs, a Labour member of the House of Lords who came to Britain in the 1930s as a child refugee fleeing the Nazi, said he believed the attack had been "unjustified and unfair".

Others from across the religious spectrum backed Mirvis.

Louise Ellman, a former Labour legislator who quit the party over the issue, said the chief rabbi's column reflects "widespread concern and anxiety" across the mainstream Jewish community.

"The reason I have left the Labour Party is because I cannot ask people to vote for Jeremy Corbyn as prime minister while we have a Labour Party that is institutionally anti-Semitic," she told the BBC.

The situation, she added, was "unprecedented."

Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby said in a tweet that the chief rabbi's comments should make clear to the country that many British Jews feel uneasy.

The Muslim Council of Britain praised the rabbi for speaking out and said it agreed with his conclusion that too many politicians have been silent while racism has spread.

The council said Muslims face hostility, particularly within the governing party led by Prime Minister Boris Johnson.

"This is an issue that is particularly acute in the Conservative Party, who have approached Islamophobia with denial, dismissal and deceit," the group said.

All 650 seats in the House of Commons will be decided in the election, which was called by Johnson with the goal of getting a new Parliament that would back his Brexit policy.

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

More clues point to chemical compound in US vaping illnesses

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Health officials said Tuesday they have more evidence that a certain chemical compound is a culprit in a national outbreak of vaping illnesses.

Researchers analyzed black market vaping cartridges seized in Minnesota during the outbreak this year, and vaping liquid seized in that state last year. The newer cartridges contained the compound vitamin E acetate, but none of the older samples did.

They also looked at vaping cartridges collected from a dozen patients. Vitamin E acetate was commonly found in those, too.

The study was small, but it echoes other work that found the compound in the damaged lungs of 29 patients across the country.

"The findings further support a potential role for vitamin E acetate in causing lung injury associated with vaping products," said Dr. Ruth Lynfield, a Minnesota health official.

Nearly 2,300 Americans who vape have gotten sick since March, many of them teens and young adults, according to a recent tally by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. At least 47 people have died.

Most who got sick said they had vaped liquids that contain THC, the high-inducing part of marijuana. Vitamin E acetate has recently been used as a thickener in illicit vaping products that contain THC, officials say.

Asian markets mixed after US shares forge new highs

By ELAINE KURTENBACH AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Shares were mostly higher in Asia on Wednesday after a fresh set of record highs on Wall Street, spurred by encouraging signs on trade talks between the U.S. and China.

Japan's Nikkei 225 advanced 0.4% to 23,464.57 while the S&P ASX 200 climbed 0.7% to 6,833.20. South Korea's Kospi gained 0.3% to 2,127.21 and the Hang Seng in Hong Kong was almost unchanged at 26,918.28. The Shanghai Composite index lost 0.3% to 2,897.89.

Shares fell in Malaysia but rose in Taiwan and elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

Overnight on Wall Street, retailers and other companies that rely on consumer spending helped power the modest rally, which adds to the market's solid start to the week. Only energy, banks and health care sector stocks ended with losses. Bond prices rose, sending yields lower.

President Donald Trump said Tuesday that "We're in the final throes of a very deal. I guess you could say one of the most important deals in trade ever."

That followed comments in Beijing, where the Commerce Ministry said negotiators for both sides had spoken on the phone and agreed to more talks aimed at reaching a deal. The latest development came a day after China announced new guidelines for the protection of patents and copyrights, which has been a key issue in the dispute.

Investors have grown more hopeful over trade negotiations as the world's two largest economies continue to keep their rhetoric in check. That's a clear difference from earlier this year, when a sharp comment from either side would seemingly silence any ongoing talks and worsen relations.

"Generally, you can kind of look at the commentary coming out and I'd say it leans in the direction of progress being made, albeit at a fairly slow pace," said Jason Pride, chief investment officer of private wealth at Glenmede Trust.

The S&P 500 index rose 0.2% to 3,140.52. The benchmark index is on a three-day winning streak. The Dow Jones Industrial Average gained 0.2% to 28,121.68.

The Nasdaq composite added 0.2% to 8,647.93. The Russell 2000 index of smaller company stocks picked up 0.1% to 1,624.23.

The major stock indexes are on track for strong gains this year. The S&P 500 is up by more than 25%, while the Dow is up by more than 20%. The Nasdaq, meanwhile, is now up by more than 30%.

Surprisingly good corporate earnings, solid economic data, interest-rate cuts by the Federal Reserve and more optimism on the part of investors about the prospects for a U.S.-China trade deal have helped spur the market higher since late October.

The latest signals indicating that both sides are continuing to pursue a deal have been particularly encouraging, as new U.S. tariffs are set to hit Dec. 15 on many Chinese-made items on holiday shopping checklists, such as smartphones and laptops.

Investors hoping that Washington and Beijing can agree on terms of a deal that halts their trade dispute, or at least stops it from escalating.

Traders also got a new read on the U.S. consumer Tuesday. The Conference Board said its closely watched consumer confidence index fell slightly for the fourth consecutive month to 125.5. Still, the reading remains elevated ahead of the holiday shopping season.

Investors will have several other economic reports to assess on Wednesday, including home sales data, a key measure of inflation and the government's latest quarterly estimate of economic growth.

In energy trading, benchmark crude oil lost 19 cents to \$58.22 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It rose 40 cents to settle at \$58.41 a barrel. Brent crude oil, the international standard, lost 18 cents to \$63.03 per barrel.

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The dollar rose to 109.13 Japanese yen from 109.03 yen on Tuesday. The euro slipped to \$1.1017 from \$1.1021.

AP Business Writers Alex Veiga and Damian J. Troise contributed.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Nov. 27, the 331st day of 2019. There are 34 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Nov. 27, 1978, San Francisco Mayor George Moscone (mah-SKOH'-nee) and City Supervisor Harvey Milk, a gay-rights activist, were shot to death inside City Hall by former supervisor Dan White. (White served five years for manslaughter; he committed suicide in Oct. 1985.)

On this date:

In 1901, the U.S. Army War College was established in Washington, D.C.

In 1924, Macy's first Thanksgiving Day parade — billed as a "Christmas Parade" — took place in New York.

In 1942, during World War II, the Vichy French navy scuttled its ships and submarines in Toulon (too-LOHN') to keep them out of the hands of German troops.

In 1945, General George C. Marshall was named special U.S. envoy to China by President Harry S. Truman to try to end hostilities between the Nationalists and the Communists.

In 1962, the first Boeing 727 was rolled out at the company's Renton Plant.

In 1970, Pope Paul VI, visiting the Philippines, was slightly wounded at the Manila airport by a dagger-wielding Bolivian painter disguised as a priest.

In 1973, the Senate voted 92-3 to confirm Gerald R. Ford as vice president, succeeding Spiro T. Agnew, who'd resigned.

In 1998, answering 81 questions put to him three weeks earlier; President Clinton wrote the House Judiciary Committee that his testimony in the Monica Lewinsky affair was "not false and misleading."

In 1989, a bomb blamed on drug traffickers destroyed a Colombian Avianca Boeing 727, killing all 107 people on board and three people on the ground.

In 1999, Northern Ireland's biggest party, the Ulster Unionists, cleared the way for the speedy formation of an unprecedented Protestant-Catholic administration.

In 2000, a day after George W. Bush was certified the winner of Florida's presidential vote, Al Gore laid out his case for letting the courts settle the nation's long-count election.

In 2003, President Bush flew to Iraq under extraordinary secrecy and security to spend Thanksgiving with U.S. troops and thank them for "defending the American people from danger."

Ten years ago: Tiger Woods crashed his SUV outside his Florida mansion, sparking widespread attention to reports of unfaithfulness to his wife, Elin Nordegren. (The couple divorced the following year.) Former President Bill Clinton and Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton announced to their friends the engagement of daughter Chelsea to longtime boyfriend Marc Mezvinsky (mez-VIN'-skee). Space shuttle Atlantis and its seven astronauts returned from the International Space Station with a smooth touchdown.

Five years ago: Reflecting its lessening oil clout, OPEC decided to keep its output target on hold and sit out falling crude prices. Mystery writer P.D. James, 94, died in Oxford, England. Frank Yablans, 79, a former president of Paramount Pictures who presided over the release of several groundbreaking pictures such as "The Godfather," died in Los Angeles.

One year ago: Mississippi Republican Sen. Cindy Hyde-Smith won a divisive runoff over Democrat Mike Espy, who had hoped to become the state's first African-American senator since Reconstruction; Hyde-Smith survived a video-recorded remark that had been criticized as racist. President Donald Trump threatened to cut off all federal subsidies to General Motors because of its planned massive cutbacks in the U.S.

Today's Birthdays: Author Gail Sheehy is 82. Footwear designer Manolo Blahnik is 77. Academy Award-

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winning director Kathryn Bigelow is 68. TV host Bill Nye ("Bill Nye, the Science Guy") is 64. Actor William Fichtner (FIHK'-nuhr) is 63. Caroline Kennedy is 62. Academy Award-winning screenwriter Callie Khouri is 62. Rock musician Charlie Burchill (Simple Minds) is 60. Actor Michael Rispoli is 59. Jazz composer/big band leader Maria Schneider is 59. Former Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty is 59. Rock musician Charlie Benante (Anthrax) is 57. Rock musician Mike Bordin (Faith No More) is 57. Actor Fisher Stevens is 56. Actress Robin Givens is 55. Actor Michael Vartan is 51. Actress Elizabeth Marvel is 50. Rapper Scoob (DAS EFX) is 49. Actor Kirk Acevedo is 48. Rapper Twista is 47. Actor Jaleel White is 43. Actor Arjay Smith is 36. Actress Alison Pill is 34. Actress Lashana Lynch (TV: "Still Star-Crossed") is 32. Actress-singer Aubrey Peeples is 26.

Thought for Today: "Man's loneliness is but his fear of life." — Eugene O'Neill, American playwright (born 1888, died this date in 1953).

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