

Groton Daily Independent

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Sunday, December 8, 2019

2:00pm- 6:00pm - Open Gym - Groton Area High School Arena

2:00-4:00 PM Grades JK-8 (Students must be accompanied by an adult) 4:00-6:00 PM Grades 6-12

Monday, December 9, 2019

7:00pm- 10:00pm: School Board Meeting

Tuesday, December 10, 2019

Milbank Student Congress

Thursday, December 12, 2019

5:00pm: Basketball: Girls 7th/8th Game at Tiospa Zina High School

Both 7th and 8th grade games will be played at 5 PM

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

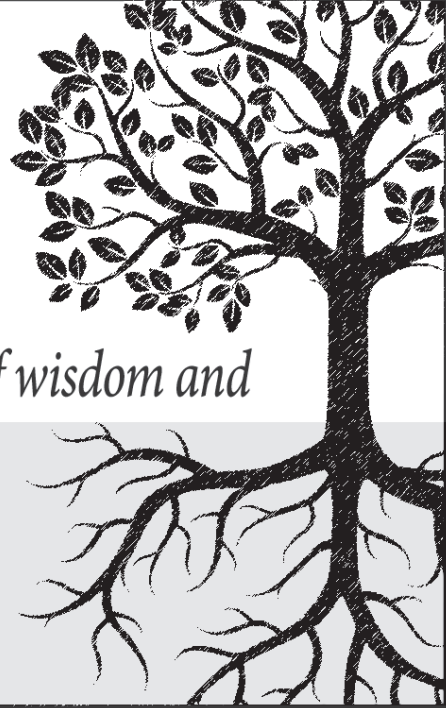
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

Sunday Extras



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might... ❀ ISAIAH 11:1,2 ❀



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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of Matthew in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. Where did the angel Gabriel appear to Mary saying, "Blessed art thou among women"? *Nazareth, Tyre, Ninevah, Gazi*

3. With two different biblical answers, who was the father of Joseph? *Jacob/Heli, Gideon/Ishmael, Solomon/Nahum, Samuel/Pilate*

4. Which Old Testament prophet predicted Jesus would be born in Bethlehem? *Amos, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum*

5. For the journey to Bethlehem how did Mary and Joseph travel? *Bible not specific, Cart, Rode donkey, Small raft*

6. Which of these wasn't a gift from the wise men (Magi)? *Silver, Myrrh, Gold, Frankincense*

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) Nazareth; 3) Jacob/Heli; 4) Micah; 5) Bible not specific; 6) Silver

Christmas gift? "Test Your Bible Knowledge: 1,206 Questions to Sharpen Your Understanding of Scripture," by Wilson Casey, is available in bookstores and online.

Comfort foods

Made fast and healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Holiday Bars

If ever there was a time of the year when plates of cookies are a "must," it's during the holiday season!

- 1 (8-ounce) can reduced-fat crescent rolls
- 1 (8-ounce) package fat-free cream cheese
- 1 egg or equivalent in egg substitute
- Sugar substitute to equal 1/3 cup sugar, suitable for baking
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 2 tablespoons mini chocolate chips

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9-by-9-inch cake pan with butter-flavored cooking spray. Unroll and pat half of the crescent rolls into prepared cake pan.

2. In a medium bowl, stir cream cheese with a spoon until soft. Add egg, sugar substitute and vanilla extract. Mix well to combine. Stir in walnuts. Pour mixture evenly into cake pan. Pat remaining crescent rolls flat, being sure to seal perforations and carefully arrange over top of filling.

3. Bake for 25 minutes. Evenly sprinkle chocolate chips over top and continue baking for 5 minutes. Place cake pan on a wire rack and allow to cool completely. Cut into 16 bars. Makes 8 (2 bars each) servings.

• Each serving equals: 160 calories, 8g fat, 7g protein, 15g carb., 411mg sodium, 0g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1 Meat, 1 Fat.

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CHARACTER PROFILE:

SECRET AGENT X-9

WRITTEN BY DASHIELL HAMMETT AND ILLUSTRATED BY ALEX RAYMOND, "SECRET AGENT X-9" FIRST APPEARED IN NEWSPAPERS ON JANUARY 22, 1934.



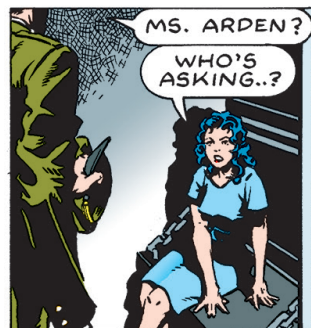
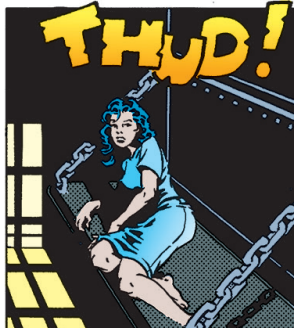
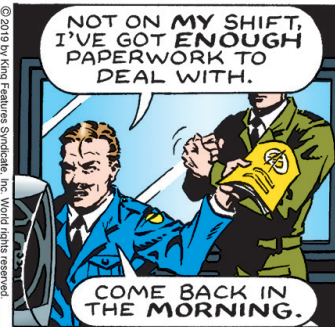
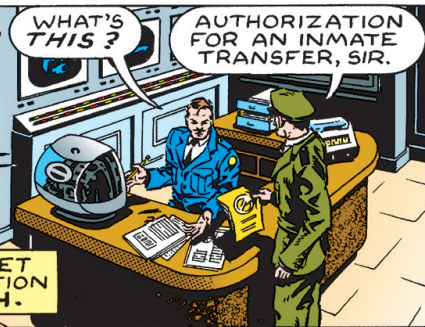
DURING RAYMOND'S TENURE ON "SECRET AGENT X-9" HE WORKED SIMULTANEOUSLY ON TWO OTHER COMIC STRIPS...

...INTERNATIONAL ADVENTURER "JUNGLE JIM" AND A SCI-FI STRIP CALLED "FLASH GORDON".

FLASH GORDON

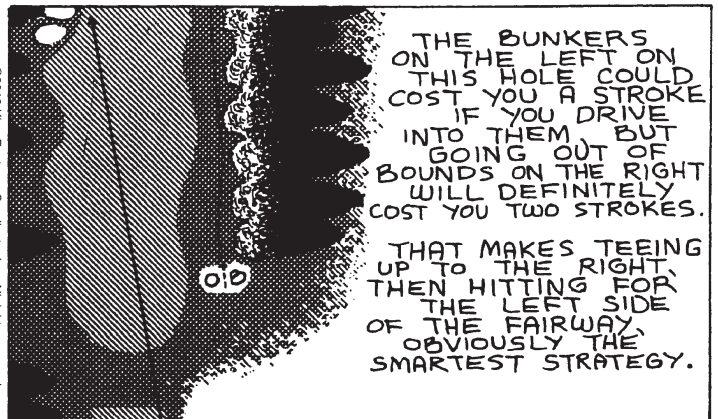
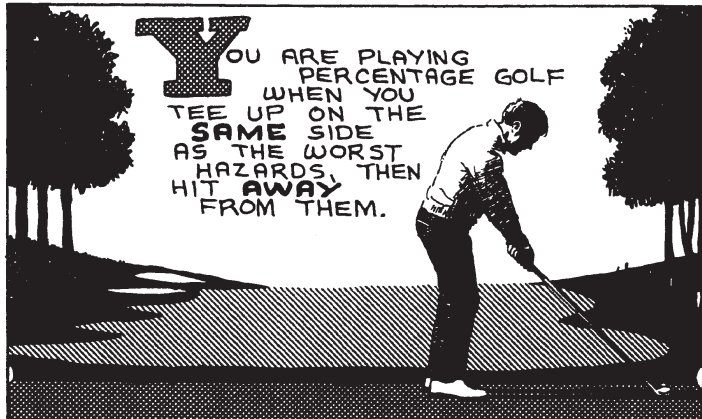
12-1 BY JIM KEEFE

P PLACE: A TOP-SECRET GOVERNMENT INSTALLATION ON THE PLANET EARTH.



TO BE CONT'D..

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS



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Size Determines Risk of Aneurysm Rupture

DEAR DR. ROACH: My boyfriend recently was diagnosed with an aneurysm. The report says the abdominal aorta is 3.02 cm in largest dimension and recommends screening every six months. Do we need to see a cardiologist for a second opinion? Is there medication to help? — *B.S.*

ANSWER: The aorta is the largest blood vessel in the body. It comes directly off the left ventricle of the heart and supplies blood to the entire body. It may become enlarged either in the chest (a thoracic aneurysm) or in the abdomen.

Abdominal aortic aneurysms are more common in men, especially over 65, and smoking is the biggest risk factor. There are contributing familial conditions as well, such as Marfan syndrome.

Most people have an abdominal aorta that is no bigger than 3 cm, so your boyfriend is just barely over the cut-off. His risk for rupture, the dreaded complication of an AAA, is negligible at this size. I agree with the screening recommendations, and would advise tobacco cessation if he smokes, regular moderate exercise and control of blood pressure if high.

Seeing a cardiologist would be very reasonable: Your boyfriend could get personalized advice on risk reduction. Although aspirin and statin drugs may have a benefit, the evidence for it is weak. Most experts do not recommend them unless there are other indications for taking them.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I had a hernia operation in 2015. The repair

included insertion of mesh patches that now have been recalled. Since the operation, I have had many health issues. Is there a blood test or other test to see if the mesh is the cause of my problems? Should I have it removed and replaced? I am 83. — *J.C.L.*

ANSWER: Surgical mesh is commonly used in hernia repair, as well as in many gynecologic surgeries. Mesh reduces the need for re-operation. However, there is an increased rate of long-term complications that partially offsets the benefit of using mesh.

Complications related to the mesh can be very serious, such as bowel obstruction, perforation or bleeding; these usually require urgent surgery. However, symptoms also may be less specific, and include pain, non-healing wounds and infection. Of people with a mesh repair, 4% to 6% had evidence of complications after five years of follow-up, according to a well-done study from Denmark.

I am aware of recalled mesh products (49 out of the top 50 results on a web search were from personal injury law firms; the 50th was from the Food and Drug Administration) and reports of significantly higher complication rates from recalled (as well as from counterfeit) mesh.

Without knowing more about your health issues, it is difficult to weigh in on whether the mesh is likely to be causing it. There is no simple blood or imaging test that will give a definitive answer. However, if your symptoms are among those possibly related to mesh complication, it absolutely would be appropriate to have a discussion with your surgeon about the upsides and downsides of a re-operation. I would be cautious about recommending another surgery for an 83-year-old, unless the symptoms are significant and your surgeon feels they are likely due to mesh complications.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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1. Name the song written about an actual murder that happened in a bar in 1895 in St. Louis.
2. Which 1964 hit includes the sound of a motorcycle?
3. Who released “Blueberry Hill” in 1956?
4. Which artist had a No. 1 hit with “Make Love Stay”?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: “Now with passion in our eyes, There’s no way we could disguise it.”

Answers

1. “Stagger Lee,” best known for the version by Lloyd Price in 1959. Billy Lyons was killed by Stag Lee Shelton when Lyons grabbed Shelton’s hat during what was likely a business or political discussion.
2. “Leader of the Pack,” by the girl group The Shangri-Las. The legend that the sound came from a motorcycle ridden into the studio is false.
3. Fats Domino. It was first heard, sung by Gene Autry, in the 1940 Western “The Singing Hill.”
4. Dan Fogelberg, in 1983. It’s thought Fogelberg was inspired by Tom Robbins’ novel “Still Life With Woodpecker.”
5. “(I’ve Had) The Time of My Life” was used in the soundtrack of “Dirty Dancing” in 1987, by Bill Medley and Jennifer Warnes. It was originally meant for Donna Summer, but she rejected the song because of the film title.

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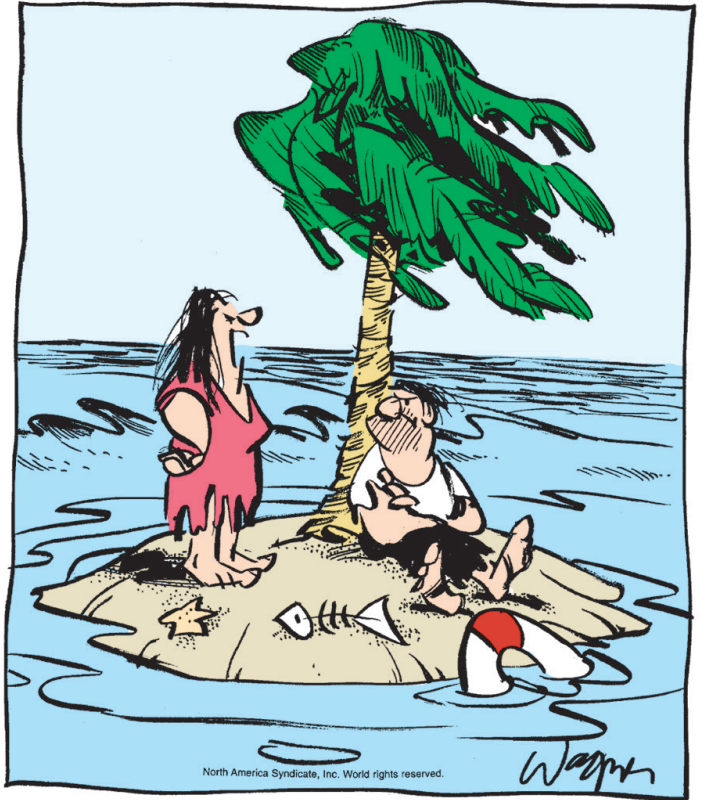
Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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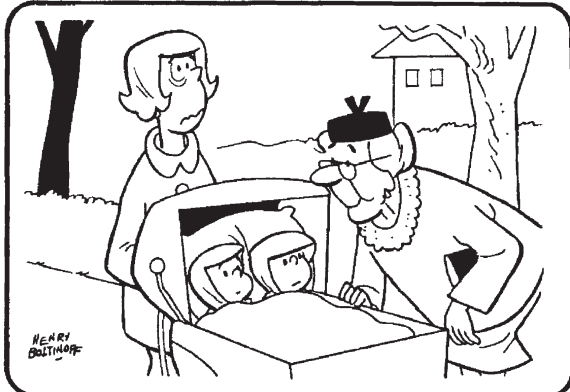
GRIN and BEAR IT



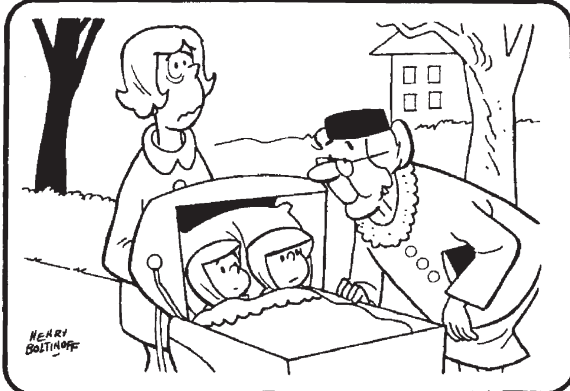
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HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Woman's hat is different. 2. Blanket has a ruff. 3. House has more windows. 4. Woman's coat has buttons. 5. Tree has extra limb. 6. Mom's bangs are different.



- Be sure to eat a hearty breakfast before heading out to the airport. Pack a piece or two of whole fruit or a portion of nuts for snacking, and bring an empty water bottle so that you can make it through airport security and fill the bottle when you are at the gate. Being hydrated and having healthy snacks will make your travel experience more pleasant.

- “Print a physical copy of your travel itinerary, including flight numbers. Stow a copy inside a secure spot in your luggage so that if it gets lost, you’ll be easy to find. I like to put mine inside the zippered net bag that’s attached to my suitcase.” — *E.L. in Ohio*

- Pack a hanging luggage scale. This is especially helpful at the holidays, when you may be both taking gifts to give and returning with gifts given to you.

- When planning a vacation or even a visit home for the holidays, it’s important to manage everyone’s expectations. Imagine Mom expects her grown kids to spend most of their time seeing extended family, while they are making plans to see childhood friends while in town. Have a chat with parents, siblings and extended family so that everyone has a good idea of what the plan is.

- “For large gatherings, borrow what you need from local friends and family. That includes chairs, servingware, place settings, silverware and linens! Most people are happy to help.” — *R.R. in Alabama*

- “We have a large family, and when we all get together at the holidays — or anytime — we share a screenshot of our itinerary in a group text as we make plans. This way, we can try to group up for pickups from the airport or car rentals.” — *C.A. in Oregon*

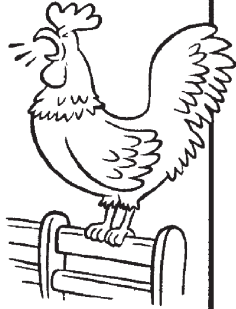
Send your tips to Now Here’s a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

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RIDDLE CARD

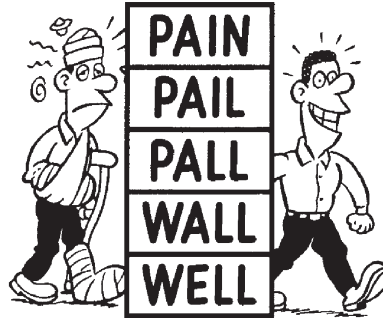
1. Why is a rooster sitting on a fence like a penny?
2. When is a pie like a poet?
3. Why is a goose like an icicle?
4. When is a man like a pony?
5. What gets wetter and wetter the more it dries?



Answers: 1. Because its head is on one side and its tail is on the other. 2. When it is Browning. 3. Because they both grow down. 4. When he is a little hoarse (horse). 5. A towel.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend



Illustrated by David Coulson

CALLING DR. WHIRL!

In this type of puzzle you are given a word that must be changed into another word in a series of moves. During each move, you must change one letter in the previous word so as to form a new word. In our example, we changed PAIN to WELL in four moves. See if you can change the following five words in four moves.

1. HAVE to LEND
2. PAID to FULL
3. PEAT to WARM
4. SALT to DOME
5. CREW to TEAM

Answers:
 1. HAVE, LAVE, LANE, LAND, LEND.
 2. PAID, PAIL, PULL, FULL.
 3. PEAT, PERT, PART, WART, WARM.
 4. SALT, SALE, DALE, DOLE, DOME.
 5. CREW, CRAW, CRAM, TRAM, TEAM.

ELECTROCARDIOGRAPHICALLY is the longest word we could find in our English Language Dictionary! We also found one word that can actually be made shorter by adding one syllable to it. Can you guess what this word is?



Answer: The word is SHORT. It becomes SHORTER when you add one syllable to it.

FIND THE SEVEN WORDS PUZZLE! In the word square at the right, we've removed six of the letters to spell out the word "TIRADE." See if you can replace these letters in the squares so that you'll have four three-letter words across and three four-letter words down. The time limit is 60 seconds.

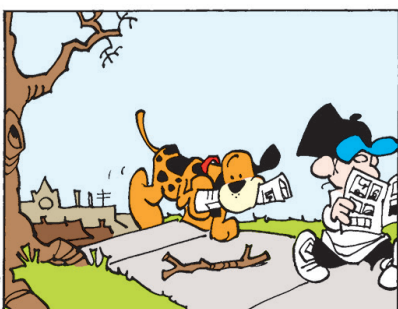
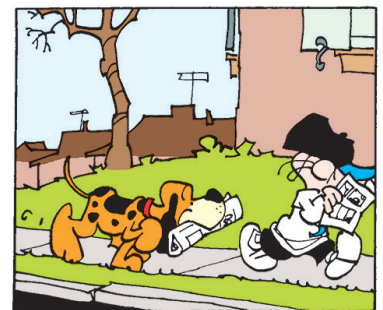
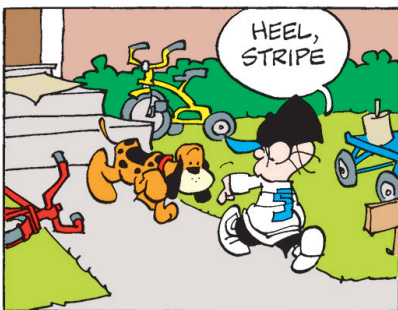
		A	M
		R	
T	A		L
I			
R	A		
A			

Answers: (Across): Dam, era, all, rat, (Down): Bear, aria, mall.

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TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Chum
- 4 With 29-Across, Conrad novel
- 8 Faction
- 12 Whatever amount
- 13 Dermatology subject
- 14 Horn sound
- 15 Related to summer theater
- 17 "That hurts!"
- 18 Decorate a T-shirt, '60s-style
- 19 Old Olds
- 21 "— the fields we go"
- 22 Trite
- 26 McCartney cohort
- 29 See 4-Across
- 30 Praise in verse
- 31 Doves' place
- 32 Eviscerate
- 33 Actress Cannon
- 34 Commotion
- 35 Trot
- 36 Part of a Santa costume
- 37 1935 Astaire/Rogers movie
- 39 Oppositionist
- 40 Swelled head
- 41 Pester
- 45 Oodles

1	2	3		4	5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12				13					14			
15			16						17			
18							19	20				
			21				22			23	24	25
26	27	28				29				30		
31					32				33			
34				35				36				
37			38				39					
			40				41			42	43	44
45	46	47			48	49						
50					51					52		
53					54					55		

- 48 Western hero's trademark
- 50 Suitor
- 51 Draftable
- 52 List-ending abbr.
- 53 Complain
- 54 Peruse
- 55 "Quiet!"
- DOWN**
- 1 History
- 2 Oppositionist
- 3 Orpheus' instrument
- 4 Attorney
- 5 Earth tone
- 6 Genetic stuff
- 7 Midwestern city
- 8 Remained upright
- 9 Debtor's letters
- 10 Elmer, to Bugs
- 11 Biblical verb ending
- 16 Worship
- 20 Shade source
- 23 Georgetown athlete
- 24 Hebrew month
- 25 See to
- 26 "Shoo!"
- 27 — list
- 28 On
- 29 Moonshine container
- 32 Commence hostilities
- 33 Thick
- 35 Binge
- 36 Went by water
- 38 Excited
- 39 Porcelain
- 42 "I'll have what — having"
- 43 Wooden strip
- 44 Leave an impression
- 45 "The Chew" network
- 46 Meadow
- 47 Rowing need
- 49 Weeding tool

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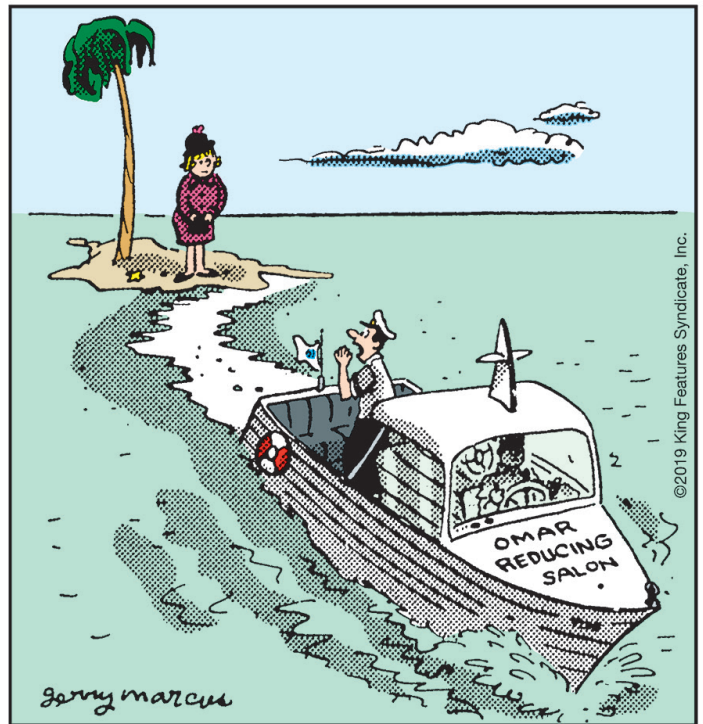
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 27 mins.

P	A	L		L	O	R	D		S	I	D	E
A	N	Y		A	C	N	E		T	O	O	T
S	T	R	A	W	H	A	T		O	U	C	H
T	I	E	D	Y	E		R	E	O			
			O	E	R		O	L	D	H	A	T
S	T	A	R	R		J	I	M		O	D	E
C	O	T	E		G	U	T		D	Y	A	N
A	D	O		J	O	G		B	E	A	R	D
T	O	P	H	A	T		C	O	N			
			E	G	O		H	A	S	S	L	E
A	L	O	T		W	H	I	T	E	H	A	T
B	E	A	U		A	O	N	E		E	T	C
C	A	R	P		R	E	A	D		S	H	H

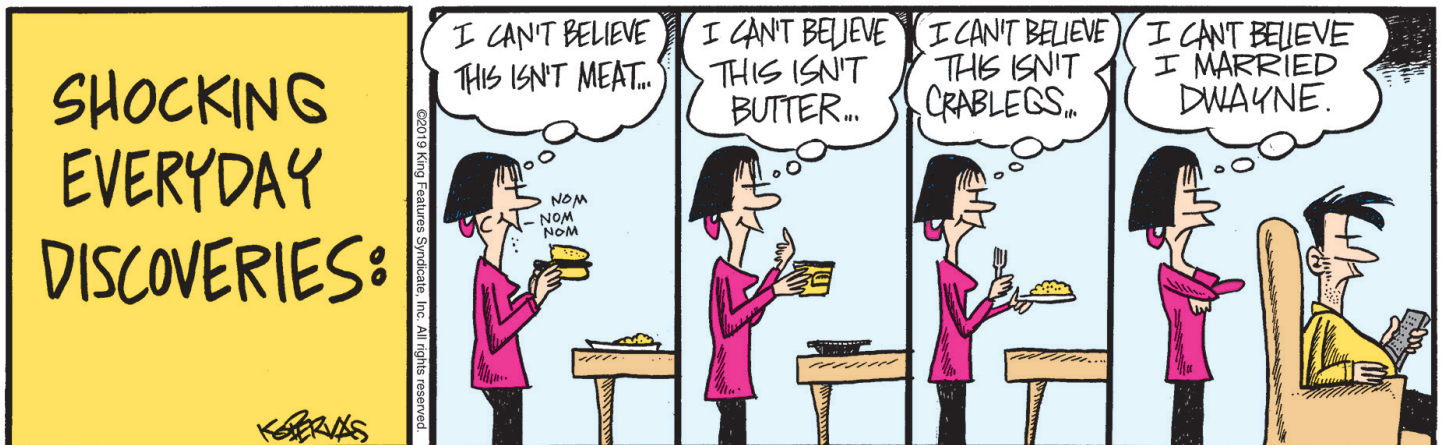
LAFF - A - DAY



"We'll be back to pick you up in two weeks!"

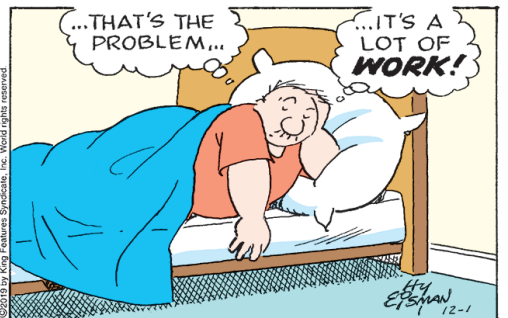
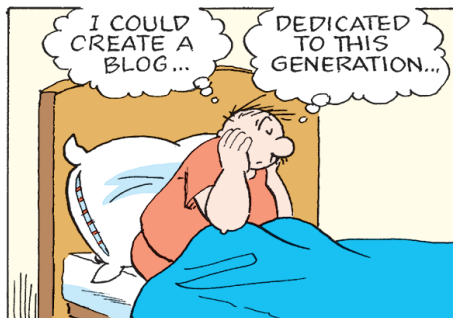
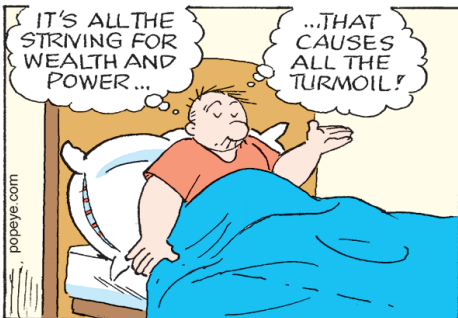
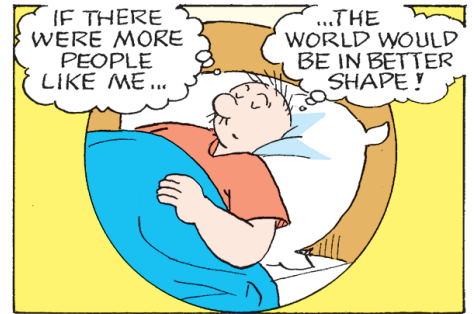
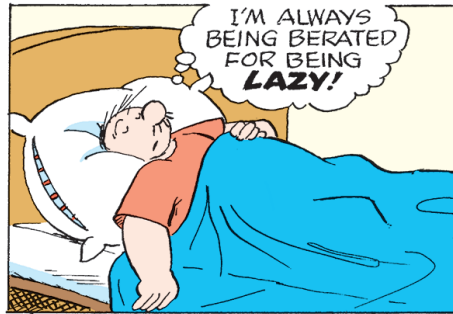
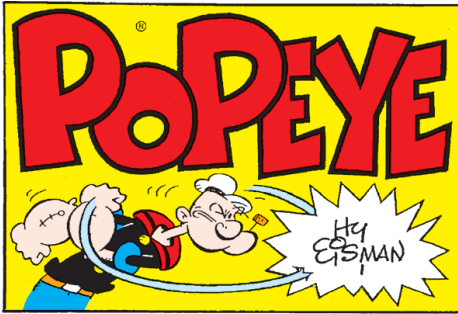
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



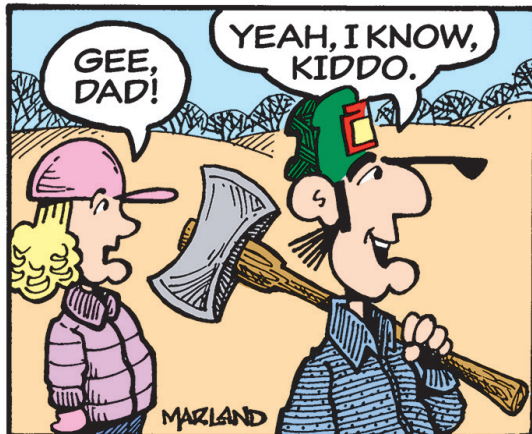
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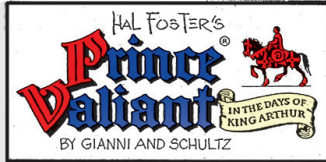
R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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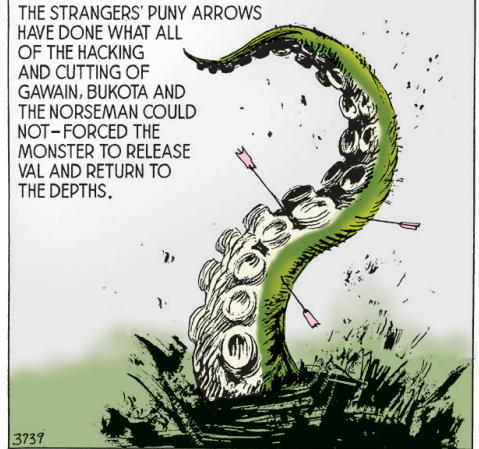
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Our Story:

THREE ARROWS FEATHER THE BEAST SET ON DRAGGING PRINCE VALIANT TO A WATERY FATE. THREE APPARITIONS SILENTLY APPEAR, GLIDING OVER THE WEED AND OUT OF THE MISTS.

VAL IS DUMFOUNDED - EVEN IN THE BIZARRE SEA OF WEED, WHAT COULD BE MORE UNEXPECTED?



THE STRANGERS' PUNY ARROWS HAVE DONE WHAT ALL OF THE HACKING AND CUTTING OF GAWAIN, BUKOTA AND THE NORSEMAN COULD NOT - FORCED THE MONSTER TO RELEASE VAL AND RETURN TO THE DEPTHS.

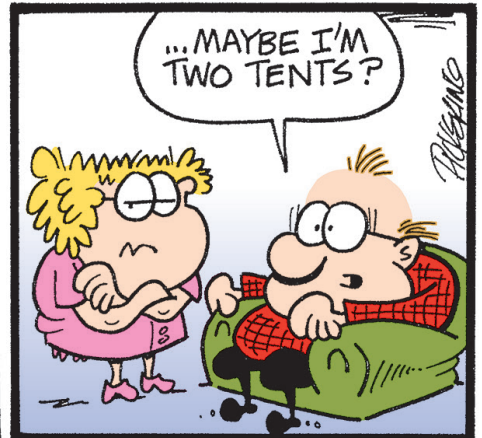
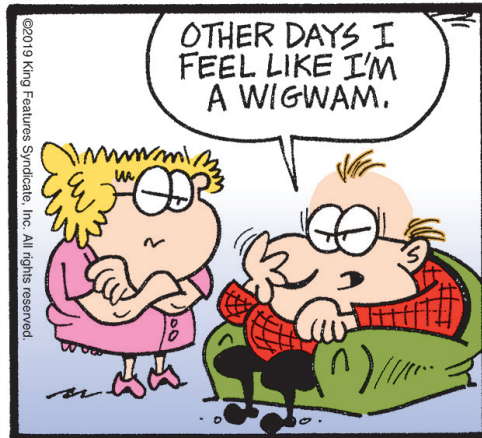
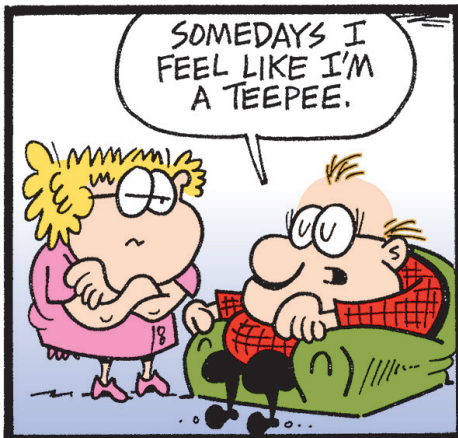
AND THEN THE DEADLY BOWS ARE TRAINED ON THEM. THE MESSAGE IS CLEAR: "YOU ARE OUR PRISONERS!"

NEXT: **Rough Company**



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Gift Ideas for Seniors

Most of us don't need a single thing. We certainly don't want more cute knickknacks to add to whatever clutter we already have on the shelves. Yet this is the time of year when others think they need to give us presents. Sometimes they'll ask in advance what we'd like to have, and we can breathe a sigh of relief when they do.

So, what do we say when they ask? Here are some thoughts:

- Pay for our cable for a couple months. Or pay for our Netflix or newspaper for a whole year. Add a year to a subscription to our favorite magazine or maybe a new one for us to try out. Consider a subscription to a fruit of the month club, or one for coffee or tea.

- Spend the afternoon with us sorting a box of photos and scan them for us. Or make us a special photo album of family and grandchildren. Create a 2020 calendar or load a digital photo frame with family photos. Give us a copy of "The Book of Me," 2nd edition (Peter Pauper Press), an autobiographical journal we can fill out.

- Some things aren't fancy but can be very useful: a bathtub grab bar, a pill organizer, gift certificates to the places we go (such as movies and dinners out). Install some SnapPower Guide-lights, which are wall outlets that double as nightlights — very handy — as well as a few of those closet lights.

- Load up our freezer with homemade single-meal dinners. Pay for a trip that the senior center will take, and if extra people are allowed, go with us.

The best gifts for seniors are those things that give us pleasure but are hard for us to afford, and those things that make our lives easier.

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1. Who was the first major-league player to hit a pair of home runs in an All-Star Game?

2. Name the last of the six major-league teams that longtime skipper (1967-88) Dick Williams managed.

3. Can you name two of the first three quarterbacks in SEC history to have at least 35 passing and 35 rushing touchdowns during their career?

4. LeBron James played in eight consecutive NBA Finals (2011-18). Name two of the three players who played in more.

5. An American has been drafted No. 1 overall eight times in the history of the NHL Entry Draft. How many of them were selected between 2000 and 2019?

6. Who was the last Cup driver before Chase Elliott in 2018-19 to win back-to-back races at Watkins Glen?

7. Who was the last female tennis player younger than Coco Gauff in 2019 (15 years old) to win her first WTA tournament?

Answers

1. Pittsburgh's Arky Vaughn, in 1941.

2. The Seattle Mariners, in 1988.

3. Tim Tebow, Dak Prescott and Nick Fitzgerald.

4. Bill Russell (10 consecutive), Sam Jones (nine) and Tom Heinsohn (nine).

5. Five.

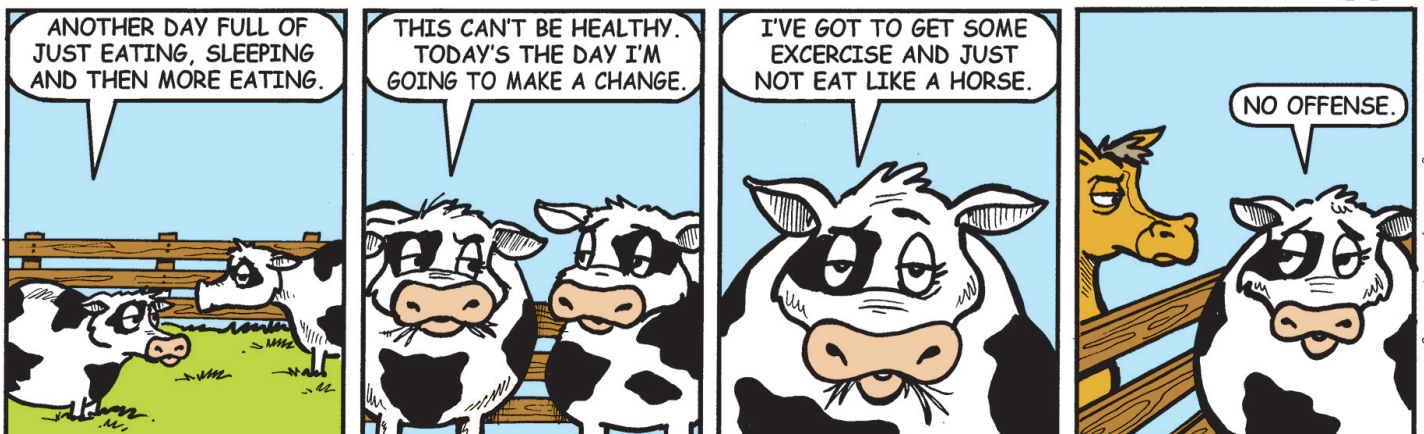
6. Marcos Ambrose, in 2011-12.

7. The Czech Republic's Nicole Pietrangeli, who was a younger 15 when she won in 2004.

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Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



MYTH VS FACT

It started with email, now it's social media – it's easier than ever to spread false information. When I came to Washington there were a few things I'd heard through the rumor mill about Members of Congress. I want to clear up a few myths with facts.

MYTH: Members of Congress can retire and receive a salary or pension for life after serving just a single, two-year term.

FACT: Members of Congress are eligible to start earning a pension after five years, similar to federal employees. A three-term (6 years) Congressman would be eligible for a pension once they turn 62 years old. It would be around \$17k – generous but not full pay.

MYTH: Members of Congress receive free health care.

FACT: Members of Congress and staffers who want employer coverage are required to pay a portion of the premium, similar to many private employers. I believe Congress should live under the laws it makes, so my staff and I buy our health insurance on the Obamacare exchange. There are several members who've chosen to pay for private health insurance or are on their spouse's plan. My family pays \$9,673.56 a year for health insurance. Like most Americans, I expect it to go up next year.

MYTH: Members of Congress are exempt from Obamacare.

FACT: Members of Congress and their personal staffers were included in Obamacare when it passed in 2010. Section 1312 of the law requires members of Congress and staff to use an Obamacare plan if they choose employer sponsored health care.

MYTH: Members of Congress get free housing in Washington, D.C.

FACT: I give this one three Pinocchios. Members of Congress do not receive free housing or any housing reimbursement. I rent a bedroom from a nice couple who has lived in Washington for years.

MYTH: Members of Congress, their staff and their families do not have to pay back student loans.

FACT: There is no student loan benefit for Members of Congress or their family. There is a student loan repayment program for congressional staff members.

MYTH: Members of Congress do not pay into Social Security.

FACT: According to the Social Security Administration, All Members of Congress, the President and Vice President, Federal judges, and most political appointees, have to pay into the system just like everyone else. All Members have been paying into Social Security since January 1984.

MYTH: Members of Congress vote to increase their own pay all the time.

FACT: Congressional salaries have not increased (including cost of living adjustments) since 2009. The annual salary of a rank and file Member of Congress (like me) is \$174,000. The last time Congress unilaterally changed its salary was in 1989, which included a cost of living adjustment.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR **KRISTI NOEM**



Driving Opportunity

On December 3, I proposed my budget to the legislature for Fiscal Year 2021. Just like many folks are experiencing, money is tight for the State this year. But just as South Dakotans always do, we're finding a way to be successful with the resources at our disposal. My proposed budget is structurally balanced, it doesn't raise taxes, and it saves money for the future. It also invests in key areas that will set us up for long-term growth.

One of my top priorities is keeping South Dakotans safe. One component of that is equipping law enforcement and first responders with the tools they need to protect our communities. In 2003, we created the state radio system – a single, uniform communications system for first responders in every corner of the state. But the current system needs an update. My budget recommends \$5.1 million in one-time funds that will ensure a smooth transition to the new system so there are no gaps in protecting South Dakota families.

I also remain committed to expanding internet access across the state. Without access to high-speed internet, folks can't use the newest technology on their farms. They can't pursue higher education because of uploading and downloading speeds. They can't start online businesses.

Last year, I dedicated \$5 million that leveraged more than \$11.4 million in direct project costs to increase connection across the state. In addition to that, because the state had a broadband plan in place, applicants for the federal Reconnect dollars scored extra points. Those awards are just starting to come in, but those dollars should bring the investment in South Dakota up to nearly \$25 million. We must do more to bring our communities into the 21st century, though, so my budget proposes another \$5 million to this project.

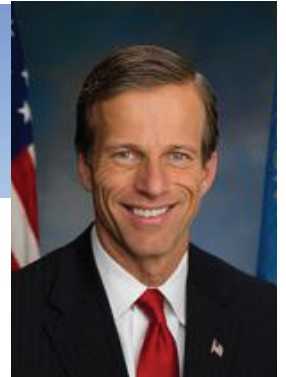
We must also invest in our universities and training programs. Eleven of USD's fastest-growing majors are in the School of Health Sciences, representing a significant opportunity for future growth in our state. I'm investing \$5 million dollars for the construction of a new School of Health Sciences Building at USD, as well as \$396,000 for the Cyber Cync Incubator at Dakota State University. These investments will spur economic development – in turn, providing greater opportunities for South Dakota families and helping keep top talent in our state.

And, of course, we're working toward storm recovery. My budget includes \$9.9 million to partner with local governments to provide disaster relief and resources for mitigating future disasters. Starting with the 2019 disasters, the State will offer loans to cities, counties, townships, and tribes from the Emergency and Disaster Fund. We will continue to pay for 10 percent of the cost of the disasters but will now offer loans for the other 90 percent. In addition to providing loans from the Emergency and Disaster Fund for the local share of the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program, the local match requirement will be lowered from 25 percent to 15 percent to allow local governments to take full advantage of these programs. We must rebuild damaged communities, build stronger communities for the future, and ensure long-term resilience so our families can thrive.

There's much more I could write about... added funding tied to increased K-12 enrollment, \$3.7 million for meth treatment and enforcement, a formula adjustment that is projected to result in nearly \$14 million for special education, added dollars to meet the increased need of training more foster parents and parents looking to adopt.... All in service of South Dakota families.

It's been a difficult year, yes, but we have tremendous opportunity before us. The growth of our current industries and the attraction of new ones will drive opportunity. Expanding on some already successful initiatives will drive opportunity. And laying the foundation to enhance our competitiveness with respect to other states will help ensure our top talent stays in South Dakota – creating more opportunity for years to come.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



South Dakota Leading the Way

I served four years as chairman of the Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation, which has jurisdiction over everything from planes, trains, and automobiles to the depths of the ocean and the heights of outer space. And no matter the subject, one of my favorite parts about serving in that role was giving South Dakota a seat at the table by elevating the issues that are important to the state and by providing South Dakotans with the opportunity and platform to share their expertise and experience on a wide range of issues.

While I no longer serve as chairman of the full committee, I'm still a member, and I'm closing out my first year as chairman of the Subcommittee on Communications, Technology, Innovation, and the Internet. It's been a fun and rewarding experience, particularly because I'm still able to give South Dakota a seat at the table.

The subcommittee's membership mirrors the full committee's membership, so we have a variety of voices, experience, and priorities on which we can lean. I also love the subject matter. I'm able to continue working on several initiatives that began years ago, particularly my effort to ensure the United States wins the race to 5G mobile broadband technology.

Winning the race to 5G isn't just about the jobs and opportunities it would create or the enhanced speed with which we'd be able to consume or share information. As important as those things are – and they are very important – this is also about better positioning the United States from a national security and economic security perspective.

For these reasons, it's more imperative than ever that we beat our global competitors in this space, particularly China, which often plays by a different set of rules. I've been committed to doing everything I can to ensure the tools are available for the United States to be the first to carry this across the finish line, but we can't take our foot off the gas.

Over the years, I've led full committee hearings on this topic. I've led subcommittee hearings on this topic. I've brought the committee to South Dakota to examine this topic. I've written bills on this topic. I've even had one signed into law. And since the federal government isn't going to win this race alone, I've also found partners at the state and local level who have been instrumental in helping South Dakota lead the way on 5G.

Sioux Falls Mayor Paul TenHaken has been one of those partners, and it was a "things-have-come-full-circle" experience to join him and others in November as the first 5G cells in South Dakota went live. After years of putting in the work, Sioux Falls is now one of the most rural communities in the entire United States to be 5G-enabled.

Because of his leadership on this issue, I recently invited Mayor TenHaken to Washington, D.C., to share his unique perspective on how important this issue is at the local level. Specifically, the mayor weighed in on the implementation of my Making Opportunities for Broadband Investment and Limiting Excessive and Needless Obstacles to Wireless Act – or MOBILE NOW, for short – which was signed into law last year. This new law helped lay some of the important groundwork that has made it possible to more easily deploy mobile broadband networks in the country.

5G is expected to contribute \$275 billion in new investment and \$500 billion in economic growth, and, as I mentioned, it will help strengthen our national security, too. We're at the point in the race where the finish line is in sight, and there's no turning back. With the right investment, a committed team, and a clear vision, the United States can win, and when we do, South Dakota will have been a part of its success.

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A Better Way to Determine How Your Tax Dollars are Spent

Again this month, Congress is operating under a Continuing Resolution, or CR, that expires just a few days before Christmas. The intent is to back Members of Congress and the White House into a corner, hoping they will be willing to accept a massive end-of-year spending package that they might otherwise oppose. This is not a new phenomenon – it's been happening under our modern budget process since 1974. But that doesn't mean we have to accept it. We must demand better when it comes to deciding how your tax dollars are spent.

Here's how our budget process is supposed to work: The regular budget process begins when the president submits his budget request to Congress, due in February, outlining his or her ideas for spending priorities for the following fiscal year that begins in October. Congress then crafts its own budget, a comprehensive road map to be used in the appropriations process between February and the October 1st deadline.

The process then moves to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees. These committees use the budget blueprint – which sets overall spending caps – to consider and pass 12 appropriations bills, which write the specific funding levels for individual programs within the federal government for defense spending and non-defense discretionary spending. I should make note that this only accounts for approximately 30 percent of what we spend today.

Once the appropriations bills pass both houses of Congress, the differences between the bills are reconciled through a conference committee report. The conference committee report becomes the actual appropriations bill in each case. Once the conference committee reports pass the House and Senate, they then go to the president, and once he signs it the federal government is funded until the next budget cycle. This is all supposed to be done well before the September 30 deadline.

But that's not what really happens. In reality, Congress rarely passes a budget and the president's budget is seen as little more than a messaging tool. Appropriators regularly drag their feet on getting their committee work done, Members hold up progress for political theater, and bills that actually do make it to the full Senate floor are too often riddled with 'poison pills' deliberately designed to kill the legislation. This leaves Congress with the false choice of passing a CR or shutting down the government, both of which waste money, harm our military and fail to bring about meaningful discussions on how your tax money is spent.

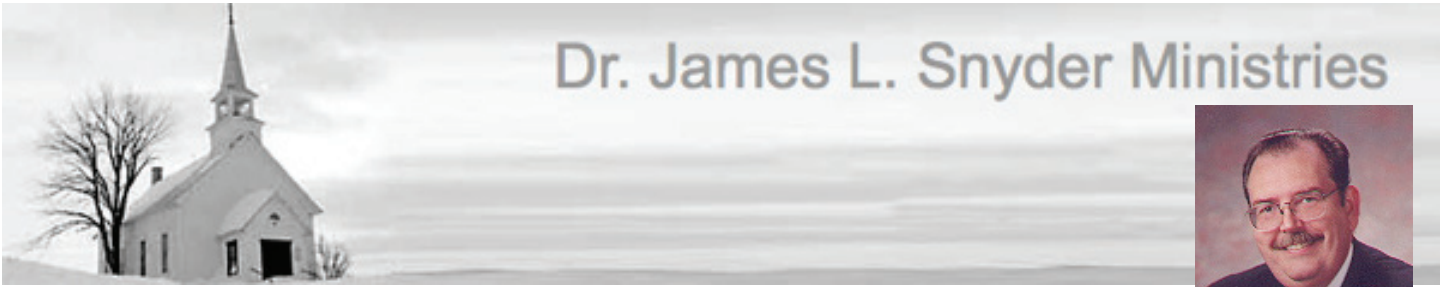
When I came to the Senate five years ago, I immediately voiced my opposition to this backwards way of appropriating, along with a number of my newly-confirmed Senate colleagues. Among many other things, I've been deeply concerned about the impact on our military. Military leaders continue to warn that CRs have a detrimental impact on our ability to train, equip and maintain the force. Leadership understood our concerns but asked us to be patient – this broken process has been around for a long time, and it would take time to convince the 'old bulls' to return to regular order. We agreed to give them time, but we did not let up.

After two years of going through the appropriations process without progress, I joined a group of my colleagues to call on Senate leadership to delay or cancel the in-state August work period so we could make progress on our appropriations work well ahead of the September 30 deadline of 2017, in addition to other issues. They agreed, and progress was made, though not enough. The following year, we did the same thing, again successfully, and for the first time since we came to the Senate, Congress passed and the president signed appropriations bills into law ahead of the September 30, 2018 deadline. In all, approximately 75 percent of government operations were funded on time through regular order. But the victory was short-lived, as the remaining 25 percent of government operated under a CR and – eventually – was shut down for 35 days this past December and January.

This way of doing business should appall every one of us. During the appropriations process for this fiscal year, which began on October 1, 2019, as I've done in the past, I voted no on CRs after no progress was made. Our appropriations process is a mess. Unless more of us take a stand and reject the status quo, we'll never get back to where we need to be to actually impact spending and to begin to rein-in our debt. I remain committed to getting us back on track. I will share more about the impact CRs have specifically on our military in a future column.

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Dr. James L. Snyder Ministries



The Difference Between a Fool and Being Full

One thing truly amazing is how fast Thanksgiving goes. Here I am in the living room relaxing in my easy chair just one day after Thanksgiving.

My ears are still ringing with all the chatter that went on around our Thanksgiving dinner table. It is so beautiful to get together with family to celebrate.

As I was sitting in my chair, I noticed I was feeling rather stuffed. The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage is an expert at stuffing turkeys. I am the turkey she stuffs the best. She never takes credit for it because all through the dinner, she asks me, "Don't you think you've had enough?"

She has yet to understand that, especially at a Thanksgiving table, I don't "think." I am not there to think but to stuff myself with all of the deliciousness on the table.

The week before Thanksgiving, I had a doctor's appointment. I discussed an issue with my nurse, which was, "Is a pumpkin a vegetable?"

We had a very lively discussion. She brought in another nurse, which made the debate even more energetic. In the end, we all came to the same conclusion; a pumpkin is a vegetable. If anybody should know this, it would be a nurse.

So, on Thanksgiving, I had my prized vegetable, pumpkin pie, and stuffed myself with it. If this is what vegetables are like, I could eat vegetables all my life, along with carrot cake for dessert.

The only problem, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage, does not agree with this. She has an entirely different point of view. As far as she is concerned, pumpkin is not a vegetable and especially pumpkin pie.

I groaned a little bit and rubbed my stomach. Then she said, "Don't you think it's rather foolish to stuff yourself so much on Thanksgiving?"

Thinking about this, I began to wonder if being full and being a fool is similar?

So, not in such a thinking mode as I should be, I asked my wife. "What is the difference in being full and being a fool?"

"Well," she said rather thoughtfully, "A fool does not know when he crosses the line to becoming full."

I had to think about that for a little while. Therefore, if I do not think I am full, then I am a fool and keep on eating. For the life of me, I cannot figure out how that can be a foolish thing to do.

I asked my wife. "How can being full make you a fool?"

"Just go and look in the mirror," she replied.

Being in such a full state that I was in, I did not have the energy to go to the bathroom and look in the mirror.

From the kitchen area, I heard my wife say, "A fool never knows when to quit eating."

I guess I've been a fool for most of my lifetime. My motto, especially around the Thanksgiving table, is, "Just one more piece."

At the time, I did not realize that "one more piece" makes me cross the line into being a very foolish person.

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Maybe that is just what life is all about. You don't know that you've had enough until after you have eaten "one more piece." My problem is, when do I stop?

Is it that foolish to become full at a Thanksgiving dinner? After all, what is Thanksgiving dinner for if I do not leave the table full?

I came by this legitimately. It goes back to my maternal grandmother.

We would all gather at grandma's place for Thanksgiving dinner, and boy could she stir up a Thanksgiving dinner. She had on the table everything you could ever imagine eating for Thanksgiving. Some things on the table I did not recognize, but, being at grandma's table at Thanksgiving time, I ate it.

After we were at the table for a while, people started to leave. Grandma always would say, "Please, just one more bite before you go. There's plenty left."

Of course, being at grandma's Thanksgiving table, she made the rules, and we abided by them out of deep respect. None of us had to be overly convinced to stay for just one more bite. We all left being as full as we possibly could be under her instructions.

I do not think being full is the same as being a fool. In my calculations, not stuffing yourself at grandma's Thanksgiving table would make you a fool. Who wants to be that kind of a fool? Remember, grandmas are never wrong!

A real fool would be someone leaving grandma's Thanksgiving dinner without being full. Believe me, I am not that kind of fool.

Between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, it is my purpose to eat as much as I can to become as full as I can be. After all, on New Year's Day, I am going to make a resolution not to eat so much at each meal. That is then, but now I indulge myself to such an extent that I am genuinely full.

As I thought of this, I remembered what Solomon said. "He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed" (Proverbs 13:20).

A wise man will walk to the table of the Lord and stuff himself with God's goodness until he is full and overflowing. That sure is not being foolish.

Rural doctor shortage in S.D. worsened by lack of physician training opportunities

By: Nick Lowrey

As medical schools across the United States have expanded to meet the needs of an aging population, the number of post-graduate training positions — commonly known as residency programs — has not kept pace with the increasing number of medical school graduates.

The lack of residency opportunities has slowed the pace at which new doctors are ready to practice and has intensified the shortage of doctors working in remote, rural areas common to South Dakota.

The doctor shortage is widespread in rural South Dakota. A map created by the South Dakota Department of Health shows that ready access to primary care physicians is available only to residents along the Interstate 29 corridor, a few areas in the central Missouri River region and around the Black Hills in the west. Most other areas of the state are considered to be in a shortage of access to primary medical care.

According to the department, nearly all of the state's counties are also home to communities that are medically underserved in terms of access to proper health care.

While physician shortages are expected all over the country thanks to an aging population with increasing longevity, rural areas of the country are expected to be among the hardest hit

"Rural areas have been particularly at risk for losing doctors and losing hospitals," said Dr. Robert Summerer, a surgeon and president of the South Dakota State Medical Association. "That puts women who are delivering babies and the elderly in danger because it takes a long time to get to the care they need."

The American Association of Medical Colleges, in an April 2019 report, predicted the country would be short between 21,100 and 55,200 primary care physicians by 2032. The same report, called "Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand," predicted smaller shortages in medical specialties such as psychiatry, general surgery and neurology as well. Overall, the AAMC report predicts a physician shortage of between 46,900 and 121,000 doctors by 2032.

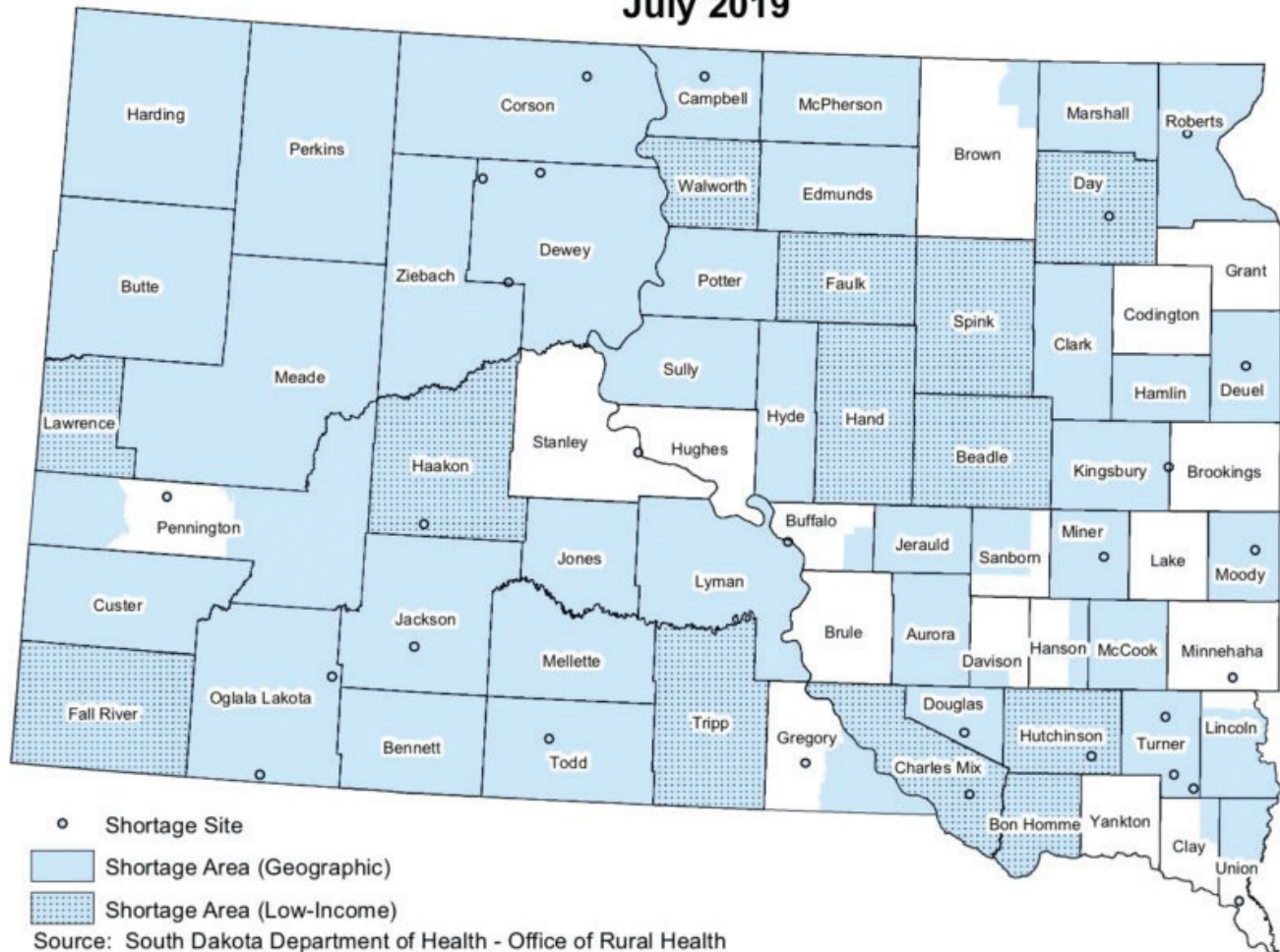
A large and growing part of the problem is that there aren't enough post-graduate training positions in places that most need primary care physicians, general surgeons and obstetricians, Summerer said.

Even after finishing a minimum of eight years of school between college and medical school, modern doctors can't actually practice medicine without first training in a specialty as what is known as a medical resident. Basically, doctors must apprentice themselves to more experienced doctors in order to learn their craft.

Such training lasts between three and seven years, depending on the demands of the specialty. A neurosurgeon, for example, will spend seven years working up to 80 hours per week performing countless



SOUTH DAKOTA HEALTH PROFESSIONAL SHORTAGE AREAS PRIMARY MEDICAL CARE July 2019



Most of South Dakota's land area has been declared a shortage area for primary care, according to the state Department of Health. Rural hospitals and clinics are having trouble recruiting physicians and other medical professionals to work in smaller, more remote communities in part because there are few training programs nearby.

surgeries under the supervision of more experienced surgeons before he or she can perform alone. The idea is to cram as much experience into a physician's mind and body as possible so that when they see patients on their own, they can better handle the routine and the unexpected.

Still, practicing medicine hundreds of miles from the nearest specialist, much less a more experienced physician, can be nerve-racking for new doctors, Summerer said. The isolation is one reason newly credentialed medical doctors are so much more likely to work within an hour's drive of where they completed residency, the final step in their training. As many as 70 percent of doctors will go into practice within 80 miles of where their residency was located, studies have shown.

Nationally, residency programs are clustered in busy, major metropolitan areas. New doctors need to get as much experience as they possibly can before practicing on their own, which means they need to

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see a lot of patients with a lot of different problems.

Training doctors tends to be expensive, involving classroom work, mentoring and even paying a resident's salary. As technology has advanced, training programs have become more expensive, which tends to force training programs to concentrate in larger, better-funded hospital systems. One study by researchers at the University of Washington School of Medicine found that a family practice resident's training — one of the shortest resident training periods — cost hospitals about \$180,000 once federal reimbursements, state and other funding sources were accounted for.

The problem has been compounded by how residency programs are paid for. In the 1960s, with the creation of Medicare, taxpayers began picking up a large portion of the cost of residency programs because educational activities were found to increase the quality of care at hospitals. More money meant more positions could be created and more doctors could be trained. Then, in 1997, thanks to the 1996 Balanced Budget Act, the amount of money the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services could spend on residency programs was capped. Since then, growth in the number of residency programs available to graduating medical students has slowed.

"We're creating a bottleneck," Summerer said.

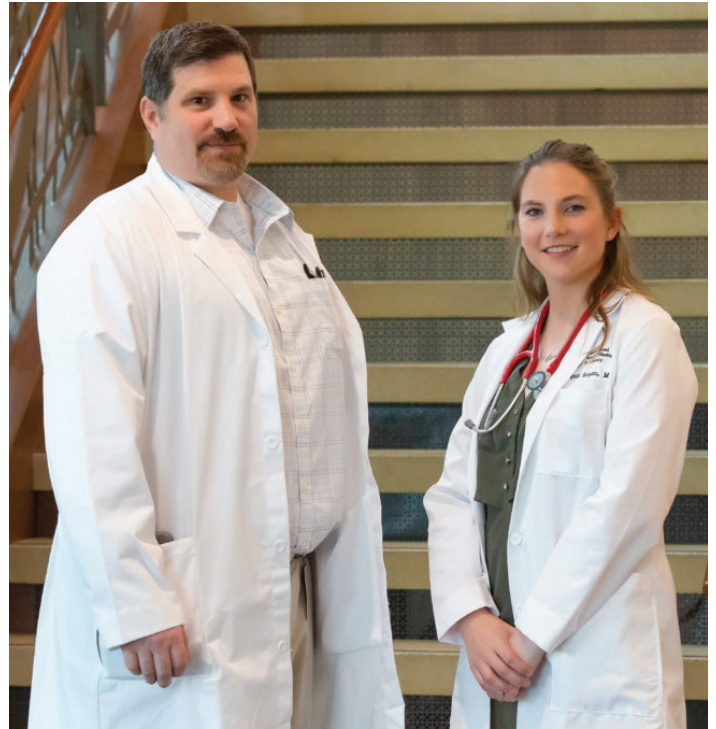
Twenty years ago, the number of medical school graduates was smaller and the country's physician workforce, much like the overall population, was younger. Today roughly two of every five doctors is projected to be over the age of 65 by 2032, ac-

According to the AAMC report "Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand." Already about 15% of the country's doctors are 65 or older, the report said. Another 27% are between the ages of 55 and 64, meaning 42% of the country's doctors are nearing retirement, according to the report.

Over the last 10 years, South Dakota has become a microcosm of the national issue. Beginning in 2015, the state's lone medical school, the Sanford School of Medicine at the University of South Dakota, began a process to grow the school's student body by about 20 percent. The school increased the size of its freshman classes from 56 to 67 in each of the past four years.

The number of residency programs available to medical school graduates in South Dakota has increased, too, but not as quickly. According to data compiled by the National Residency Match Program, the nonprofit organization that assigns medical students to residency programs, the number of residency programs in South Dakota rose from about 33 in 2009 to roughly 52 in 2019. The growth was seen in the key specialties of family medicine, psychiatry, pediatrics and general surgery.

The creation of a new general surgery residency program based in Sioux Falls in 2014 added three first-year residency openings in the specialty which focuses on soft-tissue surgeries such as appendix removals. Six new pediatric residency positions were created at the Sanford Children's Hospital in Sioux Falls. There were four new first-year psychiatry residency positions created at the Avera Behavioral Health Center in



Drs. Gene Campbell (left) and Abby Serpan (right) are the first two doctors to begin the final stage of their training as physicians in the Pierre Rural Family Residency Program. Both Serpan and Campbell said they had always planned on working in rural communities once they completed their training, so finding a residency program specifically designed to train rural doctors was an opportunity they couldn't pass up. Photo: Courtesy

Pierre Rural Family Medicine Residency Program

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Sioux Falls. Another residency position was added in pathology and three internal medicine residency positions were created too. All of them are based in Sioux Falls.

Statistically, most of the fully trained physicians the Sioux Falls programs produce are going to end up working within an hour's drive of the state's largest city. According to the South Dakota State Medical Association, 80% of the doctors who train in the state wind up practicing in the state.

South Dakota's newest residency program, which is aimed squarely at training and placing doctors in rural hospitals, can help address the problem.

The doctor most people spend the most time with, their primary care physician, typically spends three years specializing in family or internal medicine during their time as a resident. Primary care doctors are supposed to serve as the first line of defense against health problems. As such, family medicine residents spend their roughly 12,480 hours of training with a broad range of specialists in order to gain as wide a range of experience as possible to provide as broad a range of help to their patients as possible.

The Pierre Rural Family Medicine Residency program was conceived in 2015 as a partnership between Sanford Health and Avera Health, both as a way to ease the trouble both systems have in recruiting and retaining doctors in rural areas.

The program is a way to provide new doctors with experience working in more remote locations, said Dr. Thomas Huber, family practice physician at the Sanford Health clinic in Pierre who was tapped to lead the program.

South Dakota then-Gov. Dennis Daugaard supported legislation that appropriated more than \$200,000 from the state treasury in 2016 to help get the program started; both Avera Health and Sanford Health are helping fund the residency program.

Pierre is an ideal location for a rural residency program for several reasons, Huber said. The 2018 addition of a state-of-the-art cancer center to the local Avera St. Mary's hospital has dovetailed with Avera Health's efforts to improve the hospital's specialty care. The joint efforts have provided medical residents with experience working with a fairly wide range of specialists. The hospital and the Sanford Clinic also draw patients from a more than 100-mile radius around Pierre, so there will be enough patient volume for the residents to get the experience they will need.

Central South Dakota is also fairly isolated and has a doctor shortage. The next town with more than 10,000 people is more than 100 miles away in any direction from Pierre, Huber said, noting that there are manpower shortages in many industries.

"I call it the black hole of South Dakota, North Dakota, and into Nebraska ... for a lot of things, one of which is healthcare manpower," Huber said.

The plan is to have six physicians-in-training in the program every year. Recruits for the Pierre-based program will spend their first year in Sioux Falls, seeing a high volume of patients and working with specialists that are not based in Pierre. Once the residents move to Pierre, they will spend two years seeing patients out of the capital city's Sanford Health clinic while working on four-week rotations with the



Dr. Thomas Huber, a family practice physician at the Sanford Health clinic in Pierre, explains why a residency program focused on recruiting and training doctors to work in rural areas is an important step for South Dakota. Huber has been tapped to lead the Pierre Rural Family Medicine Program, South Dakota's newest physician training program. The program is intended to give new doctors the skill set needed to work in remote, rural communities. Video: Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

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surgeons, oncologists and other specialists that are based in Pierre.

The Pierre program's first two residents, Drs. Abby Serpan and Gene Campbell, started work in Sioux Falls in July 2018. They have now been working in Pierre since September.

Both physicians are examples of a less obvious advantage the Pierre rural residency program could provide for the state's rural hospitals. Recruiting doctors to rural communities often is more about finding candidates who grew up in rural areas or had a love of rural living prior to medical school. Both Serpan and Campbell said they grew up in small towns, like to hunt and fish and always intended to work in rural areas. Finding a residency program tailored to their career goals was a tremendous opportunity.

Serpan hails from Dodge City in western Kansas and went to college at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. She attended medical school at a relatively new satellite campus of the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Salina that was created specifically for students who wanted to work in rural settings. Serpan said rural communities need quality health care and she wants to be part of providing it.

"What really shaped me was own health issues. My pediatrician, when I was younger, found I had congenital scoliosis. I had to have surgery at a young age. And Dodge City is as a rural community and if I hadn't had a doctor there, who had caught it, they told me I would have been paralyzed by middle school," Serpan said.

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The plan is to have six physicians-in-training in the program every year. Recruits for the Pierre-based program will spend their first year in Sioux Falls, seeing a high volume of patients and working with specialists that are not based in Pierre. Once the residents move to Pierre, they will spend two years seeing patients out of the capital city's Sanford Health clinic while working on four-week rotations with the surgeons, oncologists and other specialists that are based in Pierre.

The Pierre program's first two residents, Drs. Abby Serpan and Gene Campbell, started work in Sioux Falls in July 2018. They have now been working in Pierre since September.

Both physicians are examples of a less obvious advantage the Pierre rural residency program could provide for the state's rural hospitals. Recruiting doctors to rural communities often is more about finding candidates who grew up in rural areas or had a love of rural living prior to medical school. Both Serpan and Campbell said they grew up in small towns, like to hunt and fish and always intended to work in rural areas. Finding a residency program tailored to their career goals was a tremendous opportunity.



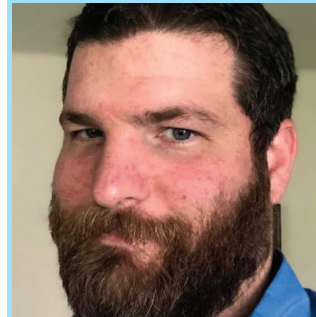
Dr. Abby Serpan, one of the Pierre Rural Family Medical Residency Program's first trainees, explains why she believes practicing medicine in a rural community is important. Serpan, interviewed with her daughter, Clara, on her lap, grew up in western Kansas and experienced a serious medical condition that could have left her paralyzed if it hadn't been caught early by a physician working in a rural setting. Video: Nick Lowrey, South Dakota News Watch

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Serpan hails from Dodge City in western Kansas and went to college at Fort Hays State University in Hays, Kansas. She attended medical school at a relatively new satellite campus of the University of Kansas School of Medicine in Salina that was created specifically for students who wanted to work in rural settings. Serpan said rural communities need quality health care and she wants to be part of providing it.

“What really shaped me was own health issues. My pediatrician, when I was younger, found I had congenital scoliosis. I had to have surgery at a young age. And Dodge City is as a rural community and if I hadn’t had a doctor there, who had caught it, they told me I would have been paralyzed by middle school,” Serpan said.



ABOUT

NICK LOWREY

Nick Lowrey, based in Pierre, S.D., is an investigative staff reporter for South Dakota News Watch. A South Dakotan for more than 20 years, he is a former editor of the Pierre Capital Journal.

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Three Groton Area grapplers take first at Clark Tourney

Three Groton Area wrestlers placed first at the Clark/Willow Lake Wrestling Tournament held Saturday in Clark. This is the first wrestling match of the season.

Dragr Monson at 120, Lane Krueger at 182 and Grady O'Neill at 195 all placed first. Adrian Knutson at 285 placed second while Christian Ehresmann at 113 and Thomas Cranford at 170 both placed third.

Groton Area placed third as a team in the field of eight teams. Kingsbury County placed first with 204 points followed by Clark/Willow Lake with 118, Groton Area had 97 points, Webster Area placed fourth with 90.5 points, Canton JV placed fifth with 81.0 points, Faulkton Area had 66 points, Britton-Hecla 32 and Hamlin /Castlewood had 29 points.

113 Aiden Heathcote (1-2)

Quarterfinal - Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 1-2 won by fall over Riley Jutting (Hamlin/Castlewood) 0-2 (Fall 3:29)

Semifinal - Cael Larson (Webster Area) 3-0 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 1-2 (Fall 0:28)

Cons. Semi - Dashed Davidson (Britton/Hecla) 2-2 won by fall over Aiden Heathcote (Groton Area) 1-2 (Fall 0:46)

113 Christian Ehersmann (3-1) placed 3rd and scored 13.5 team points.

Quarterfinal - Christian Ehersmann (Groton Area) 3-1 won by tech fall over Caden Wilson (Faulkton Area) 0-2 (TF-1.5 4:52 (18-0))

Semifinal - Gunnar Kvistad (Clark/Willow Lake) 2-1 won by major decision over Christian Ehersmann (Groton Area) 3-1 (MD 10-0)

Cons. Semi - Christian Ehersmann (Groton Area) 3-1 won by decision over Elliott Bratland (Clark/Willow Lake) 1-2 (Dec 9-3)

3rd Place Match - Christian Ehersmann (Groton Area) 3-1 won by fall over Dashed Davidson (Britton/Hecla) 2-2 (Fall 4:00)

120 Dragr Monson (2-0) placed 1st and scored 18.0 team points.

Round 1 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 2-0 received a bye () (Bye)

Round 2 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 2-0 won by fall over Gavin Witt (Webster Area) 0-2 (Fall 1:26)

Round 3 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 2-0 won by fall over Ethan Johnson (Kingsbury County) 1-1 (Fall 0:56)

126 Korbin Kucker (0-2)

Quarterfinal - Luke Steffensen (Kingsbury County) 1-2 won by decision over Korbin kucker (Groton Area) 0-2 (Dec 8-3)

Cons. Round 1 - Korbin kucker (Groton Area) 0-2 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Semi - Ethan Mcelhone (Clark/Willow Lake) 2-1 won by fall over Korbin kucker (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 0:32)

170 Thomas Cranford (2-1) placed 3rd and scored 13.5 team points.

Quarterfinal - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 2-1 won by tech fall over Chase Mundt (Britton/Hecla) 1-2 (TF-1.5 5:19 (16-1))

Semifinal - Gavin Holland (Kingsbury County) 2-0 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 2-1 (Fall 1:05)

Cons. Semi - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 2-1 received a bye () (Bye)

3rd Place Match - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 2-1 won by fall over Chase Mundt (Britton/Hecla) 1-2 (Fall 1:38)

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182 Lane Krueger (2-0) placed 1st and scored 22.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 2-0 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 2-0 won by fall over Dakota Lilly (Clark/Willow Lake) 2-1 (Fall 3:05)

1st Place Match - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 2-0 won by fall over Dylan Geary (Kingsbury County) 1-1 (Fall 4:51)

195 Grady O'Neill (2-0) placed 1st and scored 16.0 team points.

Round 1 - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 2-0 received a bye () (Bye)

Round 2 - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 2-0 won by decision over Sam Grantham (Hamlin/Castlewood) 0-2 (Dec 8-2)

Round 3 - Grady O'Neill (Groton Area) 2-0 won by fall over Owen Kerkvliet (Kingsbury County) 1-1 (Fall 1:09)

285 Adrian Knutson (2-1) placed 2nd and scored 14.0 team points.

Round 1 - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 2-1 won by fall over Ben Lasley (Canton JV) 1-2 (Fall 2:50)

Round 2 - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 2-1 won by fall over James Mickey (Hamlin/Castlewood) 0-3 (Fall 1:22)

Round 3 - Joe Hubsch (Webster Area) 3-0 won by fall over Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 2-1 (Fall 0:54)

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Northern State Men's Basketball Cruised To Their First Triple-Digit Win of The Season

Aberdeen, S.D. – The Northern State Wolves made the game of basketball look easy Saturday night, as they defeat the Golden Eagles from Wachs Arena.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Scores: NSU 101, UMC 58

Record: NSU 6-3 (NSIC 2-1), UMC 6-3 (NSIC 2-1)

Attendance: 3013

HIGHLIGHTS

Parker Fox grabbed the momentum early for Northern with a couple of big-time blocks and a powerful slam-dunk, giving the Golden Eagles a sneak peek of what was to come

The Wolves went on to shoot a staggering 80.6% from the floor in the first period, including 8-of-11 from the 3-point line, on their way to an intimidating 61-27 halftime lead.

Northern picked up right where they left off to start the second, as the Golden Eagles just couldn't find an answer to the Wolves' relentless offense

After building up a 40-point advantage mid-way through the second period, Coach Phillips sent in the bench players, who continued to score to give Northern its first triple digit game of the season

The Wolves finished the game scoring a season high 67.8% from the floor, 52.2% of their 3-pointers and 64.3% from the foul line

46 of Northern's points came from the paint, 15 from turnovers and a season high 45 off the bench

Northern's biggest lead was 47 points with 7:22 left in regulation

Parker Fox didn't miss a single basket from the floor all night long, going 8-of-8 for 19 points and five rebounds. Mason Stark also had a great night, going 5-of-6 for 12 points and four assists

Meanwhile, Roko Dominovic had the best game of his career, going 5-of-5 to score a career high 12 points and a career high nine rebounds off the bench

Gabe King and Tommy Chatman were next on the scoresheet with 11 and seven points respectively. Andrew Kallman, meanwhile, also had a perfect night, going 3-of-3 for seven points and a team high seven assists

Cole Dahl, Jordan Belka and Ethan Kranhold each came off the bench to score a combined 17 points and 12 rebounds. On the scoresheet for the first time in their NSU careers were Gus Reede with five points, Jaylen Robinson with seven points, and Lincoln Jorde with four points

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Parker Fox: 100.0 FG%, 3 blocks, 19 points

Mason Stark: 83.3 FG%, 4 assists, 12 points

Roko Dominovic: 100.0 FG%, 9 rebounds, 12 points

Gabe King: 57.1 FG%, 60.0 3-pt%, 11 points

UP NEXT

The Wolves travel to Minot, North Dakota to face the Minot State Beavers on December 13. Tip-off is set for 7:30 p.m. from the MSU Dome.

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Wolves Women's Basketball Strong Second Half Gets The Job Done

Aberdeen, S.D. – Northern State women's basketball played a strong second half that helped propel them to their second NSIC win at home this season.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Scores: NSU 74, UMC 64

Record: NSU 6-3 (NSIC 2-1), UMC 1-6 (NSIC 0-3)

Attendance: 2166

HIGHLIGHTS

NSU did not shoot well in the first quarter of the game scoring only eight points and shooting 30.77% from the field

The Wolves' made a small run back shooting much better all-around at 50.0% from the field, 60.0% from beyond the arc, and 100.0% at the foul line in the second quarter to enter half time down by six

NSU closed the door on UMC after halftime only allowing them to score another 25 points for the remainder of the game

The Wolves commanded the paint against the Golden Eagles out-scoring them 34-8

For the second game in a row NSU lowered the number of turnovers, only committing 10

Northern State continues to make opponents turn the ball over as they force 12 UMC turnovers and net 13 points as a result of those turnovers

The Wolves in the third quarter shot 53.85% from the floor, 66.67% from beyond the arc, and 80.0% from the foul line making it their most efficient quarter all evening

Overall NSU shot 46.4% from the field, 47.1% from 3-point, and 82.4% at the foul line

Shariah Smith rewrote her season and career record in assists as she records seven tonight

Joie Spier recorded a new season and career-high in points on the evening with 13

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Lexi Wadsworth: 66.6 FG%, 100.0 FT%, 16 points

Jessi Marti: 54.5 FG%, 50.0 3-PT%, 6 rebounds, 15 points

Shariah Smith: 50.0 FG%, 100.0 FT%, 7 assists, 11 points

Joie Spier: 75.0 FG%, 8 rebounds, 13 points

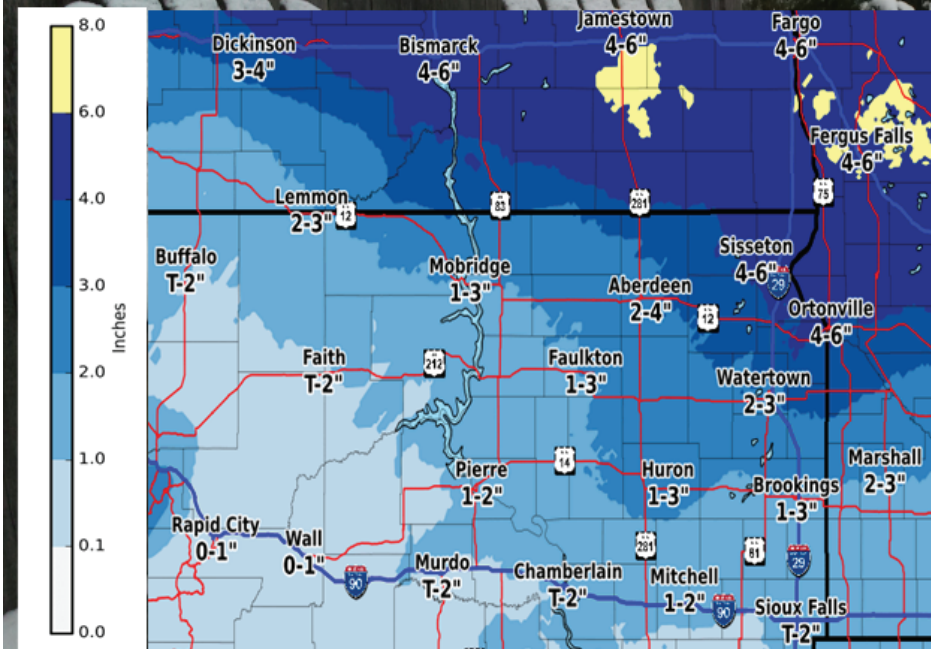
UP NEXT

Northern State women's basketball will be on the road next weekend from North Dakota to take on Minot State at 5:30 p.m. on Friday. Then the University of Mary at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday

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Total Accumulations: This Evening Through Early Monday



Other Important Info:

- Initially May Come With Light Drizzle/Ice
- Fluffy Light Snow
- Breezy To Windy Conditions Through Mid-Day Monday
- Drifting Across Roads/Hazardous Travel Conditions



Updated: 12/8/2019 4:34 AM Central

Winter Weather Advisory

...Moderate Snowfall This Evening Into Monday Morning...

...WINTER WEATHER ADVISORY IN EFFECT FROM 9 PM THIS EVENING TO 3 AM CST MONDAY...

* WHAT...Mixed precipitation expected. Total snow accumulations 2 to 5 inches and ice accumulations of a light glaze.

* WHERE...McPherson, Brown, Marshall and Day Counties.

* WHEN...From 9 PM this evening to 3 AM CST Monday.

* IMPACTS...Plan on slippery road conditions. Patchy blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility.

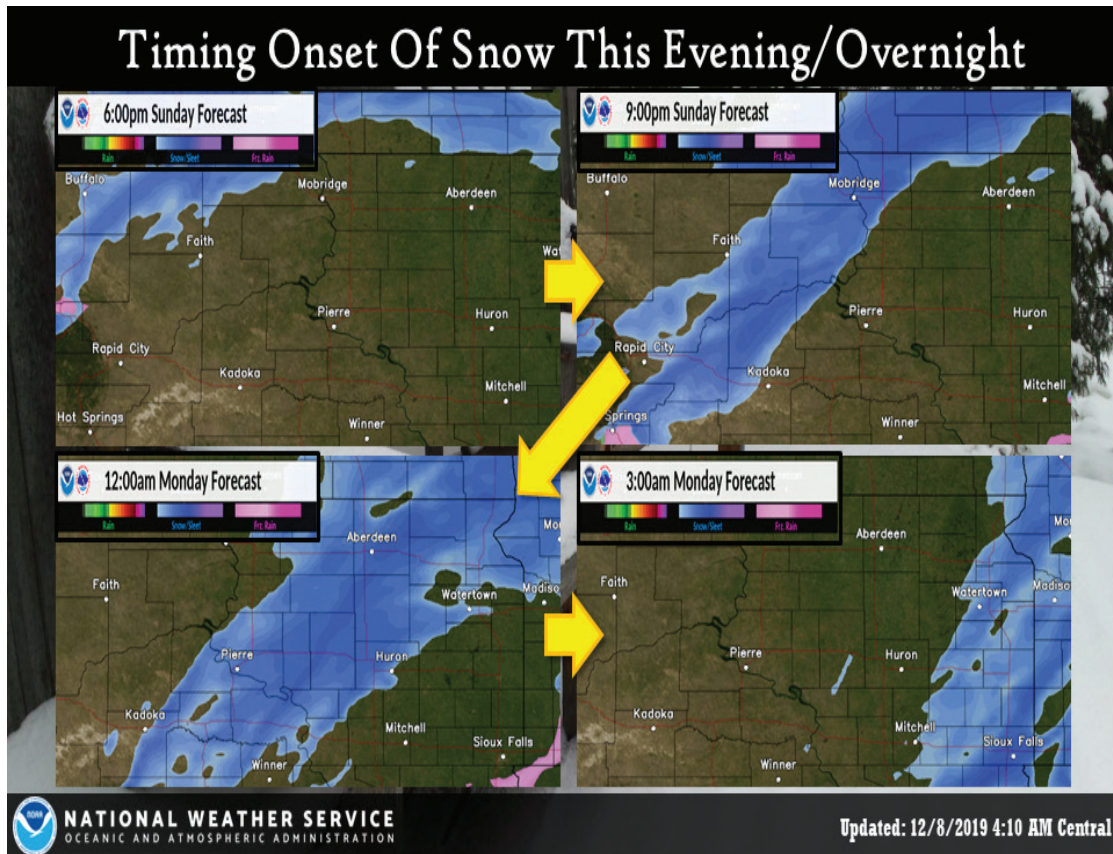
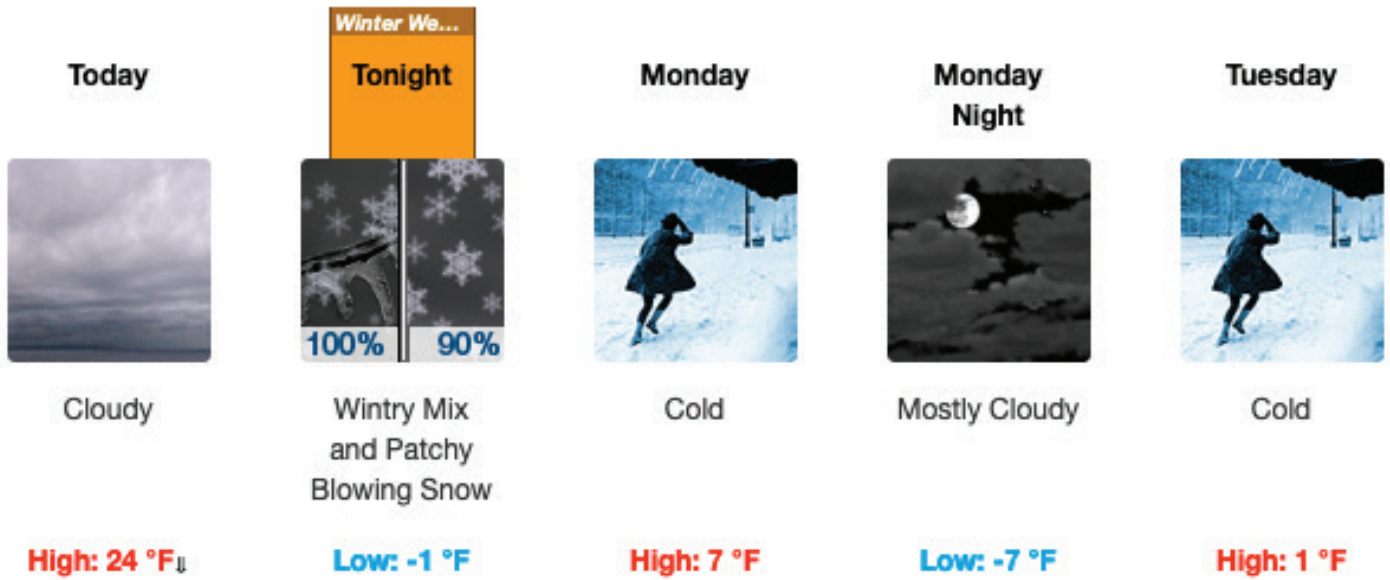
PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Slow down and use caution while traveling.

The latest road conditions can be obtained by calling 5 1 1.

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The clipper system still looks to impact the area with a few inches of snow. Here is a rough timing of the system. Gusty winds will continue for a few hours once the snow passes, leading to additional drifting and impacting travel Monday morning.

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Today in Weather History

December 8, 1995: A powerful Arctic front moved across west central Minnesota and central, north central, and northeast South Dakota throughout the day with winds of 30 to 60 mph. With temperatures falling and one to four inches of snowfall in the morning and afternoon, the high winds produced blizzard conditions with blowing snow and extreme wind chills of 40 to 70 below zero. Many schools, college classes, and activities were canceled for the day. Travel was also significantly affected.

December 8, 1935: From the Monthly Weather Review for December 1935, "The outstanding flood of December 1935 was the record-breaking overflow of Buffalo and White Oak Bayous at Houston, Texas on the 8 and 9th. This destructive flood was caused by excessive rainfall over Harris County, Texas during a 42 hour period on the 6th, 7th, 8th, with amounts ranging from 5.50 inches at Houston" to 16.49 inches at the Humble Oil Company in the northwestern part of Harris County.

1892 - A tremendous ice fall occurred at Gay Hill, TX. Ice averaged four to six inches in diameter. (David Ludlum)

1938 - The temperature at La Mesa, CA, soared to 108 degrees to set a U.S. record for the month of December. (The Weather Channel)

1963 - Lightning caused the crash of a jet airliner killing 81 persons at Elkton, MD. (Sandra and TI Richard Sanders - 1987)

1987 - A cold front crossing the northwestern U.S. continued to produce high winds along the coast, and heavy snow blanketed parts of the western U.S. Snowfall totals in the mountains of western Nevada ranged up to 18 inches at Heavenly Valley, and near the Boreal Ski Resort, and winds at Reno NV gusted to 56 mph. Thunderstorms over southern Florida deluged the Florida Keys with up to five inches of rain. Strong winds, gusting to 48 mph at Gage OK, ushered wintry weather into the Central High Plains. Goodland KS, which one day earlier was 63 degrees, was blanketed with two inches of snow. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Santa Ana winds buffeted southern California, with gusts to 92 mph reported at Laguna Peak. The high winds unroofed buildings, and downed trees and power lines, igniting five major fires, and numerous smaller ones. Damage was estimated at 15 to 20 million dollars. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A winter storm spread snow and freezing rain across much of the Atlantic Coast Region, from Georgia to New Jersey. Snowfall totals ranged up to seven inches, at Stanton VA and Tobacco MD. Up to six inches of snow blanketed the mountains of northern Georgia. More than one hundred auto accidents were reported in Gwinnett County GA. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 39 °F at 12:07 PM

Low Temp: 19 °F at 2:58 AM

Wind: 21 mph at 12:06 PM

Day Rain: 0.00 (10" Snow)

Record High: 57° in 1894

Record Low: -27° in 1927

Average High: 28°F

Average Low: 8°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.13

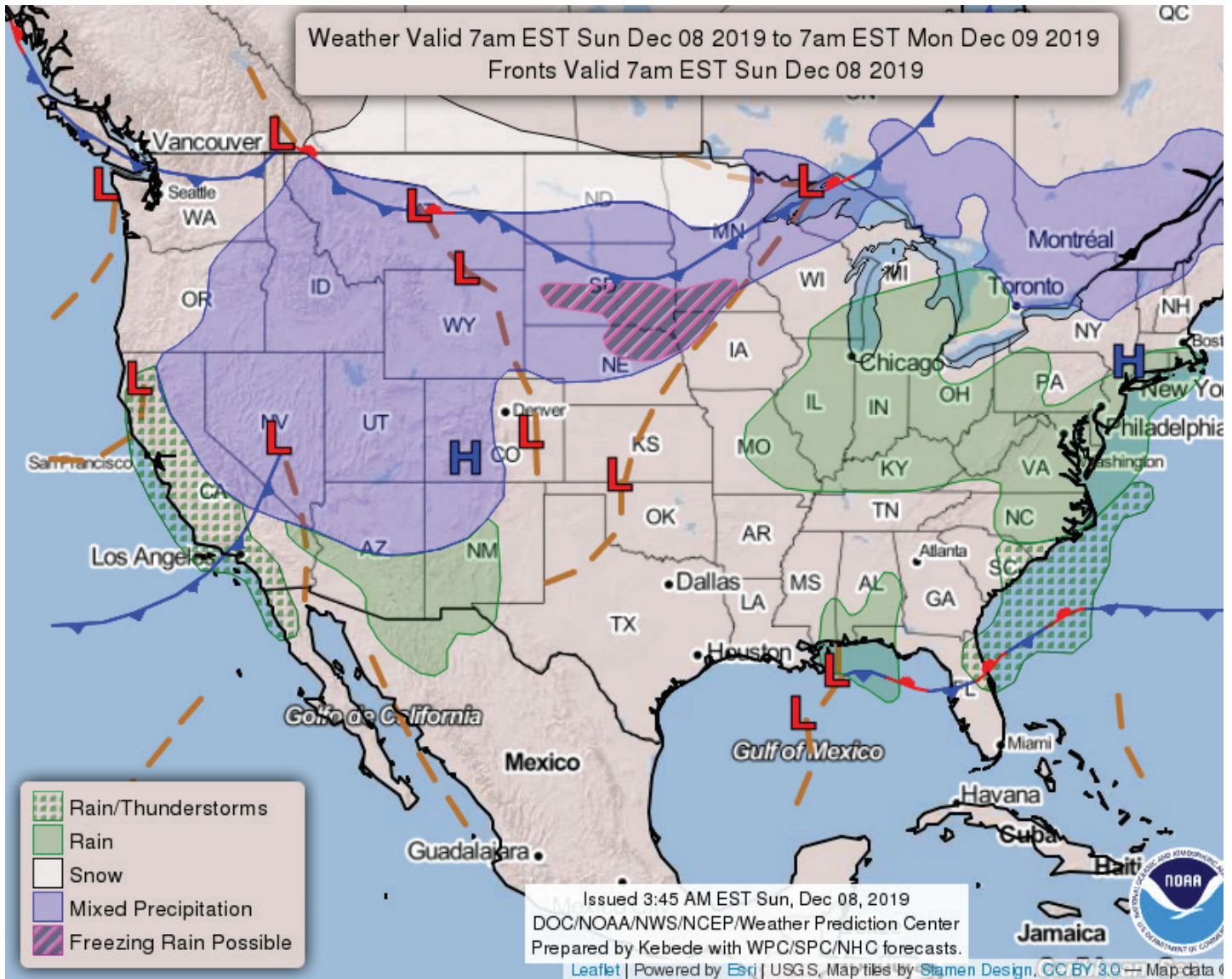
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 21.33

Precip Year to Date: 27.95

Sunset Tonight: 4:50 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:01 a.m.



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CAN YOU SEE HIM NOW?

It was the very first Christmas that Jo Ann's church had a Nativity scene on the front lawn. Working anxiously, she kept arranging, then rearranging, the figures to make certain they could all be seen.

Finally, she sent her friend, Alice, to the edge of the lawn and asked, "How do they look?"

"Fine, they are all O.K.," came the answer.

Suddenly Jo Ann began to rearrange them once again. "What are you doing? I said they were fine," said Alice grumpily.

"Yes, I heard what you said," responded Jo Ann. "But I just want to make sure that Jesus is visible so all of the people can see Him!"

Often Santa gets more attention than our Savior does during these Holy Days. Children anxiously stand in line waiting their turn to ask for gifts and have their picture taken with him. Rarely, however, do children pose at the manger to have a picture taken with the Baby Jesus. Could it be that He is not visible to most people at Christmas? Do we make any effort at all to make Him visible? Is He lost in the pile of gifts? Is He hidden behind the tree?

Matthew wrote about a group of shepherds who said, "Let's go to Bethlehem...and see this wonderful thing that has happened which the Lord has told us about."

This "wonderful thing," Jesus, is what the world needs to see. Let's be certain He is always visible – especially in our lives!

Prayer: Lord, may we not allow Your Son to be hidden or to be placed behind the "false idols" that so many worship at Christmas. May we make Him visible! In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Luke 2:15 So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us."

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

12/19/2019 – Christmas Open House 10am-4pm, Wells Fargo Bank

12/20/2019 – Holiday Bake Sale & Open House 9am-4pm, Groton Community Transit

- Bingo: every Wednesday at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 01/26/2020 Carnival of Silver Skates 2pm & 6:30pm (Last Sunday of January)

- 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt, 10 a.m. Sharp (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)

- 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)

- 05/02/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Saturday in May)

- 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services (Memorial Day)

- 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS

- 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)

Groton Hosting State B American Legion Baseball Tournament

- 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show

- 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales, 8 a.m.-3 p.m. (1st Sat. after Labor Day)

- 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest

- 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat (Halloween)

- 11/14/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)

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News from the  Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

01-08-10-23-25

(one, eight, ten, twenty-three, twenty-five)

Estimated jackpot: \$366,000

Lotto America

08-16-22-28-49, Star Ball: 3, ASB: 5

(eight, sixteen, twenty-two, twenty-eight, forty-nine; Star Ball: three; ASB: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$5.66 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$314 million

Powerball

18-42-53-62-66, Powerball: 25, Power Play: 3

(eighteen, forty-two, fifty-three, sixty-two, sixty-six; Powerball: twenty-five; Power Play: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$130 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

WRESTLING

2019 Flandreau Booster Club Wrestling Tournament

1 Madison 205.0

2 Howard 169.0

3 Elk Point-Jefferson 109.0

4 Garretson High School 81.0

5 Flandreau 72.0

6 Sioux Valley 67.0

7 Luverne 56.5

8 Viborg-Hurley 35.0

9 Deuel 20.0

10 Chester 0.0

Watertown Dual Tournament

1 Aberdeen Central 54.0

2 Yankton 21.0

KWLPG Invitational

1 Winner 208.5

2 Kimball/White Lake/Platte-Geddes 205.5

3 Wagner 160.5

4 Wessington Springs/Woonsocket/Wolsey-Wessington 139.0

5 Parkston 135.0

6 Marion/Freeman 89.0

7 Mount Vernon/Plankinton/Corsica 84.5

8 Sunshine Bible Academy 47.0

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9 Miller/Highmore-Harrold 33.5
10 Warner/Northwestern 28.0
11 Andes Central/Dakota Christian 12.0

Top of the Rock

1 Canton 215.5
2 Parker 166.0
3 McCook Central-Montrose 151.5
4 Dell Rapids 140.5
5 Bon Homme/Scotland 140.0
6 Adrian 97.0
7 Beresford/Alcester-Hudson 67.0
8 Tri-Valley 64.0
9 Dakota Valley

Stanley County Invitational

1 Burke/Gregory, SD 209.0
2 Pierre TF Riggs 163.5
3 Stanley County 129.0
4 Bennett County 127.0
5 Lyman 117.0
6 Mobridge-Pollock 102.0
7 Potter County 79.0
8 Ipswich/Leola 74.0
9 Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 49.0
10 Todd County 48.0
11 Faith 24.0
12 Lemmon/McIntosh 14.0
13 Lower Brule 13.0

Rider Invitational-

1 Brandon Valley 232.0
2 Vermillion 181.5
3 Sioux Falls Roosevelt 175.0
4 West Central 157.0
5 O'Gorman High School 144.5
6 Sioux Falls Washington 117.0
7 Lennox 90.5
7 Tea Area 90.5
9 Sioux Falls Lincoln

Clark/Willow Lake WBC Invitational

1 Kingsbury County 204.0
2 Clark/Willow Lake 118.0
3 Groton Area 97.0
4 Webster Area 90.5
5 Canton JV 81.0
6 Faulkton Area 66.0
7 Britton/Hecla 32.0
8 Hamlin/Castlewood

Cook's 18-yard FG lifts UNI over South Dakota State 13-10

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Matthew Cook kicked an 18-yard field goal with 2:10 remaining to give Northern Iowa a 13-10 victory over South Dakota State on Saturday in the second round of the Football Championship Series playoffs.

UNI (10-4) will face second-seed James Madison (12-1) in a quarterfinal.

Cook's game-winner capped a 12-play, 80-yard drive for the Panthers. On the ensuing possession, seventh-seeded South Dakota State (8-5) was aided by two penalties that kept the drive alive but didn't get past its own 30-yard line when Keaton Heide threw an incomplete pass on fourth-and-15.

Trevor Allen had 90 yards rushing on 24 carries, including a 2-yard scoring run in the third quarter that tied the game 10-10. Cook kicked a 23-yard field goal in the second.

Heide threw a 22-yard touchdown pass to Adam Anderson and Chase Vinatieri, nephew of NFL kicker Adam Vinatieri, booted a 22-yard field goal in the first quarter for the Jackrabbits.

Devastating factory fire kills at least 43 in Indian capital

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and ASHOK SHARMA Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Authorities said an electrical short circuit appeared to cause a fire that killed at least 43 people in a factory in central New Delhi early Sunday, as relatives of the workers who were trapped inside identified the dead from photos on police officers' phones.

Assistant New Delhi police commissioner Anil Kumar Mittal said that "the fire appears to have been caused by electric short circuit," adding that authorities were investigating whether the factory was operating legally.

The building's owner, Rihan, who goes by one name, was detained on suspicion of culpable homicide not amounting to murder, Mittal said.

Firefighters had to fight the blaze from 100 meters (yards) away because it broke out in one of the area's many alleyways, tangled in electrical wire and too narrow for vehicles to access, authorities said.

A resident of the area, Mohammed Naushad, said he was woken by people wailing at around 4:30 a.m. He went outside to find smoke and flames shooting out of a building near Sadar Bazaar, New Delhi's largest wholesale market for household goods. Inside, he found the fourth floor engulfed in flames. One floor below, he saw "20 to 25 people lying on the floor."

"I don't know if they were dead or unconscious, but they were not moving," Naushad said.

He said he carried at least 10 people out of the flames on his shoulders and into the arms of emergency responders.

Maisuma Bibi, a day laborer making plastic handbags, survived the blaze. She said she was sleeping in a room with about 18 other women and children on the building's first floor when she woke to find a bag



A fire engine stands by the site of a fire in an alleyway, tangled in electrical wire and too narrow for vehicles to access, in New Delhi, India, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019. Dozens of people died on Sunday in a devastating fire at a building in a crowded grains market area in central New Delhi, police said. (AP Photo/Manish Swarup)

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full of plastic parts on fire. Her brother-in-law carried her to safety, she said.

Outside a mortuary that was guarded by dozens of police officers, some of the workers' relatives said they had received phone calls from the men trapped inside, who begged them to call the fire brigade.

Many of the men were migrant workers from the impoverished border state of Bihar in eastern India, relatives said. They earned as little as 150 rupees (\$2.10) per day making handbags, caps and other garments, sleeping at the factory between long shifts.

Many of the victims were asleep when the blaze began, according to Yogesh, a police spokesman who uses one name.

Dr. Kishore Singh said rescuers brought victims to his government-run hospital and two others in the city. Another 16 people were being treated for burns or smoke inhalation and were in stable condition, Singh said.

Police barred relatives from entering Lok Nayak hospital, where some of the victims were taken. Relatives of the workers cried, consoled one another and jostled for information.

"I was told by someone my nephew is inside, but I haven't seen him," said Mohammad Moti, who was searching for his 22-year-old nephew, Mohammad Chedi.

Fire Services chief Atul Garg said it took 25 fire trucks to put out the blaze. About 60 people, including some of the dead, were taken out of the building, Mittal said.

New Delhi's chief minister, Arvind Kejriwal, appeared at the scene of the fire, promising victims' families compensation.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi described the fire as "extremely horrific."

"My thoughts are with those who lost their loved ones. Wishing the injured a quick recovery," Modi tweeted.

Fires are common in India, where building laws and safety norms are often flouted by builders and residents. In 1997, a fire in a movie theater in New Delhi killed 59 people. In February this year, 17 people were killed by a fire in a six-story hotel in the capital not far from Sunday's blaze that started in an illegal rooftop kitchen.

Associated Press photojournalist Manish Swarup contributed to this report.

Ukraine faces new challenges in peace talks with Russia

By VANESSA GERA Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland (AP) — When new Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy sits down Monday for peace talks in Paris with Russian President Vladimir Putin in their first face-to-face meeting, the stakes couldn't be higher.

More than five years of fighting in eastern Ukraine between government troops and Moscow-backed separatists has killed more than 14,000 people, and a cease-fire has remained elusive. While Zelenskyy has made ending the conflict a priority, the political novice arrives at the table with the veteran Kremlin leader in what appears to be a less-advantageous position:

— Zelenskyy still hasn't had the White House meeting with U.S. President Donald Trump that he sought to bolster his stature on the world stage.

— French President Emmanuel Macron, the host of the meeting, has made clear recently that he wants to re-engage with Russia and get back to doing business again after five years of sanctions imposed on Russia over its actions in Ukraine.

— Macron and the other mediator in the talks, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, will be meeting Zelenskyy for the first time since it emerged that he criticized them in the July 25 phone call that has become the focus of an impeachment investigation against Trump.

So there are concerns among those who support Ukraine's sovereignty that Zelenskyy might end up giving too many concessions to Putin. That could lead to a backlash from Ukrainians who strongly oppose any rapprochement with Russia.

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The talks are being organized in the so-called Normandy Format, which was launched soon after Russia's annexation of Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula in 2014 and its backing of the separatists in eastern Ukraine. The consultations had stalled since 2016 but have been revived following Zelenskiy's election.

"There is a whole cocktail of economics and geopolitics that make the situation for Ukraine very difficult and is posing lot of challenges," said Bruno Lete, a security expert at the German Marshal Fund of the U.S., a leading think tank.

"But it's critical that Europeans and the U.S. support Ukraine," Lete argued. "Without peace and stability in Ukraine, there will never be peace and stability in Europe."

The biggest challenge for Kyiv probably comes from France itself, with Macron speaking recently of the "brain death" of NATO because of a lack of coordination and leadership from Washington and also saying he wants to re-engage with Russia.

"It's like telling Russia, 'I will work with you and we'll see about Ukraine,'" Lete said. "He should have waited until after the Normandy meeting. It doesn't help the cause of European security."

The Normandy Format talks had have also been revived following several confidence-building steps between Moscow and Kyiv, including prisoner swaps and troop withdrawals by both sides.

On Sunday, Pope Francis said he was praying for the talks to bring peace "to that territory and its population."

Taras Kuzio, a security expert and professor at National University of Kyiv Mohyla Academy, said Zelenskiy has already weakened his own position by agreeing to the talks even though Russia insists Crimea is non-negotiable.

Kuzio described the 41-year-old Zelenskiy, until recently a comedic actor, as "extremely naïve about international relations" and said he will find himself in a difficult place — facing a tough opponent in Putin and a population that would reject any capitulation to Moscow.

He said Zelenskiy doesn't grasp that the Russian leader will never compromise over the conflict in eastern Ukraine because "for Putin, compromise is a defeat."

And Macron's pursuit of a reset with Moscow doesn't help Ukraine either.

"The danger is that Zelenskiy will be ambushed by Macron working in effect for Putin because his new agenda is to repair relations with Russia, to get back to a normal relationship, get back to doing business," Kuzio said.

Despite the challenges, Ukraine still has the support from the European Union, its biggest foreign donor,



FILE In this file photo taken on Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy speaks during talks with journalists in Kyiv, Ukraine. Ukraine's president sits down Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 for peace talks in Paris with Russian President Vladimir Putin in their first face-to-face meeting, and the stakes could not be higher. More than five years of fighting in eastern Ukraine between government troops and Moscow-backed separatists has killed more than 14,000 people, and a cease-fire has remained elusive. (AP Photo/Efrem Lukatsky, File)

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while Merkel has strongly supported sanctions on Russia.

But Germany's longer-term economic interests are a continual challenge for Ukraine.

Berlin is seen as having harmed Ukraine's interests by moving forward with the completion of a Russian-German gas pipeline called Nord Stream 2 that will bring Russian natural gas to Western Europe. Its route bypasses Ukraine, cutting off its leverage as a transit country and an income source.

Germany's relationship with Moscow has been complicated by last week's expulsion of two Russian diplomats over the brazen killing of a Georgian national in Berlin in August, with prosecutors suggesting the slaying was either ordered by Russia or authorities in the republic of Chechnya.

Zelenskiy also isn't helped by the revelations in the July 25 phone call with Trump. A rough transcript of the call revealed him accusing Merkel and Macron of giving too little help to Ukraine. At one point, Zelenskiy tells Trump: "When I was speaking to Angela Merkel, she talks Ukraine, but she doesn't do anything."

At the time of the call, the White House was withholding nearly \$400 million in military aid to Kyiv, adding to Ukraine's fears that the U.S. was turning its back on the vulnerable nation.

Ukrainian suspicions that the West cares more about doing business with Russia than Ukraine's sovereignty go back to when the former Soviet republic declared its independence in 1991.

A diplomatic cable written in 2009 by then-U.S. Ambassador to Ukraine William Taylor described frustration by Kyiv's political elite. The Ukrainians believed Berlin was an "obstacle in their drive towards EU and NATO membership," Taylor wrote in the cable, which has been published by Wikileaks.

Taylor, now the acting U.S. ambassador to Ukraine who testified in the impeachment hearings in Congress, cited a colorful formulation by Ukraine's former National Security and Defense Council Chairman Volodymyr Horbulin which underscored that.

Taylor wrote that Horbulin joked that there are two Russian embassies in Kyiv, but "one speaks German."

Vadim Karasev, head of the Institute of Global Strategies, an independent Kyiv-based think tank, said the Europeans "have grown tired of Kyiv's endless problems and are increasingly looking at Moscow, which has all the instruments to leverage the situation."

"They increasingly remind Kyiv about delayed reforms and corruption instead of talking about solidarity and a common European home," Karasev said.

European powers, he said, "can't endlessly deal with Kyiv's problems when they have their own issues to solve."

Associated Press writer Yuras Karmanau in Kyiv contributed to this report.

Thousands march as Hong Kong protests near half-year mark

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators crammed into Hong Kong's streets on Sunday, their chants echoing off high-rises, in a mass show of support for a protest movement that shows no signs of flagging as it enters a seventh month.

Chanting "Fight for freedom" and "Stand with Hong Kong," a sea of protesters formed a huge human snake winding for blocks on Hong Kong Island, from the Causeway Bay shopping district to the Central business zone, a distance of more than 2 kilometers (1 1/4 miles).

The crowds were so large and dense that the march ground to a standstill at times. Protesters spilled into narrow side streets, crying "Revolution in our times." One protester crawled part of the route prostrated on her hands and knees, dragging bricks and empty soda cans behind her. It was an apt metaphor for the pro-democracy movement, which has become a long-haul push to preserve Hong Kong's freedoms that make it unique among China's cities.

"This is just the beginning. We have a long way to run," said another demonstrator, Louisa Yiu, an engineer.

Many marchers held up five fingers to press the movement's five demands. They include democratic elections for Hong Kong's leader and legislature and a demand for a probe of police behavior during the six months of continuous protests.

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Marchers said they hoped the huge turnout might help win concessions from the government of Chief Executive Carrie Lam. Protesters spanned generations. One man's young son marched in his Spiderman suit.

"So many people are still supporting this movement. You can see how determined Hong Kong people are," said demonstrator Justin Ng, a 20-year-old student.

"I heard a small kid yelling slogans — 4, 5 years old," Ng said. "That really encouraged me because it's not just this generation but future generations, too."

Marchers said protesting has become part of the fabric of their lives since demonstrations erupted in June against a now-withdrawn government measure that would have allowed criminal suspects to be sent for trial in Communist Party-controlled courts in mainland China.

The protests have since snowballed into a broad, sustained anti-government movement, presenting the communist leadership in Beijing with a major headache and battering Hong Kong's economy.

Police in riot gear deployed in numbers on the edges of the march. Earlier in the day, they arrested 11 people and seized a cache of weapons, including a firearm with more than 100 bullets. Police said the suspects apparently planned to use the weapons during the protest to frame police, who have been accused of using excessive force against the protesters.

Rally organizer Eric Lai called for police restraint and for no use of tear gas.

"We hope this will be a signature for our movement after six months to show to Carrie Lam as well as to the world that people are not giving up. People will still fight for our freedom and democracy," Lai said.

Authorities, who have liberally used tear gas, water cannons and rubber bullets at previous demonstrations, say force has been necessary to disperse hard-core protesters who have battled riot officers, vandalized shops and thrown gasoline bombs. Police banned mass marches as protests turned increasingly violent, but relented and allowed Sunday's march after a few weeks of relative peace.

The rally was called by the Civil Human Rights Front, a group that has organized some of the biggest demonstrations since hundreds of thousands of protesters first marched on June 9 against the extradition bill.

Chief among the protesters' complaints Sunday was that police have been overly heavy-handed, making thousands of arrests since June.

"They are out of control," said Ernest Yau, a 28-year-old consultant. He said the movement has brought Hong Kong together.

"We understand our common enemy," he said. "We understand that we have to be united to fight against China, to fight against a government that doesn't listen to its people."



Pro-democracy protesters march on a street in Hong Kong, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019. Marchers are again expected to fill Hong Kong streets Sunday in a rally that will test the enduring appeal of an anti-government movement marking a half year of demonstrations. (AP Photo/Vincent Thian)

Associated Press videojournalist Katie Tam contributed to this report.

N. Korea conducts 'important test' at once-dismantled site

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press



People watch a TV news program reporting North Korea's announcement with a file footage of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, at the Seoul Railway Station in Seoul, South Korea, Sunday, Dec. 8, 2019. North Korea said Sunday it carried out a "very important test" at its long-range rocket launch site that U.S. and South Korean officials said the North had partially dismantled as part of denuclearization steps. The letters, top left, read "North. Very important test." (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man)

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea said Sunday that it carried out a "very important test" at its long-range rocket launch site that it reportedly rebuilt after having partially dismantled it at the start of denuclearization talks with the United States last year.

The announcement comes amid dimming prospects for a resumption of negotiations, with the North threatening to seek "a new way" if it fails to get major U.S. concessions by year's end. North Korea has said its resumption of nuclear and long-range missile tests depends on the United States.

Saturday's test at the Sohae Satellite Launching Ground will have "an important effect on changing the strategic position of (North Korea) once again in the near future," an unidentified spokesman from the North's Academy of National Defense Science said in a statement, carried by the country's official Korean Central News Agency.

North Korea didn't say what the test included. Kim Dong-yub, an analyst at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies, said that North Korea likely tested

for the first time a solid-fuel engine for an intercontinental ballistic missile.

The use of solid fuel increases a weapon's mobility and reduces the amount of launch preparation time. The long-range rockets that North Korea used in either ICBM launches or satellite liftoffs in recent years all used liquid propellants.

CNN reported Friday that a new satellite image indicated North Korea may be preparing to resume testing engines used to power satellite launchers and intercontinental ballistic missiles at the site.

Seoul's Defense Ministry said in a brief statement later Sunday that South Korea and the United States are closely monitoring activities at the Sohae site and other key North Korean areas.

On Saturday, President Donald Trump and South Korean President Moon Jae-in discussed developments related to North Korea, and the two leaders committed to continuing close communication, the White House said in a statement. Moon's office also released a similar statement, saying the two leaders had a 30-minute phone conversation at Trump's request.

The North Korean test "is meant to improve military capabilities and to shore up domestic pride and legitimacy," said Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul. "With the activity at Sohae, Pyongyang is also trying to raise international concerns that it may intensify provocations and walk away from denuclearization talks next year."

The Sohae launching center in Tongchang-ri, a seaside region in western North Korea, is where the North has carried out banned satellite launches in recent years, resulting in worldwide condemnation and U.N. sanctions over claims that they were disguised tests of long-range missile technology.

North Korea has said its satellite launches are part of its peaceful space development program. But many

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outside experts say ballistic missiles and rockets used in satellite launches share similar bodies, engines and other technology. None of North Korea's three intercontinental ballistic missile tests in 2017 was conducted at the Sohae site, but observers said the site was used to test engines for ICBMs.

After his first summit with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un in Singapore in June last year, Trump said Kim told him that North Korea was "already destroying a major missile engine testing site" in addition to committing to "complete denuclearization" of the Korean Peninsula.

Satellite imagery later showed the North dismantling a rocket engine-testing stand and other facilities at the Sohae site. Last March, South Korea's spy agency and some U.S. experts said that North Korea was restoring the facilities, raising doubts about whether it was committed to denuclearization.

U.S.-North Korea diplomacy has largely remained deadlocked since the second summit between Trump and Kim in Vietnam in February due to disputes over how much sanctions relief the North must get in return for dismantling its key nuclear complex — a limited disarmament step.

North Korea has since warned that the U.S. must abandon hostile policies and come out with new acceptable proposals by the end of this year or it would take an unspecified new path. In recent months, North Korea has performed a slew of short-range missile and other weapons launches and hinted at lifting its moratorium on nuclear and long-range missiles.

North Korea said the results of Saturday's test were submitted to the Central Committee of the ruling Workers' Party. The North said last week that the Central Committee will hold a meeting in late December to discuss unspecified "crucial issues" in line with "the changed situation at home and abroad."

At the United Nations, a statement released by North Korea's U.N. ambassador, Kim Song, said Saturday that denuclearization had "already gone out of the negotiation table."

The statement accused the Trump administration of persistently pursuing a "hostile policy" toward the country "in its attempt to stifle it." The statement was a response to Wednesday's condemnation by six European countries of North Korea's 13 ballistic missile launches since May.

The North Korean diplomat accused the Europeans — France, Germany, Britain, Belgium, Poland and Estonia — of playing "the role of pet dog of the United States in recent months."

"We regard their behavior as nothing more than a despicable act of intentionally flattering the United States," the ambassador said.

Associated Press writer Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed to this report.

In Florida, Trump says he's Israel's best pal in White House

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

HOLLYWOOD, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Saturday that Israel has never had a better friend in the White House than him because, unlike his predecessors, "I kept my promises."

Trump energized an audience that numbered in the hundreds at the Israeli American Council National Summit in Florida by recounting his record on issues of importance to Jews, including an extensive riff on his promise to recognize Jerusalem as the Israeli capital and relocate the U.S. Embassy there from Tel Aviv.

Trump said his predecessors only paid lip service to the issue.

"They never had any intention of doing it, in my opinion," Trump said. "But unlike other presidents, I kept my promises."

Trump also highlighted his decision to reverse more than a half-century of U.S. policy in the Middle East by recognizing Israel's sovereignty over the Golan Heights, the strategic highlands on the border with Syria.

Israel captured the Golan Heights from Syria in the 1967 Mideast war but its sovereignty over the territory had not been recognized by the international community.

In his speech, the president also claimed there are some Jewish people in America who don't love Israel enough.

"We have to get the people of our country, of this country, to love Israel more, I have to tell you that. We

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have to do it. We have to get them to love Israel more," Trump said, to some applause. "Because you have Jewish people that are great people — they don't love Israel enough."

Aaron Keyak, the former head of the National Jewish Democratic Council, denounced Trump's remarks as anti-Semitic.

"Trump's insistence on using anti-Semitic tropes when addressing Jewish audiences is dangerous and should concern every member of the Jewish community — even Jewish Republicans," Keyak said.

Trump has been accused of trafficking in anti-Semitic stereotypes before, including in August, when he said American Jews who vote for Democrats show "either a total lack of knowledge or great disloyalty." A number of Jewish groups noted at the time that accusations of disloyalty have long been made against Jews.

The Israeli American Council is financially backed by one of Trump's top supporters, the husband-and-wife duo of Miriam and Sheldon Adelson, a Las Vegas casino magnate.

Both Adelsons appeared on stage to introduce Trump, with Miriam Adelson asserting that Trump "has already gone down in the annals of Jewish history, and that is before he's even completed his first term in office."

The Adelsons donated \$30 million to Trump's campaign in the final months of the 2016 race. They followed up by donating \$100 million to the Republican Party for the 2018 congressional elections.

Trump's entourage at the event included Housing and Urban Development Secretary Ben Carson, along with Republican Reps. Jim Jordan and Michael Waltz, whom he described as "two warriors" defending him against "oppression" in the impeachment inquiry.

Trump criticized Israel's sworn enemy, Iran, saying he withdrew the U.S. from the Iran nuclear deal with other world powers because Tehran must never be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapon.

But Trump voiced support for Iranian citizens who have been protesting a decision by their government to withdraw fuel subsidies, which sent prices skyrocketing.

Trump said he believes thousands of Iranians have been killed in the protests and that thousands more have been arrested.

"America will always stand with the Iranian people in their righteous struggle for freedom," he said.

The president introduced his son-in-law and senior adviser, Jared Kushner, who has played a leading role in helping the administration craft its Mideast peace plan.

A self-described deal-maker, Trump said he had long been told that achieving peace between Israel and the Palestinians would be the hardest deal of all.

But "if Jared Kushner can't do it, it can't be done," Trump said.

The White House has said its Mideast peace plan is complete and had promised to release it after Israeli elections in September. The long-delayed plan remains under wraps, and Israel appears headed for its third round of elections this year.



President Donald Trump visits with members of The Shalva Band after speaking at the Israeli American Council National Summit in Hollywood, Fla., Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019. (AP Photo/

Patrick Semansky)

The plan also is facing rejection by Palestinian officials, who object to the pro-Israel leanings of the Trump administration.

During his speech, Trump also name-dropped Rep. Ilhan Omar, D-Minn., criticizing her for supporting the "BDS" movement against Israel: boycott, divest and sanction. In August, at Trump's urging, Israel denied Omar and Rep. Rashida Tlaib, D-Mich., entry to the country over their support for the BDS movement. Omar and Tlaib are the first two Muslim women elected to Congress and outspoken critics of Israel over its treatment of Palestinians.

"My administration strongly opposes this despicable rhetoric," Trump said. "As long as I am your president, it makes no difference. It's not happening."

Before addressing the Israeli American Council summit, Trump spoke at the Florida Republican Party's Statesman's Dinner in nearby Aventura. The state GOP closed the event to media coverage.

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

Half-North Korean, half-Chinese kids struggle in South Korea

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press



In this Nov. 6, 2019, photo, Song Hong Ryon, pauses for a moment during an interview in Uijeongbu, South Korea. Song Hong Ryon looks like any other young woman in South Korea. But three years after her arrival from China, the half-North Korean, half-Chinese 19-year-old has made only two South Korean-born friends and says she's often been hurt by little things, like when people ask if she's from China because of her accent.(AP Photo/Lee Jin-man)

UIJEONGBU, South Korea (AP) — Song Hong Ryon looks like any other young woman in South Korea. But three years after her arrival from China, the half-North Korean, half-Chinese 19-year-old has made only two South Korean-born friends and says she's often been hurt by little things, like when people ask if she's from China because of her accent.

"I've agonized about it a lot by myself," she said.

Song's mother fled North Korea in the late 1990s in search of food and work in China, like tens of thousands of other North Korean women did to avoid a famine at home. Many women ended up being sold to poor Chinese farmers as brides, before fleeing again and moving to South Korea, which considers the North part of its territory and therefore embraces North Korean refugees.

Many of the children of these marriages, if they're able to reunite with their mothers in the South, are alienated and frustrated as they struggle

to navigate a strange culture, cut off from friends and many of their relatives.

To tell their little-known stories, The Associated Press talked to three of the children, two of their North Korean mothers and an array of school teachers, experts and government officials.

Many of the North Korean mothers lived in China in constant fear of being captured and repatriated to

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the North, where they could face torture and lengthy detention. When they made the risky trip to South Korea, they often left their children behind in China.

The lucky ones, after getting jobs and saving money in South Korea, arranged for their children and husbands to travel to the country. But some children were abandoned, or their fathers refused to leave their hometowns and move to a place where they had no relatives or friends.

Family reunions, if they happen at all, often take years, meaning many half-Chinese, half-North Korean children must fend for themselves during their adolescent years.

Song said she was 10 when her mother left their home in the northeastern Chinese city of Yanji in 2010. A year later, her father also went to South Korea, leaving her with her grandparents.

"When my mom left, I didn't cry. But when my dad left, I cried a lot," Song said. "I think it was because I felt I was truly alone then."

She only reunited with her parents in 2016 in South Korea after a six-year separation. Last December, her mother died of lung cancer.

"I came to blame God," said Song, a devout Christian. "I asked why this had to happen to me."

In South Korea, children like Song often face crises in identity, a language barrier, public indifference and poor government assistance. Many of them feel like outsiders and get left behind academically and socially. Some return to China, parting again with their North Korean mothers.

They're often confused about whether they're Chinese, South Korean or North Korean refugees. Because neither parent is originally from South Korea, they don't have help assimilating into the country's brutally competitive and fast-paced society.

"Combined with South Korea's social bias against them and their own distorted views about (the South Koreans around them), they mostly give up on opportunities to develop themselves, and this eats away at them fulfilling their potential," said Kim Doo Yeon, the principal of the alternative Great Vision School in Uijeongbu, just north of Seoul, where Song was enrolled for two years.

Another half-Chinese, half-North Korean young woman — who wished to be identified only by her family name, Choe, because she worries that media publicity could damage her life in South Korea — came to Seoul from China last year to reunite with her North Korean refugee mother.

The 20-year-old speaks only a little Korean and has no South Korean friends. She has yet to travel alone beyond Seoul and often spends time chatting online with her friends back in China.

Her mother fled their home in Dunhua city in northeastern China in early 2017 after seeing a fellow North Korean woman in their village being arrested and sent back to North Korea.

"I was very saddened," the daughter said through tears about her separation with her mother.

Her mother, who asked to be identified as Choe H.Y. because of similar privacy issues, said brokers lured her to cross the border into China with the promise of a job before selling her to her husband for 5,000 yuan (\$710) in 1998.

Song said her mother was also almost sold to a stranger before she ran away and met her father.

Upon arrival in South Korea, these children are given citizenship because their mothers are now South Korean nationals. But because they don't have a direct link to North Korea, they cannot legally receive some other special favors that North Korea-born refugees enjoy.

Those missed benefits include the right to bypass the highly competitive national university entrance exam, get a college tuition waiver and, for men, choose whether to perform two years of mandatory military service.

Choe said her brother is still in China because of worries that he'll have to serve in the military. Choe wants to improve her Korean and go to a South Korean university, which means she must compete with South Korean students in the university entrance exam.

But language is a problem. "If I try to go deeper in our conversation in Korean, she won't understand, so I become impatient and start speaking Chinese to her," said Choe H.Y.

The fact that these children's mothers mostly began slipping into China about 20 years ago suggests their children are now reaching adulthood and that their plight could soon become a bigger social issue

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in South Korea.

According to the South Korean Education Ministry, about 1,550 such children were enrolled in primary, middle and high schools in South Korea as of April this year, compared with about 980 North Korea-born students. The true number is likely higher.

In recent years, the government has tried to help by providing 4 million won (\$3,390) to their families and dispatching more bilingual instructors to schools. In May, an opposition lawmaker proposed providing China-born North Korean children with the same assistance given to North Korea-born refugees.

Shim Yang-sup, principal of the Seoul-based alternative South-North Love School, said the children should be supported because they represent an untapped resource, with the ability to often speak two languages and navigate both Korean and Chinese cultures.

Kim Hyun-seung, 20, from Tianjin, China, arrived in South Korea three years ago to reunite with his mother, who came six years earlier. Kim's 52-year-old mother, Kim So-yeon, described him as "a great, loyal son," who tried not to talk much about his suffering and once cooked special foods for her on her birthday.

Tall and slim, Kim said he wouldn't mind serving in the South Korean military and dreams of being a chef in a French restaurant.

But he doesn't want a serious girlfriend out of fear they'd "become a couple like my father and mother that gives pain to their child, fails to live together and worries about many things."

Song's bilingual ability helped her receive special admission to a university near Seoul. Her first semester starts in March, and she's excited and nervous about meeting her mostly South Korea-born classmates.

"I'm seeing things positively ... because even if I complain about some difficulties that I have, they aren't resolved," she said. "I've sometimes gotten sick after brooding alone. As time goes by, I'm missing my mom more than ever."

Official: Base shooter watched shooting videos before attack

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — The Saudi student who fatally shot three sailors at a U.S. naval base in Florida hosted a dinner party earlier in the week where he and three others watched videos of mass shootings, a U.S. official told The Associated Press on Saturday.

Officials investigating the deadly attack were working Saturday to determine whether it was motivated by terrorism, while President Donald Trump indicated he would review policies governing foreign military training in the United States.

The Navy on Saturday identified the three victims and hailed them as heroes for trying to stop the shooter and flagging down first responders after being shot.

"The Sailors that lost their lives in the line of duty and showed exceptional heroism and bravery in the face of evil," Capt. Tim Kinsella, the commanding officer of Naval Air Station Pensacola, said in a statement. "When confronted, they didn't run from danger; they ran towards it and saved lives."

The shooter opened fire inside a classroom at the naval base on Friday, killing three people and wounding two sheriff's deputies, one in the arm and one in the knee, before one of the deputies killed him. Eight others were also hurt. Both deputies were expected to survive.

The official who spoke Saturday said one of the three students who attended the dinner party hosted by the attacker recorded video outside the classroom building while the shooting was taking place. Two other Saudi students watched from a car, the official said.

Ten Saudi students were being held on the base Saturday while several others were unaccounted for, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity after being briefed by federal authorities.

The FBI identified the shooter in a statement Saturday night as Mohammed Alshamrani, 21. Investigators said he was a 2nd Lt. in the Royal Saudi Air Force and was a student naval flight officer of Naval Aviation Schools Command. A U.S. official on Friday said the FBI was examining social media posts and investigating whether he acted alone or was connected to any broader group. The official wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity.

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Two U.S. officials said Friday that authorities were investigating whether the attack was terrorism-related. They spoke on condition of anonymity to disclose information that had not yet been made public.

In remarks at a gathering of top U.S. defense and military officials on Saturday, Defense Secretary Mark Esper was asked whether he could say definitively that the shooting was an act of terrorism.

"No, I can't say it's terrorism at this time," he said, adding that the investigation needs to proceed. He declined to discuss details of the investigation so far.

President Trump also declined to say whether the shooting was terrorism-related. The president tweeted his condolences to the families of the victims on Friday and noted that Saudi King Salman had reassured him in a telephone call that the shooter "in no way shape or form represents the feelings of the Saudi people."

But in comments echoing those made earlier by Esper, Trump said Saturday that he would review policies governing foreign military training in the U.S.

The U.S. has long had a robust training program for Saudis, providing assistance in the U.S. and in the kingdom. Currently, more than 850 Saudis are in the United States for various training activities. They are among more than 5,000 foreign students from 153 countries in the U.S. going through military training.

"This has been done for many decades," Trump said. "I guess we're going to have to look into the whole procedure. We'll start that immediately."

Speaking at the Ronald Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, California, on Saturday, Esper and others downplayed any initial impact on U.S.-Saudi ties.

Asked whether he would now hesitate to send U.S. forces to Saudi Arabia, he said, "No, not at all." He said the U.S. and Saudi Arabia have shared security interests, especially with regard to Iran.

The shooting has shined a light on the sometimes rocky relationship between the two countries, however.

The kingdom is still trying to recover from the killing last year of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. Saudi intelligence officials and a forensic doctor killed and dismembered Khashoggi on Oct. 2, 2018, just as his fiancée waited outside the diplomatic mission.

Naval Air Station Pensacola is one of the Navy's most historic and storied bases. It sprawls along the waterfront southwest of the city's downtown and dominates the economy of the surrounding area.

Part of the base resembles a college campus, with buildings where, in addition to foreign students, 60,000 members of the U.S. Navy, Marines, Air Force and Coast Guard train each year in multiple fields of aviation.

Kinsella said the base would remain closed until further notice.

Residents of Pensacola mourned the attacks and offered their condolences to affected members of the community.

Family members on Saturday identified one of the victims as a 23-year-old recent graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy who alerted first responders to where the shooter was even after he had been shot several times.

"Joshua Kaleb Watson saved countless lives today with his own," his older brother Adam Watson wrote on Facebook. "He died a hero and we are beyond proud."

A second victim was identified as Airman Mohammed Sameh Haitham, 19, of St. Petersburg, Florida, who joined the Navy after graduating from high school last year, according to the Tampa Bay Times.

Haitham's mother, Evelyn Brady, herself a Navy veteran, said the commander of her son's school called her and told her Haitham had tried to stop the shooter.

The former track and field star had been assigned to flight crew training and was looking forward to graduating from the program later this month, Brady said.

"He said he was going to get his flight jacket for Christmas," she said. "Now that's not going to happen."

The Navy identified the third victim as Airman Apprentice Cameron Scott Walters, 21, of Richmond Hill, Georgia. All three were students at Naval Aviation Schools Command.

The shooting is the second at a U.S. naval base in one week. A sailor whose submarine was docked at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, opened fire on three civilian employees Wednesday, killing two before taking his own life.

Associated Press reporters Lolita Baldor, Ben Fox, Mike Balsamo and Robert Burns in Washington; Jon

Gambrell in Dubai; Bobby Caina Calvan in Tallahassee, Florida; Tamara Lush in Tampa, Florida; and Freida Frisaro in Miami contributed to this report.

Historical documents show Japan's role in WWII sex slaves

YURI KAGEYAMA Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Japan's army during World War II asked the government to provide one sex slave for every 70 soldiers, according to historical documents reviewed by Kyodo News service that highlight the state role in the so-called "comfort women" system.

The 23 documents were gathered by Japan's Cabinet Secretariat between April 2017 and March 2019, including 13 classified dispatches from the Japanese consulates in China to the Foreign Ministry in Tokyo dating back to 1938, according to Kyodo.

The sex slaves issue has been a source of a painful dispute between South Korea and Japan. The women were from Korea, Taiwan and Australia, the Philippines as well as Japan.

In 1993, then-Chief Cabinet Secretary Yohei Kono, the government spokesman, apologized for the "comfort women" system and acknowledged the Japanese military's involvement in taking women against their will.

The Kyodo reports shows one dispatch from the consul general of Jinan to the foreign minister that said the Japanese invasion had caused a surge in prostitution in the area, with 101 geisha from Japan, 110 comfort women from Japan, and 228 comfort women from Korea.

It says "at least 500 comfort women must be concentrated here by the end of April" for Japanese soldiers. Presumably, the records imply that the women referred to as "geisha" might have come on their own, as opposed to sex slaves, who were coerced.

Another dispatch from the consul general of Qingdao in Shandong province in China says the Imperial Army asked for one woman to accommodate every 70 soldiers, while the navy had requested 150 more comfort women and geisha, Kyodo said.

The number of sex slaves is not certain, but historians say they numbered in the tens of thousands or more, and their purpose was to prevent the spread of disease and curtail rapes among soldiers.

Japan's colonization and wartime record continue to strain relations with Asian neighbors. The Japanese government says reparations are settled but it has set up funds to support the victims. That has had mixed results with continued demands for a more thorough apology. Lawsuits are ongoing in South Korea.

Some have denied official Japanese involvement, and think the women were prostitutes who came of their own accord.

More recently, the sour relations between Japan and South Korea have affected trade and tourism and



FILE - In this Dec. 28, 2017, file photo, a statue representing sex slaves is seen near the Japanese Embassy in Seoul, South Korea. Japan's army during World War II asked the government to provide one sex slave for every 70 soldiers, according to historical documents reviewed by Kyodo News service that highlight the state role in the so-called "comfort women" system. The letters read "Nul-lity". (AP Photo/Lee Jin-man, File)

set off other controversies, including one earlier this year over the display of a statue depicting a young "comfort woman."

Follow Yuri Kageyama on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

Heisman coronation? Burrow leads LSU past Georgia 37-10

By PAUL NEWBERRY AP Sports Writer

ATLANTA (AP) — Joe Burrow collected a shiny award as the game's MVP.

LSU's fans had another trophy on their minds.

"Heisman! Heisman! Heisman!" they chanted.

The coronation is likely complete.

Burrow turned in another dazzling performance on the big stage, leading No. 1 LSU to a spot in the College Football Playoff with a 37-10 rout of No. 4 Georgia in the Southeastern Conference championship game Saturday.

"Joe is the heartbeat of this team," running back Clyde Edwards-Helaire said.

The Tigers, going for their first national title since 2007 season, will either return to Atlanta or head west to suburban Phoenix for a semifinal game on Dec. 28. They surely made a persuasive case to be the top overall seed when the four-team field. and pairings are announced Sunday.

Burrow was all over the stat sheet for LSU (13-0, No. 2 CFP). He threw for 349 yards and four touchdowns. He was the Tigers' second-leading rusher with 41 yards on 11 carries, often leaving the Bulldogs grasping at air as he twirled this way and that. He even caught a pass on a ball that was batted down at the line and wound up his arms, taking off for a 16-yard gain.

"He's a great athlete, man," Georgia safety J.R. Reed said. "We had a lot of plays out there we were supposed to make, and he'd just squeeze out of it."

The Heisman-worthy moment came late in the third quarter. With Georgia (11-2, No 4 CFP) bringing the heat, Burrow spun to his left to get away from lineman Travon Walker, whirled back to his right to send Walker sprawling to the turf, then delivered a pass on the run while sprinting toward the LSU sideline with another defender in hot pursuit.

Justin Jefferson hauled in the throw just beyond midfield and took off down to the Bulldogs 9 for a 71-yard play. Three plays later, Burrow delivered his third TD pass of the game, hooking up with Terrace Marshall Jr., on a 4-yard touchdown pass that essentially finished off the Bulldogs.

"It was all improvised," Burrow said. "Justin ran a 6-yard hitch route and saw me scrambling and took off deep. We got a great feel for each other. I knew exactly where he was going to be when I got out of there."

Burrow wasn't done. Derek Stingley's second pick of Jake Fromm turned the ball back over to the pro-



LSU safety Grant Delpit (7) sacks Georgia quarterback Jake Fromm (11) during the first half of the Southeastern Conference championship NCAA college football game, Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, in Atlanta. Fromm was injured on the play. (AP Photo/John Bazemore)

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lific LSU offense at the 13, and Burrow wasted no time finding Jefferson for an 8-yard TD in the waning seconds of the third quarter to send many in the predominantly Georgia crowd heading for the exits.

LSU left no doubt it is the king of the mighty SEC, completing its run through a gauntlet of the league's top teams. The Tigers had already knocked off Alabama, Florida and Auburn. Now, they can add the Bulldogs to the list, ensuring the SEC will only get one team in the national playoff.

LSU came into the game as the second-highest scoring team in the country behind Ohio State. They figured to have a tougher time against Georgia's stellar defense, ranked No. 2 in points allowed. but Burrow kept the Bulldogs on their heels the entire game.

It was by far the most points Georgia has given up their season. Until Saturday, they held every opponent under 20 except South Carolina, which stunned the Bulldogs in double overtime nearly two months ago.

There was no such drama in this one.

Just total domination by the Tigers.

It was a painful loss — literally — for the Bulldogs, who were making their third straight appearance in the SEC title game. Two players were carted off the field with apparently major injuries. Another player wobbled off with a concussion after being leveled on a kickoff. Fromm twisted an ankle and had to go to the medical tent to get taped up, though he missed only one play.

Not that it mattered.

Fromm, who guided Georgia to the cusp of the national title two years ago as a freshman, was 20 of 42 for 225 yards with those two interceptions. He didn't get much help from his teammates: Tyler Simmons dropped a deep ball on the very first possession, and Matt Landers couldn't hang on to a throw in the end zone.

Georgia finally reached the end zone with just under 12 minutes remaining on Fromm's 2-yard TD pass to George Pickens.

"That is a really good football team," coach Kirby Smart said. "We were going to have to make explosive plays. We were unable to do that."

INJURY REPORT

Georgia's sideline looked like a M(asterisk)A(asterisk)S(asterisk)H unit.

Receiver Dominick Blaylock crumpled to the turf after going up for a catch in the first quarter. He was carted to the locker room with a left knee injury.

Outside linebacker Walter Grant suffered a concussion in the third quarter from a special teams hit. LSU's Tory Carter was ejected for targeting.

Backup middle linebacker Quay Walker (right shoulder) and cornerback Tyrique Stevenson (apparent leg injury) also left the field with injuries.

Star running back D'Andre Swift clearly wasn't at full strength, either, after going out of the regular-season finale against Georgia Tech with should injury. He had just two carries for 13 yards.

THE TAKEAWAY

LSU: The Tigers could certainly take pride in putting up 481 yards on a defense of Georgia's caliber, but the most encouraging aspect of this game was another strong performance from LSU's defense. Maligned much of the season, they followed up a 50-7 rout of Texas A&M in the regular-season finale with another championship-worthy showing against the Bulldogs, who were held to 286 yards.

Georgia: Fromm came into the season projected as a high NFL draft pick who would likely go pro after his junior season. Now, it's not a reach to say he might be better off returning for his senior season to try to boost his stock. He has now failed to complete even half his passes in five straight games.

UP NEXT

LSU: Makes its first appearance in the College Football Playoff, which began in 2014. The Tigers last played for a national title during the 2011 season, when they won 13 straight games before a dismal 21-0 loss to Alabama in the BCS championship game.

Georgia: Appears likely to make its second straight appearance in the Sugar Bowl against Baylor, loser of the Big 12 championship game.

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'Simplicity is genius': Joshua boxes smart to reclaim titles

By STEVE DOUGLAS AP Sports Writer

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia (AP) — Anthony Joshua jumped up and down in the ring with his massive entourage, celebrating being around \$70 million richer and having three world heavyweight belts back in his possession.

For the British boxing superstar, it was well worth this controversial trip to Saudi Arabia.

In the first heavyweight title fight to be held in the Middle East, Joshua toyed with an out-of-shape Andy Ruiz Jr. over 12 unspectacular rounds to win a unanimous points decision, reclaim the WBA, WBO and IBF belts, and avenge a stunning upset by his Mexican-American opponent six months ago.

Joshua got his game plan spot on, using his lighter frame to outmaneuver Ruiz, relying on his longer reach to stay clear of trouble, and selecting his moments to go on the attack.

In the final seconds of a bout fought in the early hours of Sunday in a relatively cool 19 Celsius (66 F) for this part of the world, Joshua was almost running around the ring and Ruiz — exhausted and outfought — was planted in the middle, urging him to come closer.

"Sometimes simplicity is genius. I was outclassing the champion," Joshua said.

"I am used to knocking people out, but last time I got hurt so I gave the man his credit. I said I would correct myself again."

Two judges gave the fight to the Briton 119-110, and the other awarded it to him 119-109.

Ruiz put on 15 pounds since the first fight to weigh in at 283 pounds (128 kilograms), making him the second heaviest boxer to fight for a world heavyweight title. He said he hadn't prepared hard enough for the rematch and got "boxed around."

"The partying got the best of me," Ruiz said of his brief time as champion, during which he also went on talk shows, had an audience with the Mexican president and bought new cars for himself and his parents.

"I didn't prepare how I should have. I gained too much weight. I don't want to give excuses, he won ... If we do a third fight, you best believe I'm going to get in shape. I'll be in the best shape of my life."

Whether Joshua agrees to that remains to be seen. There is no rematch clause this time round and Ruiz, short with quick hands, is an awkward opponent.

Joshua proved he had another side to his boxing skills other than a big punch. His career is back on track, for sure, but his reputation might be sullied for other reasons.

The fight was played out to a backdrop of concerns that Saudi Arabia was using this and other big sport-



Britain's Anthony Joshua celebrates after beating Andy Ruiz Jr. to win their World Heavyweight Championship contest at the Diriyah Arena, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia early Sunday Dec. 8, 2019. (AP Photo/Hassan Ammar)

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ing events to divert attention from its human-rights violations. They include the murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi last year in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul.

Joshua has shrugged off concerns that he was being used in what some, like human rights organization Amnesty International, called a "sportswashing" exercise, and he thanked Saudi Arabia for hosting the fight afterward.

Women who attended the fight at the outdoor, purpose-built, 15,000-capacity Diriyah Arena did not appear to be segregated, as they have been in sports stadiums in Saudi Arabia since being allowed into them for the first time last year.

Indeed, it felt just like any other venue once the action got underway, with a pro-Joshua crowd chanting the usual repertoire of songs about their fighter and jeering Ruiz. To make Joshua feel even more at home, there was a rare downpour of rain in the desert just before the fight and at times during the afternoon.

Ruiz knocked down Joshua four times on the way to a seventh-round win in New York in June that was regarded as one of the biggest upsets in the history of heavyweight boxing.

There was none of that drama in the rematch, with Ruiz rarely connecting cleanly with Joshua. When he did, it was with punches to the back of the head that earned him a ticking-off from the referee.

Ruiz finished the fight with blood across his face, having been caught with a right hook by Joshua in the first round.

There were straight lefts from Joshua in the fourth and ninth that rocked Ruiz back, and a right hook in the fifth that also hurt the deposed champion.

"I just wanted to put on a great boxing masterclass and also show the sweet science of this lovely sport. It's about hitting and not getting hit," Joshua said.

"Sometimes with certain fighters you have to box smarter. I understand what Andy brought to the table so I had to decapitate him in a different way."

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Steve Douglas is at www.twitter.com/sdouglas80

New Amazon lease for NY space renews debate over failed deal

By ALEXANDRA OLSON AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Amazon has signed a lease for a new office space in Manhattan that will house more than 1,500 employees, less than a year after pulling out of a deal for a larger headquarters in the borough of Queens after politicians and activists objected to nearly \$3 billion in incentives.

The new office almost immediately renewed a debate over whether the tax breaks and other incentives were excessive, given the likelihood that Amazon would continue to expand in New York City regardless because of the city's large talent pool. The online retail giant received no incentives for its new 335,000-square-foot complex in a building near Hudson Yards, a high-end commercial and residential development on the west side in midtown Manhattan.

Amazon said the new office will open in 2021 and will house employees from its consumer and advertisement teams. The Seattle-based company already has 3,500 employees in other New York offices, and the headquarters for its subsidiary Audible is in nearby Newark, New Jersey.

"As we shared earlier this year, we plan to continue to hire and grow organically across our 18 tech hubs, including New York City," the company said in an e-mailed statement.

Amazon dropped plans this year to build a \$2.5 billion campus in the Queens neighborhood of Long Island City that was projected to bring 25,000 new jobs over 15 years. The company had chosen Long Island City for one of two new headquarters after a fierce bidding war among more than 200 metropolitan areas that Amazon itself had stoked. The state and city had offered \$2.8 billion in incentives that included \$1.5 billion in tax breaks and grants, and a helipad near the new offices.

New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo had lashed out at politicians and activists whose campaign helped un-

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ravel the Queens project, saying it threatened to undermine New York City's emergence as tech hub and squandered an opportunity for generate money for schools, housing and transit. Critics of the incentives package swiftly cited Amazon's latest corporate lease to argue those fears were unfounded.

"Amazon is coming to New York, just as they always planned. Fortunately, we dodged a \$3 billion bullet by not agreeing to their subsidy shakedown earlier this year," New York state Sen. Michael Gianaris said in a statement.

Cuomo pushed back against the reaction, saying the Queens headquarters would have brought in more jobs and the new office will not benefit Long Island City.

"This is crumbs from the table compared to a feast," Cuomo said. "We don't have a problem bringing businesses to Manhattan but we have been trying for decades to get that Queens waterfront developed."

Mayor Bill DeBlasio had blamed Amazon for pulling out of the deal prematurely. His office did so again Saturday, while lamenting that Long Island City had lost out on Amazon's expansion plans.

"Amazon couldn't take the heat and didn't want to work in good faith with New Yorkers. Now, New York is getting just a fraction of the jobs and Queens is getting none of the benefits," said Jane Meyer, a spokeswoman for the mayor.

Even before the deal unraveled, experts said Amazon's choice of New York City underscored that its main concern when it comes to expansion is access to talent at a time of fierce competition for computer programmers, mobile app developers, data scientists and cybersecurity experts. The company is continuing with its plans to build another headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, a suburb of Washington, D.C. that is also an emerging tech hub.

New York has a thriving start-up scene, and big tech companies are already rapidly expanding their presence in the city. Facebook announced a deal last month to lease 1.5 million square feet of office space in Hudson Yards. Google and Instagram have also opened new offices in recent years.

"Ultimately, what Amazon needs is qualified tech talent and that's why it needs to be in New York," said Joe Parilla, a fellow at the Metropolitan Policy Program at the Brookings Institute.

Still, Parilla said the large incentive package was targeted at luring Amazon to one of New York's outer boroughs, which have not benefited from the tech boom like Manhattan has.

"Everyone who was pushing for this investment understood that New York would be fine either way overall. Within that context, they were trying to make a more precise argument, which is that Long Island City was not reaping the benefits," Parilla said.

U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, a Democrat who represents a Queens district near Long Island City,



This April 1, 2019, photo shows the Long Island Railroad storage yards and buildings at Hudson Yards in New York. Amazon has signed a lease for a new office space in Manhattan that will house more than 1,500 employees, less than a year after pulling out of a deal for a larger headquarters in the borough of Queens after politicians and activists objected to nearly \$3 billion in incentives. Amazon said the new office in a building near Hudson Yards will open in 2021. (AP Photo/Mark Lennihan)

said officials had been offering costly incentives in exchange for a promise of jobs that were not guaranteed. "The 25,000 jobs figure was a 10-20 year fantasy ... from Amazon, not a promise or agreement," Ocasio-Cortez said in a tweet.

She added that the 1,500 new jobs Amazon is now adding "are for FREE."

Associated Press writer Karen Matthews in New York contributed to this story.

Pensacola naval base shooting tests US-Saudi relations

By LOLITA C. BALDOR Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Top U.S. defense and military officials on Saturday reaffirmed America's continued commitment to and relationship with Saudi Arabia after a Saudi Air Force student's deadly attack at a Navy base in Florida.

Defense Secretary Mark Esper and others attending a security conference in California played down any initial impact on U.S.-Saudi ties. President Donald Trump described a conciliatory conversation with the Saudi king.

But the shooting also is testing the allies' ties just months after the Trump administration delivered substantial military aid to Saudi Arabia to counter threats from Iran.

"I spoke with the king of Saudi Arabia. They are devastated in Saudi Arabia," Trump told reporters Saturday as he left the White House on a trip to Florida. He said the king "will be involved in taking care of families and loved ones. He feels very strongly."

Asked about any potential effect on military relations, Esper had said on Friday: "We have strong military-to-military ties." He added, "That's the basis of our relationship with the Saudis. I don't see this undermining" the military-to-military relationship.

In remarks at the Ronald Reagan National Defense Forum in Simi Valley, Esper was asked on Saturday whether he can say definitively that the shooting in Pensacola was terrorism. "No, I can't say it's terrorism at this time," he said. Asked whether he would now hesitate to send American forces to Saudi Arabia, he said, "No, not at all." He said the U.S. and Saudi Arabia have shared security interests, especially with regard to Iran.

Investigators were exploring why the pilot trainee and three others watched videos of mass shootings in the days before he fatally shot three people at Naval Air Station Pensacola and wounded several others.

When Gen. David Berger, commandant of the Marine Corps, was asked whether the shooting gave him reservations about sending Marines to Saudi Arabia, he said no.

"All of us have forces in other countries, and theirs in ours," Berger said. "Reservations sending Marines or service members to other countries or to Saudi Arabia? No, not at all."

Saudi leaders were quick to make calls to American officials, expressing condolences and outrage over



President Donald Trump speaks with reporters before boarding Marine One on the South Lawn of the White House, Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019, in Washington. (AP Photo/Alex

Brandon)

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the killings. Saudi King Salman called Trump soon after the news broke Friday. In a statement, the Saudi Embassy said the king "affirmed that the perpetrator of this heinous crime does not represent the Saudi people, who count the American people as friends and allies."

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo tweeted Saturday that he had just talked to the Saudi foreign minister, "who expressed his condolences and sadness at the loss of life in the horrific attack."

The shooting raised uneasy parallels to the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, when many of the al-Qaida-linked hijackers who flew planes into the World Trade Center, Pentagon and Pennsylvania countryside were Saudi citizens who had flight training in the U.S.

The suspected Pensacola shooter, identified by U.S. officials as Mohammed Saeed Alshamrani, was a member of the Saudi Air Force and was attending pilot training at the base. The officials provided his name on condition of anonymity because it has not yet been released publicly. Three people were killed in the shooting, and eight were injured, including two sheriff's deputies. One of the deputies shot and killed Alshamrani.

A U.S. official told The Associated Press on Saturday that Alshamrani hosted a dinner party earlier in the week where he and three others watched videos of mass shootings. And one of the three students who attended the dinner party videotaped outside the building while the shooting was taking place, said the official, who spoke on condition of anonymity after being briefed by federal authorities. Two other Saudi students watched from a car, the official said.

The official said 10 Saudi students were being held on the base Saturday while several others were unaccounted for.

U.S. officials at the security forum in California were careful not to draw any broader conspiracy or terrorism-related links to the shooting.

Adm. Michael Gilday, the chief of naval operations, was asked about unspecified reports that the Saudi shooter may have been part of a "sleeper cell." He said he had not seen any such reports. He said the shooting was under investigation, and "at this point it is too early, in my opinion ... to draw those types of conclusions."

The U.S. has long had a robust training program for Saudis, providing assistance in the U.S. and in the kingdom. As of this week, there are more than 850 Saudis in the United States for various training activities. They are among more than 5,000 foreign students from 153 countries in the U.S. going through military training.

"This has been done for many decades," Trump said Saturday. "We've been doing this with other countries, foreign countries. I guess we're going to have to look into the whole procedure. We'll start that immediately."

The Trump administration has also been aggressively helping Saudi Arabia this year, sending Patriot missile batteries, dozens of fighter jets and hundreds of troops there after attacks on the kingdom that officials blame on Iran.

In October, Esper visited Prince Sultan Air Base to see one of the batteries and talk about efforts to get other allies to contribute to the defense of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf region to counter threats from Iran.

But the kingdom's reputation is still damaged after the killing last year of Washington Post columnist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Consulate in Istanbul. Saudi intelligence officials and a forensic doctor killed and dismembered Khashoggi on Oct. 2, 2018, as his fiancée waited outside the diplomatic mission.

Khashoggi, long a royal court insider, had been in self-imposed exile in the U.S. while writing critically of Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, son of the oil-rich nation's King Salman.

AP National Security Writer Robert Burns in Simi Valley, Calif., and Associated Press writer Brendan Farington in Pensacola, Fla., contributed to this report.

House impeachment report looks at abuse, bribery, corruption

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press



FILE - In this March 7, 2019, file photo, House Judiciary Committee Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., and Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., speak to reporters at the Capitol in Washington. The House Judiciary Committee is moving to the forefront of President Donald Trump's impeachment, starting with a hearing Wednesday, Dec. 4 to examine the "high crimes and misdemeanors" set out in the Constitution. (AP Photo/J. Scott Applewhite, File)

the national interest for his own benefit, or harm national security for equally corrupt reasons, he is subject to impeachment by the House," the Democrats wrote. "Indeed, foreign interference in the American political system was among the gravest dangers feared by the Founders of our Nation and the Framers of our Constitution."

Democrats are working through the weekend as articles are being drafted and committee members are preparing for a hearing Monday. Democrats say Trump abused his power in the July 25 phone call when he asked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for a favor and engaged in bribery by withholding nearly \$400 million in military aid that Ukraine depends on to counter Russian aggression.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi says it's part of a troubling pattern of behavior from Trump that benefits Russia and not the U.S.

Trump has insisted he did nothing wrong. "Witch Hunt!" the president tweeted Saturday morning.

The articles of impeachment are likely to encompass two major themes — abuse of office and obstruction — as Democrats strive to reach the Constitution's bar of "treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

In releasing his report Saturday, Chairman Jerrold Nadler, D-N.Y., said the president's actions are the framers' "worst nightmare."

"President Trump abused his power, betrayed our national security, and corrupted our elections, all for personal gain. The Constitution details only one remedy for this misconduct: impeachment," Nadler said

WASHINGTON (AP) — Previewing potential articles of impeachment, the House Democrats on Saturday issued a lengthy report drawing on history and the Founding Fathers to lay out the legal argument over the case against President Donald Trump's actions toward Ukraine.

The findings from the House Judiciary Committee do not spell out the formal charges against the president, which are being drafted ahead of votes, possibly as soon as next week. Instead, the report refutes Trump's criticism of the impeachment proceedings, arguing that the Constitution created impeachment as a "safety valve" so Americans would not have to wait for the next election to remove a president. It refers to the writings of George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and others to link Trump's actions in his July phone call with Ukraine's president seeking political investigations of his rivals to the kind of behavior that would "horrify" the framers.

"Where the President uses his foreign affairs power in ways that betray

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in a statement. "The safety and security of our nation, our democracy, and future generations hang in the balance if we do not address this misconduct. In America, no one is above the law, not even the President."

The report released Saturday is an update of similar reports issued during the Richard Nixon and Bill Clinton impeachments and lays out the justification for articles under consideration, including abuse of power, bribery and obstruction.

It does not lay out the facts of the Ukraine case, but it hints at potential articles of impeachment and explains the thinking behind Democrats' decision to draft them. Without frequently mentioning Trump, it alludes to his requests that Ukraine investigate Democrats, a move he believed would benefit him politically, by saying a president who "perverts his role as chief diplomat to serve private rather than public ends" has unquestionably engaged in the high crimes and misdemeanors laid out in the Constitution. That is true "especially" if he invited rather than opposed foreign interference, the report says.

The report examines treason, bribery, serious abuse of power, betrayal of the national interest through foreign entanglements and corruption of office and elections. Democrats have been focused on an overall abuse of power article, with the possibility of breaking out a separate, related article on bribery. They are also expected to draft at least one article on obstruction of Congress, or obstruction of justice.

In laying out the grounds for impeachable offenses, the report directly refutes several of the president's claims in a section called "fallacies about impeachment," including that the inquiry is based on secondhand evidence, that a president can do what he wants to do, and that Democrats' motives are corrupt.

"The President's honesty in an impeachment inquiry, or his lack thereof, can thus shed light on the underlying issue," the report says.

In pushing ahead with the impeachment inquiry, Democrats are bringing the focus back to Russia.

Pelosi is connecting the dots — "all roads lead to Putin," she says — and making the argument that Trump's pressure campaign on Ukraine was not an isolated incident but part of a troubling bond with the Russian president reaching back to special counsel Robert Mueller's findings on the 2016 election interference.

"This isn't about Ukraine," she explained a day earlier. "It's about Russia. Who benefited by our withholding of that military assistance? Russia."

It's an attempt to explain why Americans should care that Trump pushed Ukraine to investigate rival Joe Biden while withholding the military aid that Congress had approved.

At the same time, by tracing the arc of Trump's behavior from the 2016 campaign to the present, it stitches it all together. And that helps the speaker balance her left-flank liberals, who want more charges brought against Trump, including from Mueller's report, and centrist Democrats who prefer to keep the argument more narrowly focused on Ukraine.

Pelosi and her team are trying to convey a message that impeachment is indeed about Ukraine, but also about a pattern of behavior that could stoke renewed concern about his attitude toward Russia ahead of the 2020 election.

Trump pushed back on the Democrats' message. "The people see that it's just a continuation of this three-year witch hunt," he told reporters as he left the White House on a trip to Florida.

Late Friday, White House counsel Pat Cipollone informed the Judiciary Committee that the administration would not be participating in upcoming hearings, decrying the proceedings as "completely baseless."

And Trump's campaign announced new rallies taking the case directly to voters — as well as a new email fundraising pitch that claims the Democrats have "gone absolutely insane."

"The Democrats have NO impeachment case and are demeaning our great Country at YOUR expense," Trump wrote in the email to supporters. "It's US against THEM."

Impeachment articles could include obstruction of Congress, as the White House ordered officials not to comply with House subpoenas for testimony or documents in the inquiry. They could also include obstruction of justice, based on Mueller's report on the original Trump-Russia investigation.

There is still robust internal debate among House Democrats over how many articles to write and how much to include — and particularly whether there should be specific mention of Mueller's findings from his two-year investigation into Trump's possible role in Russia's 2016 election interference.

The special counsel could not determine that Trump's campaign conspired or coordinated with Russia.

However, Mueller said he could not exonerate Trump of obstructing justice in the probe and left it for Congress to determine.

Iran frees Chinese-American scholar for US-held scientist

By JON GAMBRELL and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press



This photo provided by U.S. Embassy Switzerland, Edward McMullen greets Xiyue Wang in Zurich, Switzerland on Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019. In a trade conducted in Zurich, Iranian officials handed over Chinese-American graduate student Xiyue Wang, detained in Tehran since 2016, for scientist Massoud Soleimani, who had faced a federal trial in Georgia. (U.S. Embassy Switzerland via AP)

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — A Princeton scholar held for three years in Iran on widely criticized espionage charges was freed Saturday as part of a prisoner exchange that saw America release a detained Iranian scientist, a rare diplomatic breakthrough between Tehran and Washington after months of tensions.

The trade on the tarmac of a Swiss airport saw Iranian officials hand over Chinese-American graduate student Xiyue Wang for scientist Massoud Soleimani, who had faced a federal trial in Georgia over charges he violated sanctions by trying to have biological material brought to Iran.

The swap, however, had clear limits. Crushing U.S. sanctions on Iran blocking it from selling crude oil abroad remain in place, part of President Donald Trump's maximum pressure campaign imposed following his unilateral withdraw from Tehran's nuclear deal with world powers last year. Those sanctions in part fueled the anger seen in nationwide protests last month that Iranian security forces violently put down, unrest that report-

edly killed over 200 people.

Meanwhile, Western detainees from the U.S. and elsewhere remain held by Tehran, likely to be used as bargaining chips for future negotiations. At least two American families of detainees, while praising Wang's release, questioned why their loved ones didn't come home as well.

Wang's release had been rumored over recent days. One lawyer involved in his case tweeted out a Bible verse about an angel freeing the apostle Peter just hours before Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif broke the news in his own tweet. He posted pictures of himself with Soleimani at the Zurich airport before quickly whisking him back to Tehran by jet.

Trump shortly after acknowledged Wang was free in a statement from the White House, thanking Switzerland for its help. The Swiss Embassy in Tehran looks out for America's interests in the country as the U.S. Embassy there has been closed since the 1979 student takeover and 444-day hostage crisis.

"We're very happy to have our hostage back. The whole Princeton University community is very thrilled and it was a one-on-one hostage swap," said Trump, speaking to reporters outside the White House before he left on a trip to Florida. "Actually I think it was a great thing for Iran. I think it was great to show that we can do something. It might have been a precursor as to what can be done. But we have our hostage back."

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Brian Hook, the U.S. special representative for Iran, accompanied the Soleimani to Switzerland to make the exchange. He later posed for a photograph with Wang, who carried a folded American flag in his arms while wearing gray workout clothes.

Hook and Wang traveled to Landstuhl hospital near Ramstein Air Base in Germany where Wang likely will be examined by doctors for several days.

Wang's wife, Hua Qu, released a statement saying "our family is complete once again."

"Our son Shaofan and I have waited three long years for this day and it's hard to express in words how excited we are to be reunited with Xiyue," she said. "We are thankful to everyone who helped make this happen."

Soleimani arrived at Tehran's Mehrabad International Airport with Zarif, where his wife and family wrapped garlands of yellow and purple carnations around his neck. He briefly spoke to journalists from state-run media, his voice shaking and a tear running down his face under a portrait of the late Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini.

"Their grudge against us is based on our scientific growth," Soleimani said. "They are afraid of our knowledge."

Wang was sentenced to 10 years in prison in Iran for allegedly "infiltrating" the country and sending confidential material abroad. Wang was arrested in 2016 while conducting research on the Qajar dynasty that once ruled Iran for his doctorate in late 19th- and early 20th-century Eurasian history, according to Princeton.

Wang's family and Princeton strongly denied the claims. The United Nations' Working Group on Arbitrary Detention said "there was no legal basis for the arrest and detention."

Westerners and Iranian dual nationals with ties to the West often find themselves tried and convicted in closed-door trials, only later to be used as bargaining chips in negotiations.

Soleimani works in stem cell research, hematology and regenerative medicine. He and his lawyers maintained his innocence, saying he seized on a former student's plans to travel from the U.S. to Iran in September 2016 as a chance to get recombinant proteins used in his research for a fraction of the price he'd pay at home.

Zarif in September said in an interview with NPR that he had pushed for an exchange of Wang for Soleimani. Speaking in Tehran on Saturday night, Zarif referred to Wang as a "spy" who received his release due to "Islamic mercy."

It remains unclear whether this exchange will have a wider effect on Iranian-U.S. relations. Iran has accused the U.S. without evidence of being behind the mid-November protests over gasoline prices. The demonstrations and the crackdown reportedly killed at least 208 people, though Iran has refused to release nationwide statistics over the unrest.

Meanwhile, Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has ruled out direct talks between the nations.

A U.S. official, speaking to journalists on condition of anonymity to discuss negotiations with Iran, suggested the maximum pressure campaign targeting Tehran would continue.

"There's been absolutely no payment of cash or lifting of sanctions or any sort of concessions or ransom in any of these cases, and certainly not with respect to Mr. Wang," the official said.

There had been signs a swap could be coming. In June, Iran released Nizar Zakka, a U.S. permanent resident from Lebanon who advocated for internet freedom and has done work for the U.S. government. The U.S. then deported Iranian Negar Ghodskani in September, who had been brought from Australia and later sentenced to time served for conspiracy to illegally export restricted technology to Iran.

Others held in Iran include U.S. Navy veteran Michael White, who is serving a 10-year espionage sentence, as well as environmentalist Morad Tahbaz, an Iranian with U.S. and British citizenship also initially sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Also in Iran are 83-year-old Baquer Namazi and his son, Siamak Namazi, dual Iranian-American nationals facing 10-year sentences after they were convicted of collaborating with a hostile power. Baquer Namazi now is on a prison furlough, said Alireza Miryousefi, a spokesman at Iran's mission to the United Nations.

However, the Namazis say he remains unable to leave Iran.

Babak Namazi, Baquer's son and Siamak's brother, issued a statement saying he was "beyond devastated that a second president" had left the two behind. An earlier 2016 prisoner swap as the nuclear deal took effect saw prisoners including Washington Post journalist Jason Rezaian released but not the Namazis.

Former FBI agent Robert Levinson, who vanished in Iran in 2007 while on an unauthorized CIA mission, remains missing as well. Iran says that Levinson is not in the country and that it has no further information about him, but his family holds Tehran responsible for his disappearance.

"We can't help but be extremely disappointed that, despite all its efforts, the United States government was unable to secure his release, especially after such a painful week for our family," the Levinson family said in a statement. "Iranian authorities continue to play a cruel game with our father's life, and with our family. But the world knows the truth, and Iranian leadership must come clean."

Lee reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Darlene Superville in Washington and Nasser Karimi in Tehran, Iran, contributed to this report.

Aging survivors return to Pearl Harbor to recall '41 attack

By AUDREY McAVOY Associated Press



Pearl Harbor survivor Lou Conter, 98, center, who was the only survivor from the USS Arizona to make it to this year's ceremony, smiles during the 78th anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Saturday, Dec. 7, 2019 at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Survivors and members of the public gathered in Pearl Harbor to remember those killed when Japanese planes bombed the Hawaii naval base 78 years ago and launched the U.S. into World War II. About a dozen survivors of the attack attended the annual ceremony, the youngest of whom are now in their late 90s. (AP Photo/Caleb Jones)

morning.

Elfring was standing at the edge of his barracks at Camp Malakole a few miles down the coast from Pearl Harbor, reading a bulletin board when Japanese Zero planes flew over. "I could hear it coming but

PEARL HARBOR, Hawaii (AP) — A dozen frail survivors of the attack on Pearl Harbor returned Saturday to honor those who perished when Japanese planes pierced a quiet sunny morning 78 years ago and rained bombs on battleships lined up below.

About 30 World War II veterans and some 2,000 members of the public joined the survivors, the youngest of whom are now in their late 90s, to commemorate the anniversary of the Dec. 7, 1941, attack that launched the U.S. into World War II.

Herb Elfring, 97, of Jackson, Michigan, said being back at Pearl Harbor reminds him of all those who have lost their lives.

"It makes you think of all the servicemen who have passed ahead of me. As a Pearl Harbor survivor, I'm one of the last chosen few I guess." He's the only member of his old regiment still living.

Elfring was in the Army, assigned to the 251st Coast Artillery, part of the California National Guard. The unit's job was to protect airfields but they weren't expecting an attack that

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didn't pay attention to it until the strafing bullets were hitting the pavement about 15 feet (4.57 meters) away from me," he said.

A moment of silence was held at 7:55 a.m., the same time the assault began. U.S. Air Force F-22 fighter jets flying overhead in missing man formation broke the quiet.

Retired Navy Adm. Harry Harris, currently the U.S. ambassador to South Korea, and Interior Secretary David Bernhardt delivered remarks.

Harris said it's difficult to imagine the events of 78 years ago when people "not unlike us" were waking up to enjoy another day in paradise. "It was a day of gallantry and unquestionable heroism even as it was a day of sacrifice and immeasurable loss," Harris said.

He said the World War II generation played a pivotal role in underwriting the freedoms the U.S. enjoys today. "Every December 7 we remember the past actions of our veterans on Oahu because they inspire us today and because they shape our tomorrows," he said.

The ceremony comes on the heels of two deadly shootings at Navy bases this week, one at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard and another at Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida.

Rear Adm. Robert Chadwick, commander of Navy Region Hawaii, said the military community has received an outpouring of love and support from Hawaii after the shooting at "our beloved shipyard" earlier this week.

"Our thoughts and prayers remain with the families of the victims and everyone affected," Chadwick said.

A Pearl Harbor National Memorial spokesman said security was beefed up as usual for the annual event.

The 1941 aerial assault killed more than 2,300 U.S. troops. Nearly half — or 1,177 — were Marines and sailors serving on the USS Arizona, a battleship moored in the harbor. The vessel sank within nine minutes of being hit, taking most of its crew down with it.

Lou Conter, 98, was the only survivor from the USS Arizona to make it to this year's ceremony. Two other survivors are still living. Conter was sick last year and couldn't come. He said he likes to attend to remember those who lost their lives.

"It's always good to come back and pay respect to them and give them the top honors that they deserve," Conter said.

Conter said his doctor has vowed to keep him well until he's 100 so he can return for the 80th anniversary.

The USS Arizona still rests in the harbor today and is a grave for more than 900 men killed in the attack. Each year, nearly 2 million people visit the white memorial structure built above the ship.

An interment ceremony is scheduled to be held at sunset on the memorial for one of the Arizona's sailors who survived the attack, Lauren Bruner. He died earlier this year at age 98.

Bruner asked that an urn with his ashes be placed inside the Arizona's sunken hull upon his death. His ashes will join the remains of 44 shipmates who managed to live through the attack but wanted to be laid to rest in the ship. Bruner explained before he died that he preferred being interred in the Arizona so he could join his buddies and because of the memorial's high number of visitors.

Bruner is expected to be the last Arizona crew member to be interred on the ship. The three Arizona survivors still living plan to be laid to rest with their families.

Conter, the USS Arizona survivor from Grass Valley, California, said he will attend Bruner's interment ceremony later Saturday. He said Bruner was a good friend who joined the Navy and the USS Arizona a year ahead of Conter.

"Lauren was a good sailor, a good man. I'm glad he made it through Pearl," he said.

Venice tide barriers pass another test but skeptics remain

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

VENICE, Italy (AP) — Floated along by barge, one of the 10-ton barriers designed to relieve Venice's perennial flooding looks like a giant plaything: an oversized hinged yellow Lego.

Central to the plan to protect the city, some or all of the 78 barriers will one day be raised when the sea rises more than 110 centimeters (43 inches), to prevent damaging high tides from pushing into the

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lagoon city, a world heritage site built picturesquely — but somewhat precariously — upon more than 120 islands. Concerns that high tides are becoming more frequent because of climate change have increased the urgency.

While the concept is simple, its realization has been anything but.

The system of movable underwater barriers, dubbed Moses, has been beset by corruption, cost overruns and delays. Projected at 1.8 billion euros (\$2 billion) and meant to be completed by 2011, the project has so far cost 5.5 billion euros and is running a decade behind schedule.

In the wake of last month's flooding of Venice, the worst in 53 years, the consortium that oversees construction of Moses is eager to demonstrate that the project — after years of bad news — is on track and will be fully operational by the end of 2021.

Venetians say they cannot afford to be wrong. Skeptics and critics say they may be.

A recent test of the deepest expanse of barriers — at the Malamocco entrance to the lagoon — was declared a success by the New Venice Consortium.

It was the last of the four sections of barriers to be completely raised — but so far only in calm seas. The real test will come when all four are raised at once, and not only in serene waters, but under flood conditions. That isn't scheduled to take place until the end of next year.

It took six years to test each of the four movable sea walls covering the three openings to the lagoon, partly because work was slowed by a 2014 corruption scandal that implicated the three main contractors and sent 35 people to jail.

Work is continuing largely with the original subcontractors now contracting directly with the consortium, which itself has been placed under government control as a result of the scandal.

The fact that the barriers have not yet been physically tested in rough seas is a concern to critics.

Paolo Vielmo, an offshore marine engineer who has long criticized the project, said that tests carried out in a laboratory in the Netherlands in the 1990s indicated that the barriers, under certain conditions, would oscillate out of control — possibly even breaking apart.

"Its behavior is not predictable," Vielmo said. He said that the trials so far declared successful have been under only modest sea conditions that fail to represent anywhere near the threat of the phenomenon of extreme oscillation called subharmonic resonance.

Vielmo and two other offshore engineers have compiled a report for the Codacons consumer and environment protection advocacy group, which is asking officials to run additional calculations to see if the project is indeed viable.

And if it is not, Codacons says Moses should be stopped.

"We don't want to delay by one minute the possibility to make Moses operational. But we say we cannot make it operational until we are sure it will work," said Franco Conte, president of Codacons in Venice.



A yellow barrier, part of a plan to protect the city of Venice from flooding, floats on a barge, in Venice, Italy, Friday, Nov. 29, 2019. Central to the plan to protect Venice, some, or all, of the 78 barriers will one day be raised when the sea rises more than 110 centimeters to prevent damaging high tides from pushing into the lagoon city, a UNESCO heritage site built picturesquely but somewhat precariously among more than 120 islands. (AP Photo/Antonio Calanni)

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"Naturally, the Venetian community is exasperated and they say, 'If we did 95%, let's do 100% and see if that works.' But that is unconscionable. If we don't know if it works, we cannot experiment."

The barrier system is made up of giant flood gates, each 20 meters (66 feet) long. The gates are attached by hinges to giant cement blocks placed on the seabed along the three openings from the sea into the lagoon, Malamocco, Chioggia and the Lido. The gates can be lifted to create a temporary barrier in high tides. Once the water has receded, they can be lowered again — allowing shipping traffic to continue and for the tidal system to flush out the lagoon.

The idea behind the project was to create a mobile system that would not impede views of the unique and protected landscape. But Moses has suffered criticism from the start that there were simpler, cheaper systems that could have been deployed.

Venetians have been waiting since the record 1.94-meter (6.36-foot) flood of 1966 for a system to protect them from regular inundations. The flooding in November, the second-worst recorded, proved the urgency.

In the 150 years that they have been recording the tide levels in Venice, two high tides above 1.5 meters have never been recorded in a year. In November, there were three in one week.

Climate scientists note that exceptional tides — those over 1.4 meters — have become much more frequent in the past two decades, with more than half of all recorded occurring since 2000.

"One has to realize the kind of existential question that that serious flooding has given rise to," said Jane Da Mosto, an environmental scientist and executive director of the non-profit group We Are Here Venice, which is working to defend the city against myriad issues, including depopulation, cruise traffic through St. Mark's basin and overtourism. "People are asking: will Venice be defensible against these kinds of episodes?"

It's not just the still-uncalculated damage to landmarks like St. Mark's Basilica, where corrosive salt water creeps through porous brick and tile. It's also the boxes of ruined belongings and piles of soaked mattresses discarded in alleyways and loaded onto motorboats and trash barges for disposal. The relentlessness of the Venetian fall and winter tides make one-third of ground floors uninhabitable in the historic canal city.

"I am very old, I cannot say that I want to die, but I certainly do not want to be witness to the fact that it does not work," 84-year-old resident Paola Scarpa said of the Moses barriers, as she walked to check on a family property in the Canareggio neighborhood on a recent December morning. "It would be a pain too great."

Associated Press journalist Trisha Thomas contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Dec. 8, the 342nd day of 2019. There are 23 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 8, 1980, rock star and former Beatle John Lennon was shot to death outside his New York City apartment building by an apparently deranged fan.

On this date:

In 1863, President Abraham Lincoln issued his Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction for the South.

In 1886, the American Federation of Labor was founded in Columbus, Ohio.

In 1940, the Chicago Bears defeated the Washington Redskins, 73-0, in the NFL Championship Game, which was carried on network radio for the first time by the Mutual Broadcasting System (the announcer was Red Barber).

In 1941, the United States entered World War II as Congress declared war against Imperial Japan, a day after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

In 1972, a United Airlines Boeing 737 crashed while attempting to land at Chicago-Midway Airport, killing 43 of the 61 people on board, as well as two people on the ground; among the dead were Dorothy

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Hunt, wife of Watergate conspirator E. Howard Hunt, U.S. Rep. George W. Collins, D-Ill., and CBS News correspondent Michele Clark.

In 1982, a man demanding an end to nuclear weapons held the Washington Monument hostage, threatening to blow it up with explosives he claimed were inside a van. (After a 10-hour standoff, Norman D. Mayer was shot dead by police; it turned out there were no explosives.)

In 1987, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet leader Mikhail S. Gorbachev signed a treaty at the White House calling for destruction of intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

In 1991, AIDS patient Kimberly Bergalis, who had contracted the disease from her dentist, died in Fort Pierce, Fla., at age 23.

In 1998, struggling to stave off impeachment, President Bill Clinton's defenders forcefully pleaded his case before the House Judiciary Committee. The Supreme Court ruled that police cannot search people and their cars after merely ticketing them for routine traffic violations.

In 2001, the U.S. Capitol was reopened to tourists after a two-month security shutdown.

In 2003, President George W. Bush signed a \$400 billion Medicare overhaul bill that included a prescription drug plan for seniors. Congress approved legislation to stem the flood of unwanted junk e-mail known as "spam."

In 2013, hundreds of thousands of protesters poured into the streets of the Ukrainian capital of Kyiv (KEE'-ihv), toppling the statue of former Soviet leader Vladimir Lenin and blocking key government buildings in an escalating stand-off with the president on the future of the country.

Ten years ago: Ohio executed murderer Kenneth Biros by performing the nation's first lethal injection using a single drug, a supposedly less painful method than previous executions that required three drugs. A wave of coordinated bomb attacks targeting high-profile symbols of Iraqi authority killed at least 127 people.

Five years ago: The U.S. and NATO ceremonially ended their combat mission in Afghanistan, 13 years after the Sept. 11 terror attacks sparked their invasion of the country to topple the Taliban-led government. Britain's Prince William sat down with President Barack Obama in Washington while his wife, Kate, made an impression of a down-to-earth duchess on preschoolers and prominent British expats in New York.

One year ago: As protests on the streets of Paris grew more violent, French riot police used armored police trucks and tear gas to contain thousands of yellow-vested protesters venting their anger against the government. Oklahoma quarterback Kyler Murray was named the winner of college football's Heisman Trophy, beating out Alabama's Tua Tagovailoa (TOO'-ah tuhng-ah-vy-LOH'-ah). President Donald Trump said that chief of staff John Kelly would leave his job by year's end amid an expected West Wing reshuffling.

Today's Birthdays: Flutist James Galway is 80. Singer Jerry Butler is 80. Pop musician Bobby Elliott (The Hollies) is 78. Actress Mary Woronov is 76. Actor John Rubinstein is 73. Reggae singer Toots Hibbert (Toots and the Maytals) is 71. Actress Kim Basinger (BAY'-sing-ur) is 66. Rock musician Warren Cuccurullo is 63. Rock musician Phil Collen (Def Leppard) is 62. Country singer Marty Raybon is 60. Political commentator Ann Coulter is 58. Rock musician Marty Friedman is 57. Actor Wendell Pierce is 56. Actress Teri Hatcher is 55. Actor David Harewood is 54. Singer Sinéad (shih-NAYD') O'Connor (AKA Shuhada' Davitt) is 53. Actor Matthew Laborteaux is 53. Baseball Hall of Famer Mike Mussina is 51. Rock musician Ryan Newell (Sister Hazel) is 47. Actor Dominic Monaghan is 43. Actor Ian Somerhalder is 41. Rock singer Ingrid Michaelson is 40. R&B singer Chrissette Michele is 37. Actress Hannah Ware is 37. Country singer Sam Hunt is 35. MLB All-Star infielder Josh Donaldson is 34. Rock singer-actress Kate Voegele (VOH'-gehl) is 33. Christian rock musician Jen Ledger (Skillet) is 30. NHL defenseman Drew Doughty is 30. Actress Wallis Currie-Wood is 28. Actress AnnaSophia Robb is 26.

Thought for Today: "War does not determine who is right — only who is left." — Author unknown (although this sentiment is sometimes attributed to Bertrand Russell).

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