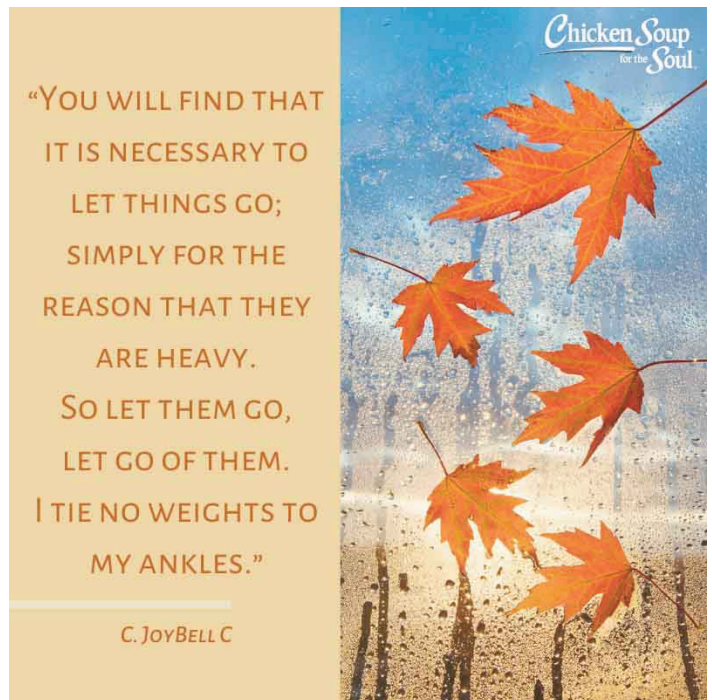


Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 1 of 57

- [1- Waves of Snow](#)
- [2- School Board Agenda](#)
- [3- Dr. Holm's Column: Kindness in Medicine](#)
- [4- Weekly Vikings Roundup](#)
- [5- Weather Pages](#)
- [8- Daily Devotional](#)
- [9- 2019 Groton Events](#)
- [10- News from the Associated Press](#)



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



There were waves of snow in the street this morning as 1.5 inches of snow fell overnight. While it was not a lot of snow, it did create drifts as deep as 2 feet in some areas, but since it was fluffy, it was easy to go through them. (Photo by Paul Kosel)

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 2 of 57

GROTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT #06-6

School Board Meeting

December 9, 2019 – 7:00 PM – GHS Conference Room

AGENDA:

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

POTENTIAL CONFLICTS DISCLOSURE PURSUANT SDCL 23-3

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. Approval of minutes of November 11, 2019 school board meetings as drafted.
2. Approval of November District bills for payment.
3. Approval of November 2019 Financial Report, Agency Accounts, and Investments.
4. Approval of November 2019 Transportation Report.
5. Approval of November 2019 School Lunch Report.

OLD/CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Open Forum for Public Participation in accordance with Board Policy & Guidelines.
2. Administrative Reports: (a) Superintendent's Report; (b) Principal's Reports; (c) Business Manager Report

NEW BUSINESS:

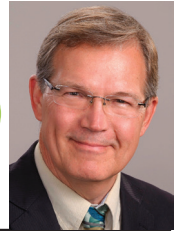
1. Approve resignation of Jaccob Sargent, Custodian, effective December 6, 2019.
2. Approve hiring Jasmine Schinkel, Special Education Paraprofessional, at \$11.40/hour effective January 6, 2020.
3. Approve Wyatt Locke as a volunteer Assistant Wrestling Coach for 2019-2020 season.
4. Consider request from Emmanuel Lutheran Church and Groton United Methodist Church for use of two school buses on December 11, 2019.
5. Acknowledge receipt of Notification for Public School Exemption #20-14.
6. Appoint ASBSD Legislative Action Network member for 2020 legislative session.
7. Executive session pursuant SDCL1-25-2(2) for a student issue.
8. Consider job description for certified sign language interpreter.

ADJOURN

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 3 of 57

Kindness in Medicine



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

This week I spent some time exploring the origins of the word, kind: It comes from Old English geynd (YEH'-kund) or cynn (kyn), meaning nature, race, family. Another Old English word kyndnes (KIND'-nes) means "nation," which I interpret as a subtle and ancient nod toward kin, kinship and our common bond in support of our country. Modern dictionaries define the word kindness as the quality or state of being generous, helpful, caring and giving. Synonyms include tactful, good hearted, neighborly, forgiving and gracious.

Sometimes I only understand something when I explore it's opposite or antonym. For example, I had to think about mental illness to better understand mental health; about hate to better understand love; about depression to better understand joy. The antonyms of kindness are words like mean, cruel, malicious, spiteful, malevolent, even despicable.

Where is the intersection of kindness and medicine? In years past, admission committees for medical school have searched hard to find the very smartest college graduates and they were able to do it. Certainly, physicians need the intellect to understand the complexity of human health and continue a lifetime of learning. However, we have realized that searching for students by intellect alone might graduate medical students who don't always develop good bedside manners and a capacity for compassion. More recently, some of the best medical schools have added kindness and compassion programs to their curriculum.

I didn't have the benefit of such a program when I went to medical school, however, over my 40-year medical career, I've learned to recognize the healing power of kindness in medicine. I've seen it in the nursing staff caring for folks living in a small-town long-term care facility. I've heard it from medical providers, nurses and technicians caring for people in clinics, ERs, hospitals and in hospice programs. I've heard it from kind supportive friends who have offered or driven me for chemo; from jolly laughing buddies who raise my mood; from my care team as they gently hook me up for my next infusion; from our kids who call to check on me; and from my loving wife who is at my side warming me when I'm chilled, picking up my burdens with unending daily kindnesses as I struggle through these side-affects. It's a good thing she doesn't love me for my hair.

I am happy that our medical schools are teaching young doctors that people deal with illness so much better when it comes with a generous dose of kindness.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 4 of 57

Weekly Vikings Roundup

By Jordan Wright

Over a millennium ago, the ancient Vikings raided and settled across Europe and North America, rarely encountering a lion and therefore never developing a fear of the animal. The Vikings of present day have no fear of Lions either.

The Minnesota Vikings (9-4) beat the Detroit Lions (3-9-1) on Sunday 20-7, in part because the defense was better, in part because the offense was "efficient" according to Mike Zimmer, and in part because the Lions were already knocked out of the playoffs and were starting a rookie quarterback. It was a perfect storm that culminated in an easy Vikings win and keeping them in the playoff picture.

Kirk Cousins completed 24/30 passes (80%) for 242 yards and a touchdown. The completion percentage was good, and Cousins didn't have a turnover on Sunday, but his accuracy was off on several throws and he had to be bailed out by spectacular catches by his receivers. Eleven different players caught passes for the Vikings, led by Stefon Diggs' six catches for 92 yards. Adam Thielen sat out this game because of his injury.

The Vikings wanted to play it safe with Dalvin Cook after his scary looking injury last week, so he only had 20 touches against the Lions. And even though he sat most of the fourth quarter, Cook still finished the game with 75 total yards and a rushing touchdown. Alexander Mattison was the main beneficiary of Cook's light workload, touching the ball a career high 16 times for 64 yards.

The Vikings' defense hasn't been playing their best recently, but a matchup against Detroit was just what the doctor ordered. The defense held the Lions to 231 total yards while forcing seven Detroit drives of three plays or less. The Vikings finished the game with five sacks, eight quarterback hits, seven tackles for a loss, and five pass deflections. It was a dominant defensive display on Sunday, it's just too bad the team couldn't hold on to the shutout.

The player of the game on offense was Garrett Bradbury. The rookie center got off to a rough start this season, but he hasn't given up a sack since week four and entered the Lions' game only allowing one pressure in the past three games. His run blocking is also stellar, as he is already one of the best centers in the NFL at getting to the second level. As a bonus, he also caught his first career pass on Sunday (it was a tipped pass, but it counts all the same!).

The player of the game on defense was Danielle Hunter, who had three sacks, three quarterback hits and seven total tackles – including three tackles for a loss. Hunter is the youngest player in NFL history to reach 50 sacks, having just turned 25 years old a month and a half ago. He is one of the best defensive ends in football, hopefully the Vikings will be able to hold on to him for his whole career.

Looking ahead, the Vikings travel to the City of Angels to take on the 5-8 Chargers. The game will air on CBS at 3:05 pm (CT) this Sunday, December 15. The Chargers have lost three of their last four games but are coming off a 45-10 beatdown of the Jacksonville Jaguars. This is a game the Vikings should win, even though Mike Zimmer is 1-6 when traveling west for a late kickoff. This season has been one for rewriting many negative narratives, and that trend will continue against LA. Skoll!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 5 of 57

**This
Afternoon**



Cold

High: 5 °F

Tonight



Chance Snow
then Mostly
Cloudy

Low: -8 °F

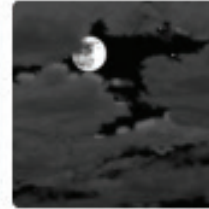
Tuesday



Cold

High: -5 °F

**Tuesday
Night**



Clearing

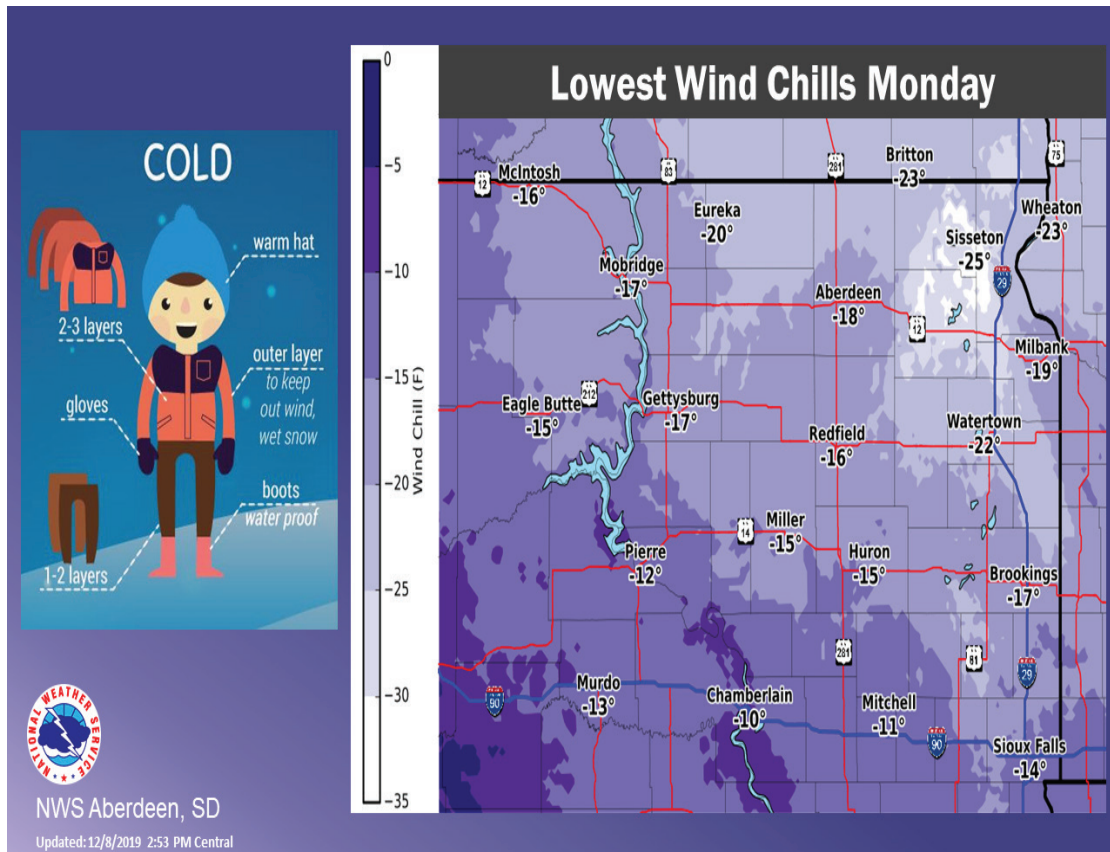
Low: -11 °F

Wednesday



Cold

High: 6 °F



Cold temperatures will infiltrate the area behind a clipper system on Monday. This combined with west to northwest breezes will create some cold wind chills through the daytime hours. If you have plans to spend the day outdoors, make sure to bundle up!

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 6 of 57

Today in Weather History

December 9, 1961: A snowstorm moved through the area and dropped 3 to 6 inches of snow east of the Missouri River and 1 to 3 inches to the west of the river from late afternoon on the 8th through late afternoon on the 9th. The storm was accompanied by high winds, blowing snow, icy highways, and temperatures falling to near zero. Three men were killed and one injured in a two-car crash near Watertown as snow and blowing snow sharply reduced visibilities. A skidding accident on a slippery highway near Winner resulted in an automobile fatality of one man. In a rural area near Vale, in Meade County, one man abandoned his stalled vehicle and was found the next day, frozen to death. 6 inches of snow fell at Sisseton and Wheaton, with 5 inches at Aberdeen and Watertown and 3 inches at Mobridge. Only an inch fell at Pierre.

December 9, 1917: A severe winter storm struck the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes Region. It produced 25 inches of snow and wind gusts to 78 mph at Buffalo NY. The storm produced 26 inches of snow at Vevay Indiana, with drifts fourteen feet high.

1786 - A second great snowstorm in just five days brought another 15 inches of snow to Morristown NJ, on top of the eight inches which fell on the 7th and 8th, and the 18 inches which fell on the 4th and 5th. The total snowfall for the week was thus 41 inches. New Haven CT received 17 inches of new snow in the storm. Up to four feet of snow covered the ground in eastern Massachusetts following the storms. (9th-10th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1917 - A severe winter storm struck the Ohio Valley and the Great Lakes Region. It produced 25 inches of snow and wind gusts to 78 mph at Buffalo NY. The storm produced 26 inches of snow at Vevay IND, with drifts fourteen feet high. By the 16th of the month people could walk across the frozen Ohio River from Vavey into Kentucky. (8th-9th) (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1987 - The fifth storm in nine days kept the northwestern U.S. wet and windy. Winds along the coast of Washington gusted to 75 mph at Oceans Shores and at Hoquiam, and the northern and central coastal mountains of Oregon were drenched with three inches of rain in ten hours, flooding some rivers. Snowfall totals in the Cascade Mountains of Washington State ranged up to 36 inches in the Methow Valley. High winds in Oregon blew a tree onto a moving automobile killing three persons and injuring two others at Mill City. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A winter storm blanketed the Southern and Central Appalachians with up to ten inches of snow. Arctic air invaded the north central U.S. bringing subzero cold to Minnesota and North Dakota. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A strong storm produced wind gusts of 40 to 65 mph from the Alaska Peninsula to the North Gulf Coast of Alaska. Southeasterly winds gusted to 75 mph in the Anchorage hillside. Gusty winds associated with a strong cold front caused a power outage across much of the island of Hawaii. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

December 9, 2003: Although it never threatened land, a subtropical storm became Tropical Storm Peter approx. 700 miles WNW of the Cape Verde Islands. Combined with Tropical Storm Odette from earlier in the month, this is the first time since 1887 that two tropical storms formed in the Atlantic Basin in December.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 7 of 57

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 28 °F at 9:01 AM

Low Temp: 8 °F at 9:28 PM

Wind: 27 mph at 6:48 PM

Day Rain: 0.00 1.5 inches of snow. 0.11 Precip

Record High: 61° in 1939

Record Low: -27° in 1955

Average High: 27°F

Average Low: 8°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.14

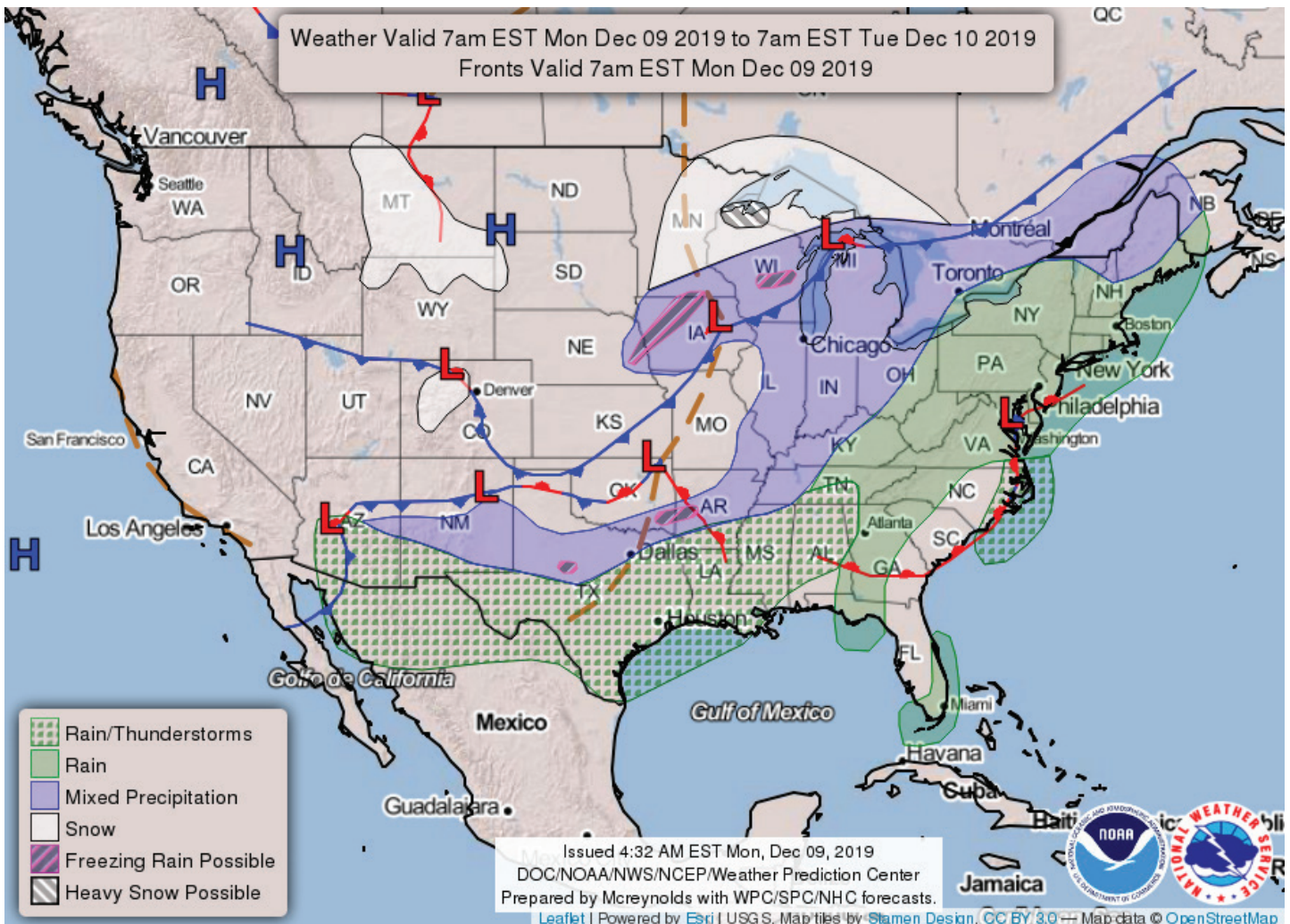
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.11

Average Precip to date: 21.34

Precip Year to Date: 28.06

Sunset Tonight: 4:50 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:02 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 8 of 57



THE PROMISE OF PEACE

A professor stood before his class and boasted, "The Bible is false. It cannot be believed. It says, 'Peace and goodwill toward men.' History cannot account for a time when there were no wars!"

Disturbed, Arthur went to his pastor and related the incident. Calmly, his pastor said, "Art, that's not what the angels said. They said, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth among men with whom He is pleased.'"

Politicians speak of peace through treaties and boundaries, threats and sanctions, wars and rumors of wars. But that is not the peace that God speaks of in His Word. His Word speaks of a peace that comes through salvation and surrender to the Prince of Peace. It is a peace that comes from the new heart that He implants within us. It is a peace that Christians enjoy when we open the door to our hearts and allow Him to come in and rule our lives.

The peace that Scripture speaks of will never come from a non-peaceful source. It is a peace that comes through the risen Christ and has its source in God Himself.

We cannot find peace in a turbulent, war-torn world until we make peace with God through Jesus Christ. Only when we go to Him in humility and with faith, trust, and surrender, repent and ask for His forgiveness will He grant us His peace.

Prayer: We pray, Father for Your peace – a peace that comes from the God of all comfort Who gives us His peace that assures us of His presence in our lives. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Luke 2:13-14 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 9 of 57

2019 Groton SD Community Events

- 12/03/2019 – Christmas Open House 10am-4pm, James Valley Telecommunications
- 12/07/2019 – Santa Day 9am-12pm, Professional Management Services
- 12/07/2019 – Tour of Homes 4pm-7pm, Olive Grove Golf Course (Tickets available at Lori's Pharmacy, Groton Ford, Hair & Co (Aberdeen) and Vicki Walter (605) 380-0480)
- 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)

News from the Associated Press

Federal challenge on petition circulators law being heard

ABERDEEN, S. D. (AP) — A federal trial challenging a state law that will require petition circulators to register is getting underway in Aberdeen.

The lawsuit, filed by the grassroots organization SD Voice, seeks an injunction to stop the law from taking effect next July. It requires petition circulators to apply with the secretary of state for an identification number and be included in a directory.

SD Voice says the law is unconstitutional. The plaintiffs say the law places additional restrictions on ballot measures, but makes no changes to the process related to candidates, candidate committees, political action committees or political parties, according to Aberdeen American News.

Judge Charles B. Kornmann will rule after hearing the evidence. Kornman could make his decision Monday or issue a written ruling later.

New Mexico granting fewer cyanide bomb OKs for coyotes

SANTA FE, N.M. (AP) — Records show New Mexico agricultural officials have approved fewer licenses for the use of cyanide bombs — a device deployed by ranchers to kill coyotes.

The Santa Fe New Mexican reports records show state-issued licenses for cyanide bombs has declined from 86 in 2015 and 2016 to 54 in 2019. That's a 37% reduction.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency last week reauthorized the use of devices known as cyanide bombs targeting coyotes.

Ranchers say they still need the devices, also known as M-44s, to kill hungry coyotes, which can cost the industry thousands of dollars a year in livestock losses.

Environmentalists say the devices are a horrible way to kill coyotes and point to collateral damage inflicted on dogs and other animals. They say M-44s also present a risk for humans — even killing a Utah man last year.

New Mexico is one of five states with local agriculture departments — along with Montana, South Dakota, Texas, and Wyoming — that are authorized to deploy the devices. An M-44 is essentially a trap coated with bait and loaded with a cyanide capsule that ejects into the mouths of animals lured by the scent.

South Dakota schools, business revive skilled labor career

By **KATIE NELSON** and **PATRICK ANDERSON** Argus Leader

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — When local business owner Jeff Rhone signed on to teach shop at O'Gorman High School more than a year ago, he hoped to revitalize a class that had been dwindling in numbers. When the program stopped a few years ago, only five to seven students were taking it each semester.

But thanks to a grant from the Sioux Empire Home Builders Care Foundation, the class is receiving new life. While planning for its first year, Rhone estimated he would have between eight and 12 students a semester.

He was wrong.

"The first semester, we ended up with 45," Rhone told the Argus Leader. "It exploded."

O'Gorman is one of several high schools refocusing on skilled trades by partnering with local businesses. Employers in the Sioux Falls area are making a concerted effort to connect with students as young as high school and even middle school after years of facing the region's ongoing short supply of workers, dragged down by persistently low unemployment.

The result has been a rise of programs, camps and classes designed to expose youth to trades such as architecture, construction and welding, and even the return of shop courses that were previously shelved in K-12 schools.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 11 of 57

The 2.3% jobless rate in the Sioux Falls metro area in September was one of the 50 lowest in the United States, according to rankings for nearly 400 metros by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Unemployment in South Dakota's largest city consistently hangs well below national averages for the rest of the state and the country.

The result is a competitive push across industries to attract and retain workers. Those in the skilled trades, including Sioux Falls' increasingly busy construction industry, have started planning for the future.

Dusty Rallis, owner of Rallis Construction, said his industry's needs for workers have continued to increase with the growing population and the addition of new neighborhoods and commercial developments.

"The demand for new construction, it's always going to be there," Rallis said. "We just have not had the workforce to get the required work done."

The labor pool plummeted in 2009 when the housing bubble popped and caused the Great Recession. Construction employers in the Sioux Falls metro lost more than 2,000 workers during the two years of fallout, according to data from the South Dakota Department of Labor and Regulation.

The labor pool wouldn't surpass pre-recession levels until 2016. The construction workforce in the four-county metro reached an all-time high of 22,969 workers in 2018, according to the state labor department.

"We're getting more people interested earlier on because we're doing this exposure in high school and middle school," said Denise Guzzetta, vice president of talent and workforce development for the Sioux Falls Development Foundation.

Building for the future

More than ever, contractors and leaders in the trades are working to reach out to educators and students. The development foundation hosted a Talent Draft Day event in October, connecting employers across the region with more than 600 students interested in skilled trades, including students from 12 high schools.

The day was designed as a chance for employers to connect with the region's future generation of workers.

"I think what's happening is we have a really engaged business community," Guzzetta said.

Rallis is the current president of the Home Builders Association of the Sioux Empire, which in recent years has worked collaboratively with schools and businesses to introduce new ways to reach out to the city's future workforce.

The association worked with Sioux Falls public schools to develop a carpentry apprenticeship program at the Career and Technical Education Academy. It started a summer camp for seventh- and eighth-graders from across the region in 2016, an effort that will soon start showing a return on investment, Rallis said.

The association is also involved in Harrisburg's push to increase its construction programming, and this year helped O'Gorman restore its once-defunct building trades program.

Rallis, a 1995 O'Gorman grad, is an alumnus of the program and was involved in the conversations leading up to its re-introduction.

"We helped them bring that back to life," he said.

At O'Gorman, the construction program has been so successful that Rhone decided to cap the number of students per year at 32 to ensure there are enough tools to go around.

In one class, students start out learning to swing a hammer and learn to build a shed as their final project. In another, they learn framing and how to hang doors and windows. Local businesses are also brought on board to teach teens the basics of plumbing, electrical and drywall.

"All these companies have been just great," Rhone said.

Learning on the job

Another high school making a big splash is Harrisburg. Situated in Lincoln County, one of the fastest-growing in South Dakota, the school saw an opportunity to develop programs that help meet the needs of the community.

"Schools for generations have asked for internship opportunities, and I think a lot of times that's viewed as a stress on a business," said Michael Amolins, the district's curriculum director. "If we can approach it and say, 'For a couple of years, we will train (students), make sure they have the skill set needed so when they come to you ... they're ready to go, that's a win for everybody.'"

As part of that goal, Harrisburg began a new construction program this year geared toward teaching

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 12 of 57

students the basics of home building. Armed with a \$250,000 workforce education grant and a \$250,000 grant from the Sioux Empire Home Builders Care Foundation, the school is wrapping up a new building in which students will construct homes for low-income families.

Affordable Housing Solutions in Sioux Falls is partnering with Harrisburg students on the class, Amolins said. While students build the home using materials provided by Affordable Housing Solutions, the organization will choose a community revitalization lot, purchase the land, select a family to buy the home and move the finished house to the site.

Construction on the first home will begin in January. The house will eventually be moved to a lot on Duluth Avenue near 10th Street, Amolins said.

While Amolins acknowledges that Harrisburg is not the first school to pursue such a project, he says the facility that will house the project is unique.

"There are a lot of schools that have construction programs, but a lot of them are building homes outside," he said. "What's nice about this is they're out of the elements, it's going to be a quality home, it's going to be sealed."

Although inclement weather over the summer pushed back the timeline on the new building, teachers got creative. While waiting for the building to be finished, students built a large storage shed that will be put up for auction, Amolins said. Students are also building tables, shelves and other furniture for the new building.

The Tea Area School District is another local district reinvigorating its career and technical education programs. Through a workforce development grant, the district is building a shop on the high school campus to offer welding, construction and architecture classes in fall 2020. While some Tea students have been taking classes at the CTE Academy in Sioux Falls, the new shop will allow them to stay on campus and get a similar experience.

"We'll be able to reach way more students than we currently do," said Tea superintendent Jennifer Lowery.

Reversing the stigma

Rallis, who founded his home building company in 1999, noticed the industry's current labor shortage by how it was affecting his subcontractors, from concrete workers to carpenters.

"The demand for good workers is going to be a lot of different aspects of the trade," he said.

Meanwhile, schools started to pull the plug on classes that allowed students to try their hands at the skilled trades while the industry coped with parents' preconceived notions about what a career in construction meant for their child.

The resurrection of his alma mater's building trades program represents a "big step" toward overcoming the stigma about working in the trades, Rallis said.

On top of bringing back shop, O'Gorman is revamping its drafting course and purchased four 3-D printers to help students visualize their work. It is also beginning an architecture class next year using the same software used by local firms.

When students move on to college or technical school, they will hopefully be familiar with the programs they will use in the real world, Rhone said.

Harrisburg isn't done, either. The school is currently working with Schulte Subaru in Sioux Falls to create an auto shop program that is slated to begin next fall.

"We're excited to see where this goes," Amolins said.

Amolins, who grew up in a blue-collar family, has particularly strong feelings about making opportunities for students who don't follow a traditional path. While many of Harrisburg's students will go on to college, many will not, and it is part of the school's responsibility to help them decide what's next.

"It's not preparing everybody for a four-year degree," he said. "It's preparing them for the future that they want."

19-year-old man shot, wounded in Sioux Falls

Sioux Falls police are investigating a weekend shooting that sent a 19-year-old man to the hospital. The shooting happened Saturday night, police said. The victim was taken to a hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

The Argus Leader reports no one has been arrested. Police continue to investigate, but say the public is not in danger and that the victim was targeted.

Watchdog expected to find Russia probe valid despite flaws

By ERIC TUCKER and MICHAEL BALSAMO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department's internal watchdog will release a highly anticipated report Monday that is expected to reject President Donald Trump's claims that the Russia investigation was illegitimate and tainted by political bias from FBI leaders. But it is also expected to document errors during the investigation that may animate Trump supporters.

The report, as described by people familiar with its findings, is expected to conclude there was an adequate basis for opening one of the most politically sensitive investigations in FBI history and one that Trump has denounced as a witch hunt. It began in secret during Trump's 2016 presidential run and was ultimately taken over by special counsel Robert Mueller.

The report comes as Trump faces an impeachment inquiry in Congress centered on his efforts to press Ukraine to investigate a political rival, Democrat Joe Biden — a probe the president also claims is politically biased.

Still, the release of Inspector General Michael Horowitz's review is unlikely to quell the partisan battles that have surrounded the Russia investigation for years. It's also not the last word: A separate internal investigation continues, overseen by Trump's attorney general, William Barr and led by a U.S. attorney, John Durham. That investigation is criminal in nature, and Republicans may look to it to uncover wrongdoing that the inspector general wasn't examining.

Trump tweeted Sunday: "I.G. report out tomorrow. That will be the big story!"

He previously has said that he was awaiting Horowitz's report but that Durham's report may be even more important.

Horowitz's report is expected to identify errors and misjudgments by some law enforcement officials, including by an FBI lawyer suspected of altering a document related to the surveillance of a former Trump campaign aide. Those findings probably will fuel arguments by Trump and his supporters that the investigation was flawed from the start.

But the report will not endorse some of the president's theories on the investigation, including that it was a baseless "witch hunt" or that he was targeted by an Obama administration Justice Department desperate to see Republican Trump lose to Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016.

It also is not expected to undo Mueller's findings or call into question his conclusion that Russia interfered in that election in order to benefit the Trump campaign and that Russians had repeated contacts with Trump associates.

Some of the findings were described to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity by people who were not authorized to discuss a draft of the report before its release. The AP has not viewed a copy of the document.

It is unclear how Barr, a strong defender of Trump, will respond to Horowitz's findings. He has told Congress that he believed "spying" on the Trump campaign did occur and has raised public questions about whether the counterintelligence investigation was done correctly.

The FBI opened its investigation in July 2016 after receiving information from an Australian diplomat that a Trump campaign adviser, George Papadopoulos, had been told before it was publicly known that Russia had dirt on the Clinton campaign in the form of thousands of stolen emails.

By that point, the Democratic National Committee had been hacked, an act that a private security firm — and ultimately U.S. intelligence agencies — attributed to Russia. Prosecutors allege that Papadopoulos

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 14 of 57

learned about the stolen emails from a Maltese professor named Joseph Mifsud. Papadopoulos pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about that interaction.

The investigation was taken over in May 2017 by Mueller, who charged six Trump associates with various crimes as well as 25 Russians accused of interfering in the election either through hacking or a social media disinformation campaign. Mueller did not find sufficient evidence to charge a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia.

He examined multiple episodes in which Trump sought to seize control of the investigation, including by firing James Comey as FBI director, but declined to decide on whether Trump had illegally obstructed justice.

The inspector general's investigation began in early 2018. It focuses in part on the FBI's surveillance of a former Trump campaign adviser, Carter Page. The FBI applied in the fall of 2016 for a warrant from the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to monitor Page's communications, with officials expressing concern that he may have been targeted for recruitment by the Russian government.

Page was never charged and has denied any wrongdoing.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which is scheduled to hear testimony from Horowitz on Wednesday, said he expected the report would be "damning" about the process of obtaining the warrant.

"I'm looking for evidence of whether or not they manipulated the facts to get the warrant," Graham, R-S.C., said on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures."

The warrant was renewed several times, including during the Trump administration. Republicans have attacked the procedures because the application relied in part on information gathered by an ex-British intelligence operative, Christopher Steele, whose opposition research into the Trump campaign's connections to Russia was funded by Democrats and the Clinton campaign.

In pursuing the warrant, the Justice Department referred to Steele as "reliable" from previous dealings with him. Though officials told the court that they suspected the research was aimed at discrediting the Trump campaign, they did not reveal that the work had been paid for by Democrats, according to documents released last year.

Steele's research was compiled into a dossier that was provided to the FBI after it had already opened its investigation.

The report also examined the interactions that senior Justice Department lawyer Bruce Ohr had with Steele, whom he had met years earlier through a shared professional interest in countering Russian organized crime. Ohr passed along to the FBI information that he had received from Steele but did not alert his Justice Department bosses to those conversations.

Ohr has since been a regular target of Trump's ire, in part because his wife worked as a contractor for Fusion GPS, the political research firm that hired Steele for the investigation.

This is the latest in a series of reports that Horowitz, a former federal prosecutor and an Obama appointee to the watchdog role, has released on FBI actions in politically charged investigations.

Last year, he criticized Comey for a news conference announcing the conclusion of the Clinton email investigation, and for then alerting Congress months later that the probe had been effectively reopened. In that report, too, Horowitz did not find that Comey's actions had been guided by partisan bias.

Deadly India fire in one of thousands of illegal factories

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and EMILY SCHMALL Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Day laborers in one of New Delhi's most congested neighborhoods demonstrated against unsafe working conditions on Monday, a day after at least 43 people were killed in a devastating fire at an illegal factory there.

Dozens of workers who were asleep when the fire broke out were trapped Sunday in the burning four-story building with little ventilation and only one exit.

Tucked in an alleyway tangled with electrical wires, firefighters had to fight the blaze from 100 meters (330 feet) away. Rescuers carried out survivors and the dead one by one.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 15 of 57

The building, zoned for residential use, had been clandestinely and crudely converted into a cluster of small factories in a pattern repeated in old and crowded areas across the city of 28 million.

Tens of thousands of such spaces have been closed in a drive spurred by a decades-old court case, but a Delhi Municipal Corporation census counted more than 30,000 illegal factories last year.

Sunday's tragedy illustrates authorities' struggle to control the proliferation of illegal factories in ancient parts of the city that were long exempt from regulation, despite the Supreme Court order to close them or revamp the surrounding city infrastructure, including widening roads and installing water service, according to New Delhi's master plan.

Factories operating in areas zoned residential were ordered closed.

"What happened in Delhi was unfortunately they were completely illegalized, so what we have now is this mushrooming happening in completely underground ways, all over the city. They moved the entire sector to the underground," said Anuj Bhunia, an associate law professor at Ambedkar University in New Delhi who has studied the public interest litigation cases that spurred the Supreme Court order.

More than 100 migrant workers earning as little as \$2 a day making handbags, caps and other garments worked in the fire-gutted building's 500 square meters (about 5,400 square feet). The building was built about 15 years ago as a residential complex and later quietly turned into a commercial hub, according to Delhi Municipal Corporation officials.

The dense neighborhood is home to thousands of migrant workers from across India who often live and work in the same space.

Aslam, a local resident who goes by one name, said the building was among many that lack necessary clearances and fire safety equipment.

He said there was a small fire in the same building in March. There were no reported injuries and local residents put it out themselves, but it should have set off alarm bells, he said.

"The building was a disaster in the making. Almost every building in this neighborhood is unsafe," Aslam said.

Manufacturing in New Delhi has declined with a clampdown on illegal activity and the rise of the service sector. There were about 130,000 factory spaces in 2001, according to an official economy survey. With growing public concern about industrial pollution contributing to New Delhi's noxious air, authorities have shuttered tens of thousands of illegal factory operations since then.

The 30,000-plus illegal factories found by the municipal corporation census last year are nearly quadruple the number of factories registered with New Delhi's planning department in 2017.

Jai Prakash, a municipal administrator in New Delhi, said they are continuously trying to close illegal factories and small manufacturing units.

One complication is the shortage of affordable housing.

Many of these spaces also serve as sleeping quarters for poor laborers and their families who migrate from Indian villages and small towns for employment.

Another administrator, Varsha Joshi, said it is building owners who usually turn residential buildings into commercial hubs. Aslam said that often, each floor of a building is informally leased to a different commercial tenant who uses middlemen to find contract workers.

The owner of the building that caught fire on Sunday was detained on suspicion of culpable homicide not amounting to murder. He remains in custody but hasn't been formally charged while the investigation continues. Bhunia said cracking down in this case would do little to keep small factories from operating within Delhi.

"Being so fundamentalist about zoning in this city makes no sense. This is not the reality of the city," he said. "This is a fantasy city that they want to build."

World Anti-Doping Agency imposes 4-year ban on Russia

By GRAHAM DUNBAR AP Sports Writer

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) — The Russian flag and national anthem were banned from next year's Tokyo Olympics and other major sports events for four years on Monday.

Russia's hosting of world championships in Olympic sports also face being stripped after the World Anti-Doping Agency executive committee approved a full slate of recommended sanctions as punishment for state authorities tampering with a Moscow laboratory database.

Russian athletes will be allowed to compete in major events only if they are not implicated in positive doping tests or if their data was not manipulated, according to the WADA ruling.

Still, it is unclear how the ruling will affect Russian teams taking part in world championships such as soccer's World Cup.

Russia's anti-doping agency can appeal the decision to the Court of Arbitration for Sport within 21 days.

Legal fallout from the WADA ruling seems sure to dominate preparations for the Tokyo Olympics, which open on July 24.

Evidence shows that Russian authorities tampered with a Moscow laboratory database to hide hundreds of potential doping cases and falsely shift the blame onto whistleblowers, WADA investigators and the International Olympic Committee said last month.

"Flagrant manipulation" of the Moscow lab data was "an insult to the sporting movement worldwide," the IOC said last month.

However, WADA's inability to fully expel Russia from the Tokyo Olympics and 2022 Beijing Winter Games frustrated the doping watchdog's vice president.

"I'm not happy with the decision we made today. But this is as far as we could go," said Linda Helleland, a Norwegian lawmaker who serves on WADA executive committee and has long pushed for a tougher line against Russia. "This is the biggest sports scandal the world has ever seen. I would expect now a full admission from the Russians and for them to apologize on all the pain all the athletes and sports fans have experienced."

Handing over a clean database to WADA was a key requirement for Russia to help bring closure to a scandal that has tainted the Olympics over the last decade.

Although the IOC has called for the strongest possible sanctions, it wants those sanctions directed at Russian state authorities rather than athletes or Olympic officials.

That position was opposed by most of WADA's athlete commission. It wanted the kind of blanket ban Russia avoided for the 2016 Rio de Janeiro Olympics and the 2018 Pyeongchang Winter Games after a state-run doping program was exposed by media and WADA investigations after Russia hosted the 2014 Olympics in Sochi.

"This entire fiasco created by Russia has cheated far too many athletes of their dreams and rightful careers, for far too long," the WADA athlete panel said in a statement ahead of the meeting.

Russia previously signaled it would appeal the ruling. That must be filed by the Russian anti-doping agency, known as RUSADA. That body was declared non-compliant on Monday, 15 months after it was reinstated by WADA in defiance of athlete opposition.

The decision to appeal has been stripped from RUSADA chief executive Yuri Ganus, an independent figure criticizing Russian authorities' conduct on the doping data issue. Authority was passed to the agency's supervisory board after an intervention led by the Russian Olympic Committee.

The ROC on Saturday labeled the expected sanctions as "illogical and inappropriate."

Russia has stuck to its claim that deceptive edits in the data were in fact made by WADA's star witness, Grigory Rodchenkov. The former Moscow lab director's flight into the witness protection program in the United States was the subject of an Oscar-winning documentary.

Technical reasons were claimed — and debunked by WADA investigators — for why the data appeared to have been edited shortly before the delayed handover in January.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 17 of 57

AP Sports Writer James Ellingworth in Duesseldorf, Germany, contributed to this report.

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

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. **WHAT THE SAUDI GUNMAN TWEETED BEFORE NAVAL BASE SHOOTING** The suspect took to Twitter to blast U.S. support of Israel and accuse America of being anti-Muslim, a U.S. official said.

2. **NEW ZEALAND VOLCANO ERUPTS** Five deaths are confirmed, and that number is likely to rise with many more are missing on the tourist destination of White Island.

3. **HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE SET TO HEAR FINDINGS AGAINST TRUMP** Chairman Jerrold Nadler expects the committee to vote soon, possibly this week, on at least two or more charges against the president.

4. **HIGHLY ANTICIPATED REPORT TO FIND RUSSIA PROBE VALID** The report is expected to reject President Donald Trump's claims that the Russia investigation was illegitimate and tainted by political bias from FBI leaders.

5. **WHAT CHINA CLAIMS ABOUT PEOPLE AT VOCATIONAL TRAINING FACILITIES** Officials say detainees have all graduated and are leading happy lives, their families say Muslim minorities are still being detained in prisons and camps.

6. **TRAINING SHORTFALLS EXPOSED BY ACCIDENTAL POLICE SHOOTINGS** The methods used to train officers with their firearms "create the illusion of learning" but are inadequate for the demands of today's policing.

7. **NEW FORM OF TOURISM TAKES ROOT IN BETHLEHEM** As pilgrims descend on the town this Christmas, the focus shifts on the West Bank town's Palestinian residents, their culture and history and their struggles under Israeli occupation.

8. **WHERE A HISTORY-SHAPING ELECTION WILL TAKE PLACE** The Brexit election, which will help determine where the country's formal relationship with the European Union lands, is the most critical polling day since World War II.

9. **WADA IMPOSES 4-YEAR BAN ON RUSSIA** The Russian flag and national anthem have been banned from the Olympics and other major sports events for four years by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

10. **WHO WILL BE IN THE RUNNING FOR A GOLDEN GLOBE** With Renee Zellweger, Brad Pitt and Eddie Murphy as locs, the Hollywood Foreign Press Association will unveil their nominations in Los Angeles.

Judiciary hearing sets stage for Trump impeachment charges

By HOPE YEN and LISA MASCARO Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Pushing ahead with articles of impeachment, the House Judiciary Committee convenes Monday to formally receive the investigative findings against President Donald Trump as the White House and its allies launch an aggressive attack on Democrats and the proceedings.

Chairman Jerrold Nadler expects the committee to vote soon, possibly this week, on at least two or more charges against the Republican president. Democrats say Trump's push to have Ukraine investigate rival Joe Biden while at the same time withholding U.S. military aid ran counter to U.S. policy and benefited Russia. It could result in impeachment charges of abuse of power, bribery and obstruction.

"The central allegation is that the president put himself above his country several times, that he sought foreign interference in our elections several times, both for 2016 and 2020, that he sought to cover it up," Nadler said.

"All this presents a pattern that poses a real and present danger to the integrity of the next election, which is one reason why we can't just wait for the next election to settle matters," he said.

The hearing sets off a pivotal week as Democrats march toward a full House vote expected by Christmas.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 18 of 57

In drafting the articles of impeachment, Speaker Nancy Pelosi is facing a legal and political challenge of balancing the views of her majority while hitting the constitution's bar of "treason, bribery or other high crimes and misdemeanors."

Trump and his allies acknowledge he likely will be impeached in the Democratic-controlled House, but they also expect acquittal next year in the Senate, where Republicans have the majority. Trump's team is turning attention elsewhere, including Monday's release of a long-awaited Justice Department report into the 2016 Russia investigation.

"Impeachment Hearing Hoax," Trump tweeted Sunday.

The White House is refusing to participate in the process it calls a sham and the top Republican on the panel, Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia asked to postpone the hearing, criticizing Democrats for moving too swiftly. One legal scholar testified last week it would be the quickest impeachment in modern history.

"This is just how desperately they are -- desperately focused on impeaching this president," said Collins who said against Democrats unleashed thousands of pages of documents his side has no time to review before the session. "This is a show. This is a farce. This is whatever you want to call it. The American people are having their tax dollars wasted on this impeachment of this president."

Trump is heading out for campaign rallies shifting attention away from the House. Over the weekend, Trump was focused on a related matter, the Justice Department Inspector General's findings into the FBI's decisions to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 election. The president has long called special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe a "witch hunt," but the Inspector General's report is expected to reject the president's claim that it was illegitimate, according to people familiar with its findings.

Trump tweeted Sunday, "I.G. report out tomorrow. That will be the big story!"

Democrats say Trump abused his power in the July 25 phone call when he asked Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy for a favor in investigating Democrats and engaged in bribery by withholding nearly \$400 million in military aid that Ukraine depends on to counter Russian aggression.

Trump and his aides have made clear that they now see his impeachment in the House as inevitable and have shifted their focus. A vote to convict requires a two-thirds vote of the Senate, where Republicans hold 53 of 100 seats. It is unlikely that any Republican senators would cross party lines and vote to remove Trump from office.

As Democrats draft the articles, Pelosi's challenge will be to go broad enough to appease her liberal flank, which prefers a more robust accounting of Trump's actions reaching back to Mueller's findings, while keeping the charges more tailored to Ukraine as centrist lawmakers prefer. Democratic leaders will meet later Monday evening.

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., the chairman of the Intelligence Committee, said Democrats should approach the question of what to include in the articles the way a prosecutor bringing forward "the strongest and most overwhelming evidence and not try to charge everything, even though you could charge other things."

Schiff said, "I think we should focus on those issues that provide the greatest threat to the country. And the president is engaged in a course of conduct that threatens the integrity of the next election, threatens our national security."

Monday's hearing is to receive the Intelligence panel's report on the inquiry, with lawyers from both parties testifying in what is expected to be a day long session that will lay the groundwork for the impeachment charges.

Nadler, in two television interviews, declined to say ultimately how many articles of impeachment Democrats will present but said they will involve "certainly abuse of power" and likely "obstruction of Congress." He said final decisions will come after Monday's hearing following discussions with House leadership and the Democratic caucus.

Nadler pointed to a "pattern" of conduct by Trump in seeking foreign interference in elections but would not commit to including the evidence of obstruction of justice in special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation as part of the articles of impeachment.

In his report, Mueller said he could not determine that Trump's campaign conspired or coordinated with

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 19 of 57

Russia in the 2016 election. But Mueller said he could not exonerate Trump of obstructing justice in the probe and left it for Congress to determine.

House Republican leader Kevin McCarthy criticized Democrats for their timeline, which he said was unfairly aimed at preventing the nation's voters from making their own choices in the 2020 election.

"If they do not impeach him, they cannot beat him at the polls," McCarthy, R-Calif.

Trump said over the weekend that his personal attorney Rudy Giuliani wants to take the information gathered from Giuliani's investigations and a recent trip to Ukraine to the U.S. attorney general and to Congress. But a House GOP ally called Giuliani's trip "weird," coming as House investigators review allegations that Giuliani improperly worked on behalf of Trump to pressure Ukraine to pursue investigations into Biden and Biden's son, as well as a discredited conspiracy theory that Ukraine, not Russia, interfered in the 2016 U.S. election.

"It is weird that he's over there," said Rep. Matt Gaetz, R-Fla., describing it as "odd having him over there at this time."

Nadler spoke on NBC's "Meet the Press" and CNN's "State of the Union," McCarthy was on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures," Gaetz spoke on ABC's "This Week," and Schiff appeared on CBS' "Face the Nation."

Associated Press writers Eric Tucker, Mary Clare Jalonick and Darlene Superville contributed to this report.

5 dead, many more missing in eruption of New Zealand volcano

By MARK BAKER Associated Press

WHAKATANE, New Zealand (AP) — A volcanic island in New Zealand erupted Monday in a tower of ash and steam while dozens of tourists were exploring the moon-like surface, killing five people and leaving many more missing.

Police said the site was still too dangerous hours later for rescuers to search for the missing.

Police Deputy Commissioner John Tims said the number of missing was in the double digits but he couldn't confirm an exact number. He said there were fewer than 50 people on the island when it erupted and 23 had been taken off, including the five dead.

Tims said experts had told them the island remained unstable but search and rescue teams wanted to get back as quickly as they could. He said there had been no contact with any of those who were missing.

He said both New Zealanders and overseas tourists were among those who were dead, missing or injured. He said most of the 18 who survived were injured and some had suffered severe burns.

Some of those involved were tourists from the Royal Caribbean International cruise ship Ovation of the Seas.

"A number of our guests were touring the island today," the company said. "We will offer all possible assistance to our guests and local authorities. Please keep all those affected in your prayers."

The cruise ship, which had left from Sydney last week, was scheduled to sail to the capital Wellington on Monday night but the company said it would instead remain in the Tauranga port overnight until it learned more on the situation.

"My god," wrote Michael Schade on Twitter as he posted video of the eruption. "My family and I had gotten off it 20 minutes before, were waiting at our boat about to leave when we saw it. Boat ride home tending to people our boat rescued was indescribable."

His video showed a wall of ash and steam around the island and a helicopter badly damaged and covered in ash. He said one woman was badly injured but seemed "strong" by the end.

White Island sits about 50 kilometers (30 miles) offshore from mainland New Zealand. Already people are questioning why tourists were still able to visit the island after scientists recently noted an uptick in volcanic activity.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern traveled to the region late Monday. She said the incident was "very significant."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 20 of 57

"All our thoughts are with those affected," she said.

Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said he'd offered Ardern his support.

"Australians have been caught up in this terrible event and we are working to determine their wellbeing," Morrison wrote on Twitter.

Brad Scott, a volcanologist with research group GNS Science, said the eruption sent a plume of steam and ash about 12,000 feet (3,660 meters) into the air. He said it had also affected the whole of the White Island crater floor.

The GeoNet agency, which monitors volcanoes and earthquakes in New Zealand, raised the alert level on White Island from one to two on Nov. 18, noting an increase in the amount of sulfur dioxide gas, which originates from magma deep in the volcano. It also said at the time that over the previous weeks, the volcanic tremor had increased from weak to moderate strength.

Scott said the alert level was often raised and then later dropped again without any eruption. He said there hadn't been any major incidents with tourists visiting the island in the past, although there had been some close calls.

Scott said it was not for him to say whether the island was safe enough to host tourists immediately before Monday's eruption.

Ardern said the focus remained on the search and rescue mission for now and questions about whether tourists should be visiting would be addressed later.

GeoNet at first raised its alert level to four, on a scale where five represents a major eruption. It later dropped the alert level back down to three. Scott said that was because the eruption wasn't sustained beyond the initial blast.

"In the scheme of things, for volcanic eruptions, it is not large," said Ken Gledhill from GeoNet. "But if you were close to that, it is not good."

White Island is northeast of the town of Tauranga on North Island, one of New Zealand's two main islands. Experts say it's New Zealand's most active cone volcano and about 70% of the volcano lies under the sea.

Twelve people were killed on the island in 1914 when it was being mined for sulfur. Part of a crater wall collapsed and a landslide destroyed the miners' village and the mine itself.

The remains of buildings from another mining enterprise in the 1920s are now a tourist attraction, according to GeoNet. The island became a private scenic reserve in 1953, and daily tours allow more than 10,000 people to visit the volcano every year.

The island is also known by the indigenous Maori name Whakaari.

North Korea calls Trump 'erratic' old man over tweets

By KIM TONG-HYUNG Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) — North Korea insulted U.S. President Donald Trump again on Monday, calling him a "heedless and erratic old man" after he tweeted that North Korean leader Kim Jong Un wouldn't want to abandon a special relationship between the two leaders and affect the American presidential election by resuming hostile acts.

A senior North Korean official, former nuclear negotiator Kim Yong Chol, said in a statement that his country wouldn't cave in to U.S. pressure because it has nothing to lose and accused the Trump administration of attempting to buy time ahead of an end-of-year deadline set by Kim Jong Un for Washington to salvage nuclear talks.

On Sunday, Trump tweeted: "Kim Jong Un is too smart and has far too much to lose, everything actually, if he acts in a hostile way ... North Korea, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, has tremendous economic potential, but it must denuclearize as promised."

He was referring to a vague statement issued by the two leaders during their first summit in Singapore in June last year that called for a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula without describing when or how it would occur.

Trump added that Kim "does not want to void his special relationship with the President of the United

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 21 of 57

States or interfere with the U.S. Presidential Election in November.”

Kim Yong Chol said Trump’s tweets clearly show that he is an irritated old man “bereft of patience.”

“As (Trump) is such a heedless and erratic old man, the time when we cannot but call him a ‘dotard’ again may come,” Kim Yong Chol said.

“Trump has too many things that he does not know about (North Korea). We have nothing more to lose. Though the U.S. may take away anything more from us, it can never remove the strong sense of self-respect, might and resentment against the U.S. from us.”

Kim Yong Chol traveled to Washington and met with the U.S. president twice last year while setting up the summits with Kim Jong Un.

Nuclear negotiations faltered after a February meeting between Trump and Kim in Vietnam broke down when the U.S. side rejected North Korean demands for broad sanctions relief in exchange for a partial surrender of its nuclear capabilities.

Kim has said North Korea will seek a “new way” if the U.S. maintains its sanctions and pressure, and issued the deadline for the Trump administration to offer mutually acceptable terms for a deal.

Trump and Kim met for a third time in June at the border between the two Koreas and agreed to resume talks. But an October working-level meeting in Sweden broke down over what the North Koreans described as the Americans’ “old stance and attitude.”

Kim Yong Chol’s statement came days after North Korea’s first vice foreign minister, Choe Sun Hui, issued a similar threat to resume insulting Trump after he spoke during a NATO summit in London of possible military action toward the North and revived his “rocket man” nickname for Kim Jong Un.

In 2017, Trump and Kim traded threats of destruction as North Korea carried out a slew of high-profile weapons tests aimed at acquiring an ability to launch nuclear strikes on the U.S. mainland. Trump said he would rain “fire and fury” on North Korea and derided Kim as “little rocket man,” while Kim questioned Trump’s sanity and said he would “tame the mentally deranged U.S. dotard with fire.”

The two leaders avoided such words and developed better relations after North Korea entered nuclear negotiations with the U.S. last year. Trump even said he and Kim “fell in love,” but his comments on Kim have become sharper in recent weeks amid the standoff in nuclear negotiations.

North Korea in recent weeks has said it is unwilling to continue rewarding Trump with meetings and summits he could chalk up as foreign policy wins unless it gets something substantial in return. The North’s stance has raised doubts about whether Kim will ever voluntarily give away a nuclear arsenal he may see as his biggest guarantee of survival.

On Sunday, North Korea’s Academy of National Defense said a “very important test” was conducted at a long-range rocket facility on the country’s western coast, touching off speculation that the North could have tested a new rocket engine for either a satellite-launch vehicle or a solid-fuel intercontinental-range missile.

US Catholic priests beset by overwork, isolation, scandals

DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

CHICOPEE, Mass. (AP) — More than a century ago, waves of Catholic immigrants from Ireland, Poland and Quebec settled in Chicopee and other western Massachusetts mill towns, helping build churches, rectories and schools to accommodate their faith. Today the priests leading those churches are under siege due to stresses, challenges and sex abuse scandals complicating their lives and those of their fellow priests across the United States.

The Rev. Mark Stelzer is among those trying to persevere. He’s a professor at a Roman Catholic college in Chicopee, and its chaplain. He travels frequently to out-of-state events organized by a Catholic addiction-treatment provider, recounting his own recovery from alcoholism.

Last year, his busy schedule got busier. Amid a worsening shortage of priests, the Diocese of Springfield named him administrator of a parish in Holyoke, Chicopee’s northern neighbor, where he lives alone in a mansion-sized rectory while serving as spiritual leader to the 500 families of St. Jerome’s Church.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 22 of 57

"I'm at an age where I thought I'd be doing less rather than doing more," said Stelzer, 62.

Stelzer loves being a priest, yet he's frank about the ever-evolving stresses of his vocation that leave him nostalgic for the priesthood he entered in 1983.

"It was a lot simpler then," he said. "There's a real longing, a mourning for the church that was — when there was a greater fraternity among priests, and the church was not facing these scandals that are now emerging every day."

Stelzer's concerns echoed those of other priests, and some of their psychological caregivers, who were interviewed by The Associated Press.

Weighing on the entire Catholic clergy in the U.S. is the ripple effect of their church's long-running crisis arising from sex abuse committed by priests. It's caused many honorable priests to sense an erosion of public support and to question the leadership of some of their bishops. That dismay is often compounded by increased workloads due to the priest shortage, and increased isolation as multi-priest parishes grow scarce. They see trauma firsthand. Some priests minister in parishes wracked by gun violence; others preside frequently over funerals of drug-overdose victims.

One such victim was a 31-year-old woman whose family was among Stelzer's closest friends. "This is one of the few times I actually felt my voice quivering," he said of the funeral service he led last year.

Burnout has been a perennial problem for clergy of many faiths. But Thomas Plante, a psychology professor at California's Santa Clara University who has screened or treated hundreds of Catholic clerics, sees new forms of it as the sex abuse crisis persists and many parishioners lose trust in Catholic leadership.

"You're just trying to be a good priest and now everyone thinks you're a sex offender," he said. "If you walk in a park with your collar on, people think you're on the lookout for children. ... Some have been spat upon."

The Springfield diocese, like many across the U.S., has a long history of sex-abuse scandals. In the early 1990s, priest Richard Lavigne was defrocked and several of his victims received cash settlements. In 2004, a grand jury indicted Thomas Dupre on two counts of child molestation soon after he resigned following a 13-year stint as Springfield's bishop.

Stelzer had hoped the abuse crisis was abating but it resurfaced dramatically over the past two years. Abuse allegations led to former Cardinal Theodore McCarrick's ouster from the priesthood and a Pennsylvania grand jury report asserted that about 300 priests had abused at least 1,000 children in the state over seven decades.

"It opened up an old wound and now we're back to ground zero," Stelzer said in an interview at the College of Our Lady of the Elms.

The wound is self-inflicted, said Rev. Philip Schmitter, 74, who has served for 50 years in Flint, Michigan. His stance endears him to an African American community where he lived in public housing for three decades to maintain close ties.

"This cover up, this 'Let's protect the institution' was just a heinous, utterly unchristian kind of behavior," he said.

Two miles north of Stelzer's campus, on a recent Sunday, the Rev. William Tourigny was getting ready for the 4 p.m. Mass — his fourth and last of the day — at Ste. Rose de Lima Church.

When Tourigny, now 66, was ordained in 1980, the Springfield diocese had more than 300 priests serving 136 parishes. Since then, the ranks of priests have shrunk by more than half and nearly 60 of the parishes have closed. For Tourigny, it's meant many more funerals to handle, including dozens related to drug overdoses and heavy drinking.

Even his own family has been scarred: Tourigny says the 27-year-old daughter of his first cousin was killed in circumstances he describes as fueled by her drug habit.

"But for her addiction, she was a wonderful mother," Tourigny said.

Tourigny says he's worked nearly 40 years without a real vacation. For years, he's had therapy sessions, which he describes as "crucially important," and he strives to minister compassionately without being

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 23 of 57

engulfed in the emotions of those he consoles.

"I can share their pain but I can't enter into it," he said. "I'd be overwhelmed by grief."

With 2,500 families, many of Polish and French Canadian descent, Tourigny's parish has fared better with membership and finances than several nearby parishes. Yet Tourigny says many Catholics now mistrust the church hierarchy because of the flawed response to the abuse scandals.

"I was ordained at a time when the church was so alive — there was so much optimism," he said. "Then things began to change quickly. It has changed the way people look at us. The church has lost credibility and it's hard to get credibility back again."

Plante, the California psychologist, says even priests deeply devoted to their work are upset.

"A lot are angry at bishops and the institutional church for screwing up — a lot of them feel they've been thrown under the bus," he said. "They're also concerned that one of these days someone will accuse them of misbehavior, even if they've done nothing wrong. They're asking, 'Did I do something 30 years ago that could be misconstrued, that will come back and haunt me?'"

The Rev. Stephen Fichter, pastor of St. Elizabeth Church in Wyckoff, New Jersey, said he has counseled people who've been abused by Catholic clergy and understands the "pain and horror" they experienced. Yet he voiced concerns on behalf of priests with unblemished careers who feel vulnerable to unwarranted suspicions.

"Sometimes a priest is confronted by an anonymous accusation from 30 or 40 years ago, and doesn't have a chance to defend himself," Fichter said. "It used to be innocent until proven guilty. Now a lot of priests feel it's been turned upside down."

Mark Stelzer proudly identifies himself as an alumnus of Guest House, a residential facility in Michigan that has specialized in addiction treatment for Catholic clergy since 1956. He travels frequently to make presentations on behalf of Guest House, and teaches a course at his Chicopee college titled "Addiction and Recovery."

By the time he was ordained, Stelzer says, he was consuming alcohol daily. Only after five more years of steady drinking did acquaintances suggest he had a problem, leading to his stay at Guest House.

Guest House's president, Jeff Henrich, is an experienced drug and alcohol counselor. He says substance abuse among priests is a longstanding problem but has been aggravated by recent developments — including the "residual shame" arising from the sex-abuse scandals and increased isolation as more priests now manage parishes on their own.

Since 1985, according to researchers at Georgetown University, the Catholic population in the U.S. has risen by nearly 20%, but the number of priests has plunged from more than 57,000 to under 37,000.

"There's fewer of them and more work to do," Henrich said. "That means you're far more likely to live alone than ever before — and very few of us were meant to live alone."

In response, treatment experts urge priests in recovery to find companionship in a support group and to form friendships outside their ministry.

Stelzer agrees that isolation raises the risks of substance abuse.

"We're lone rangers," he said. "Substance abuse might go undetected for longer when you're living alone. A lot of those in treatment now say it was because of isolation, working harder and longer, and not feeling support from leadership."

The harmful consequences of the priest shortage have come to the attention of the Vatican's ambassador to the U.S., Archbishop Christophe Pierre. Addressing U.S. bishops in November, he urged them to be attentive to their priests' health, spiritual well-being and sense of priestly fraternity.

"Many priests are saying they no longer know one another," Pierre said. "Others, due to the priest shortage, are forced to live in isolation, managing multiple parishes."

Stress, burnout, depression and addictions are among the conditions treated at St. Luke Institute, a residential treatment center for Catholic clergy and lay leaders, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

St. Luke's president, the Rev. David Songy, is a psychologist who has worked extensively with troubled priests. One growing problem, he says, is that new priests are now often assigned their own parish within

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 24 of 57

three years, instead of 10 or more in the past, and may be ill-prepared to oversee finances and personnel as well as pastoral duties.

"Some of the younger people that come to us — they've been overwhelmed and weren't sure how to deal with things," Songy said. Stress, burnout, depression and addictions are among the conditions treated at St. Luke Institute, a residential treatment center for Catholic clergy and lay leaders, in Silver Spring, Maryland.

Other stressful changes relate to ideological differences. Tourigny considers himself a progressive and has welcomed lesbian couples into Ste. Rita. He says many young priests now emerging from seminary are less tolerant of LGBTQ congregants and eager to revive the tradition of celebrating Mass in Latin.

Another change noted by several priests: Some parishioners, rather than showing deference to their pastors, openly challenge them.

"In the past they might have disagreed, but they'd be courteous. Now it's different," said Fichter. "They think you are not Republican enough or Democratic enough depending on which end of the political spectrum they occupy. ... They want you to preach what they want to hear, and they will confront you."

At St. Joseph's Seminary in Yonkers, New York — just north of New York City — there's increased emphasis on screening applicants for their ability to handle stress and avoid the burnout that's now affecting some priests even early in their ministry.

"There's no doubt these men coming forward are facing what will be a very stressful life," said the Rev. Thomas Berg, the seminary's vice rector. "We must be sure they have the skill set or will be able to develop it."

"On top of that, in some places, you don't have a sense that their bishop supports them," added Berg. "In plenty of dioceses, priests are essentially treated as outside contractors — there's a lack of a genuinely caring relationship."

Police officers, firefighters and paramedics are collectively labeled first responders. Henrich, the Guest House president, says priests also merit that label.

"They see trauma and loss on a very regular basis," he said. "They get called out to hospitals, deal with grieving families, with lost and dead children."

Gun violence is the plague besetting the Rev. Mike Pflieger's parish in an African American area of Chicago. "It's a war zone," says Pflieger, an outspoken pastor at Saint Sabina Church since 1981. "Doing funerals of children is the hardest for me."

The violence has ripple effects: he says parents of slain young people go through divorce, mental breakdowns, addiction.

"It becomes overwhelming when it's day in and day out, and you don't have the resources to meet the needs," he said.

Now 70, Pflieger says his health is good, and his work rewarding. Yet he says he and his colleagues risk being overwhelmed by the crises facing their neighborhood of Auburn Gresham.

"I was seeing myself becoming depressed, after several violent deaths in a short span," he said. "I needed to make sure I talked to somebody."

"Last year I didn't take any days off — I realized that was a big mistake," he added. "It's important to have people around you to say, 'Are you OK?'"

In Brunswick, Ohio, a town of 34,000 people 20 miles (30 kilometers) southeast of Cleveland, the Rev. Robert Stec's priorities have been transformed, due to the scourge of opioids, since he became pastor of St. Ambrose Church in 2005.

In 2016, Brunswick's Medina County reported 20 opioid-related deaths. Stec presided over six funerals of those victims in a short span. While sharing parishioners' grief, Stec resolved to combat the opioid epidemic and founded a multifaith coalition of Northeast Ohio religious leaders.

Stec is grateful that Brunswick has better-than-average mental health services. But he and his fellow priests in drug-ravaged towns still employ a triage policy, seeking help for the most dire cases, because

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 25 of 57

they can't provide comprehensive support to every affected parishioner.

"We weren't trained for this in the seminary," he said.

Still the priests treasure their jobs despite the challenges. Mark Stelzer holds onto his role as a comforter. "For a lot of people, I'm the last person they saw while they were still alive," he said. "There's an energy and grace in those moments."

Associated Press writer Martha Irvine contributed from Flint, Michigan.

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

Britain faces most history-shaping election since WWII

By TAMER FAKAHANY Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Britain is facing the most testing and significant period in its modern history since World War II.

The polarized electorate now has a critical choice to make -- but it seems unlikely the result, whatever it may be, will heal deep and toxic divisions that could last a generation or more.

The 20th century saw Britain fight alongside and against Europeans and then help make the prosperous peace into the 21st century. This election will help determine where Britain's formal relationship with the European Union lands and what the impact will be on all walks of life.

In 1945, after punishing years of war, Nazi bombardment, self-sacrifice and rationing, the voting populace shifted in huge numbers after Victory in Europe Day, casting aside wartime leader Winston Churchill for a Labour Party committed to economic rebuilding from the ashes of war.

In the nearly 75 years since, there have been other pivotal polling days — in 1964, 1979, 1997 and 2010 — and now the "Brexit election" serves up another inflection point that will shape the country's future.

CHURCHILL SWEEP ASIDE IN 1945

Churchill epitomized Britain in its war years: The bulldog spirit and features and the iconic victory sign are still well-ingrained on the national psyche.

That didn't count for much at the polls, though, in 1945 when a population weary from the German blitz and day-to-day suffering and shortages delivered the biggest election swing ever in Britain.

No elections had been held since 1935. Churchill's Conservatives, who had presided over a national government during the war years, were unceremoniously dumped with a stunning nearly 11% election tilt to the Labour Party led by Clement Attlee.

It was a landslide triumph based on an economic program which had some similarities to U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's 1930s New Deal. In Britain, the National Health Service and welfare state came into being, full employment was sought and social reform was at the fore. This became the bedrock of the nation for decades until Margaret Thatcher's rise in 1979.

LABOUR'S WILSON ENDS TORY RULE IN 1964

The Conservative government began to come off the rails as the 1960s dawned. They were beset by economic problems, the Profumo Affair, a sex scandal that had threatened national security, and an old guard establishment in charge that seemed out of touch with modernity.

Voters wanted to move on. Labour's Harold Wilson, a pipe-smoking economist, made the then remarkable life journey from a northern town to 10 Downing Street. The year before his victory, Wilson had famously captured the now, in stark contrast to his opponents, with a speech extolling a new Britain that would need to be forged in the "white heat of a scientific revolution."

London would swing later that decade. The Beatles were the country's greatest export. But as viewers of "The Crown" TV series will know, Wilson had to dig Britain out of a deep economic hole and eventually devalue the pound when the deficit he had inherited from his predecessors became too crippling. He faced plots against his tenure both in the 1960s and during a second, briefer stint as prime minister in

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 26 of 57

the mid-1970s.

THATCHER'S RADICAL RIGHT ASCENSION IN 1979

The "Winter of Discontent," a period in the late 1970s that saw Britain steeped in a mire of nationwide strikes by potent public sector trade unions, paved the way for a radical right-wing government led by Margaret Thatcher. Her rule would upend and divide the country.

She was dubbed "Iron Lady." The domineering right-wing press backed her to the hilt. Thatcher saw the unions as the "enemy within" and sought to destroy them.

She waged war with Argentina over the Falkland Islands, also known as Las Malvinas. She won both battles. But they came at a cost. When Britain sank an Argentinian ship, the *Belgrano*, which was sailing away from the area of conflict, hundreds of young conscripts were killed. One headline in a Rupert Murdoch-owned tabloid crowed, "Gotcha!"

Parts of society benefited hugely under Thatcher during the 1980s. But unemployment and poverty rocketed, especially in the north of the country where long-established industries, like mining, were destroyed and with them their communities. A dominant and divisive Thatcher won three consecutive elections. She was felled in 1990 by her own party over her belligerent stance over ties with the EU — a fate that would befall her Tory successors as well.

There was no love lost between Thatcher and Ted Heath, prime minister from 1970-1974 after she had ousted him as Conservative leader. When she was deposed Heath was said to have exclaimed, "rejoice, rejoice, rejoice!"

BLAIR'S 'NEW LABOUR' TAKES POWER IN 1997

After 18 years of Conservative power, Tony Blair won over voters with a pledge of a fresh start: His "New Labour" would be a new incarnation of the party, no longer left-leaning as they had historically been, much more centrist and highly EU- and business-friendly.

At first Blair declared his priorities to be "education, education and education." But military interventions followed on behalf of Kosovo against Serbia and in Sierra Leone in 1999/2000.

A much-hyped millennium night display that fizzled out seemed to capture the way the government was headed — style and spin over substance. With the Sept. 11 attacks came Blair's determination to "stand shoulder to shoulder" with the U.S. He duly followed President George W. Bush into wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. London was then targeted in deadly terror attacks in 2005. Blair handed over the premiership after 10 years to Gordon Brown with an Iraq War-tainted legacy.

CAMERON'S COALITION EKES OUT WIN IN 2010

Brown's three years at the helm were punctuated by the global financial crisis of 2008 and its fallout. He was a less charismatic leader than Blair and faced a young and energetic David Cameron on polling day.

Various Conservative leaders had painted themselves as one-nation Tories since the Thatcherite era ended. Cameron also attempted to cultivate a more compassionate Conservative approach than years previous.

A hung parliament ensued: Cameron cobbled together a coalition with the Liberal Democrats and harsh austerity years followed. Labour was out after 13 years, but the British political landscape would come to be dominated by a new word to enter the lexicon later the same decade: Brexit.

EDITOR'S NOTE — Tamer Fakahany is AP's deputy director for global news coordination and has helped direct international coverage for the AP for 16 years. Follow him on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/tamer-fakahany>

China claims everyone in Xinjiang camps has 'graduated'

By YANAN WANG Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — People who were at vocational training centers in China's far west Xinjiang have all "graduated" and are living happy lives, an official said Monday. But Uighurs and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities from the region say their family members continue to be arbitrarily detained in camps and prisons.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 27 of 57

Shohrat Zakir, Xinjiang's Uighur governor, made the remarks during a press briefing as part of a strident propaganda campaign launched following U.S. Congress' approval last week of the Uighur Human Rights Policy Act.

"When the lives of people of all ethnic groups in Xinjiang were seriously threatened by terrorism, the U.S. turned a deaf ear," Zakir said at a press briefing. "On the contrary, now that Xinjiang society is steadily developing and people of all ethnicities are living and working in peace, the U.S. feels uneasy, and attacks and smears Xinjiang."

The U.S. legislation condemns the mass detentions of an estimated more than 1 million Uighurs, Kazakhs and others. It also raises possible sanctions against Chinese government officials deemed responsible for human rights abuses in Xinjiang.

Former detainees and their relatives have told The Associated Press that the centers for "re-education" were essentially prisons where they were forced to renounce Islam and express gratitude to the ruling Communist Party. They were subject to indoctrination and torture, the detainees said.

While Chinese authorities have described the detentions as a form of vocational training, classified documents recently leaked to a consortium of news organizations revealed a deliberate strategy to lock up ethnic minorities even though they had not committed any crimes.

Xu Hairong, the Communist Party chief of Urumqi city, Xinjiang's capital, did not dispute the documents' authenticity. He said, however, that there was no such thing as "detention camps."

"The reports by The New York Times, the International Consortium of Investigative Journalists and other foreign media organizations are purely malicious attempts to smear and discredit Xinjiang's vocational education centers and its counter-terrorism and de-radicalization efforts," Xu said.

Officials have repeatedly declined to say how many people are in the centers but insist the figure is far less than 1 million. Zakir said Monday the number is "dynamic."

All those in the centers who were studying Mandarin Chinese, law, vocational skills and deradicalization have "graduated" and found stable employment, Zakir said, adding that others such as village officials, farmers and unemployed high school graduates continue to enroll on a rolling basis in programs that allow them to "come and go freely."

Some ex-detainees have told AP they were forced to sign job contracts and barred from leaving factory grounds during weekdays, working long hours for low pay. Many Uighurs abroad also say their relatives are in prison, not camps, after being sentenced on vague charges of extremism.

Monday's briefing was the latest in a slew of public rebuttals from the Chinese government in response to the U.S. Uighur human rights bill, which Beijing has called a violation of international law and interference in China's internal affairs. The legislation further muddied U.S.-China ties, which were already strained over trade and pro-democracy demonstrations in Hong Kong.

During the briefing, officials played a clip from a documentary released last Friday by CGTN, the international branch of state broadcaster CCTV. The documentary, called "Fighting Terrorism in Xinjiang," showed old footage of terrorist attacks over the last decade, including bombings and stabbings such as the knife attack that killed 31 people outside a railway station in southern Kunming city in 2014.

Associated Press journalist Dake Kang in Hong Kong contributed to this report.

Accidental shootings by police expose training shortfalls

By MARTHA BELLISLE Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — When an Iowa mother tried to take her child from her husband during an argument on a snowy sidewalk in 2015, an officer stepped in to stop the scuffle, but he accidentally fired his weapon as a dog approached. The bullet went through the woman's arm and into her chest, killing her as her family watched in horror.

When a Minnesota sergeant stopped a motorcyclist after a 2015 high-speed chase, he stepped out of his patrol car with his firearm drawn, flush with adrenaline, and accidentally shot the man in the arm.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 28 of 57

And an Arkansas police officer fatally shot a suspect in 2012 as she tried to get him into handcuffs. Accidental shootings by law enforcement have happened in recent years at agencies small and large and at all levels — city, county, state and federal — across the U.S., an Associated Press investigation found. They've caused hundreds of injuries to officers, suspects and bystanders, and sometimes they've caused deaths.

Experts say it's because officers don't get the training they need to handle their guns proficiently, especially in life-and-death situations.

The methods used to train officers with their firearms "create the illusion of learning" but are inadequate for the demands of today's policing, said Bill Lewinski, executive director of the Illinois-based Force Science Institute, which provides research and training to law enforcement agencies.

"The training has to match the shooting challenges on the street," he said. "We don't do enough street training connected to actual skill and decision-making that's required of officers in this type of encounter. Some officers only handle their guns once a year."

Officers are most proficient with their guns immediately after graduating from a police academy, experts say.

After that, most are tested only once or twice a year in "qualifications" that measure a minimum level of firearms proficiency. There are no federal guidelines for these tests so there are thousands of different standards across the county.

No one tracks these shootings nationwide, so the AP collected media reports and surveyed agencies across the country through public records requests. The review was not comprehensive, due to the sheer number of U.S. law enforcement agencies and a lack of reporting requirements for such shootings. But it provides a snapshot of the problem, documenting 1,422 unintentional discharges since 2012 at 258 agencies, and uncovering detailed reports on 426.

The tally includes any incident in which a gun went off and the officer did not intend it to, whether they were cleaning or unloading a weapon or surging with adrenaline while responding to a call. Some shootings occurred because of involuntary muscle reflexes, experts said, or because the officer simply tripped.

While countless law enforcement officers safely perform their duties every day, some experts say even a small number of accidental shootings is unacceptable because they are preventable.

"Ninety-nine out of 100 times, there is not something wrong with the gun," said Paul Markel, a former police officer and firearms instructor in Mississippi. "It's the person holding it."

TRAGIC CONSEQUENCES

Gabe Steele describes Jan. 6, 2015, as the worst day of his life.

He and his wife, Autumn, had been having marital problems, issues he partly blames on his PTSD from two tours in Iraq. When she showed up at their Burlington, Iowa, home that morning, he called 911, fearing another fight.

Autumn Steele was trying to wrest their 3-year-old son from Gabe's arms on the sidewalk when Officer Jesse Hill approached.

Just then, their dog darted toward Hill, barking loudly, and the officer lost his footing, firing two shots as he fell backward into the snow. One bullet hit the dog, the other hit 34-year-old Autumn Steele, killing her.

Hill became frantic.

"I pulled my gun and shot it, and I hit her," he told Officer Tim Merryman, according to Hill's body camera video. "Oh, my God, no!"

Gabe Steele knew instantly his wife was in trouble. She "actually sat down, looked me in the eye" before she died, he recalled, choking up, in a recent exclusive interview. "That was tough."

The AP found 21 cases where people died in accidental shootings by police. It identified another 134 where the officer injured himself, and 45 where an accidental discharge injured another officer. An officer accidentally shot bystanders in 34 instances and suspects in 19.

Unintentional shootings usually lead to two investigations: one by an outside agency to determine whether

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 29 of 57

charges should be filed, and an internal review to see if any policies were violated and punishment, such as suspension, is appropriate.

In Autumn Steele's case, state investigators reviewed the shooting and sent the matter to then-Des Moines County Attorney Amy Beavers to determine if Hill should be charged.

Beavers compared the evidence against Iowa's homicide statutes: First- and second-degree murder and voluntary manslaughter didn't fit the scene, she said; involuntary manslaughter would apply only if the death occurred while the officer committed a crime; and Iowa has no negligent homicide law. She decided Hill could not be charged.

"(It) appeared to me that Officer Hill was trying to protect himself from the dog and an assault," Beavers said in a recent interview, adding that the decision still weighs on her. "It was a tragic accident."

Hill also kept his job, including working as a school security officer. His lawyer did not respond to a request for comment, and Burlington Police Chief Dennis Kramer declined AP interviews with himself and Hill.

Gabe Steele, 40, thinks Hill should have been held accountable.

"He just got to go on vacation and get paid for it, for taking my son's mother away," Steele said. "No one has ever apologized to me and my son. That hurts."

Steele's family filed a wrongful death suit against the city and Hill, and reached a \$2 million settlement in 2018, according to their lawyer.

The AP's investigation found 17 cases in which the officer was charged and 28 that ended in lawsuits. Settlements varied from \$200,000 to several million.

PERVASIVE PROBLEM

Law enforcement agencies have different terms for these shootings, including "accidental," "negligent," or "unintentional" discharges.

But Doug Tangen, firearms program manager at Washington state's law enforcement training center, argues they are all caused by a degree of negligence because at some point the officer violated one or more of the four universal firearms safety rules: Assume all guns are loaded, always point the muzzle in a safe direction, keep your finger off the trigger, and be sure of your target and what is beyond it.

"Guns don't go off by themselves," Tangen said.

In addition to a lack of standards for police shooting qualifications, there are no federal regulations mandating the amount of firearms training officers must receive at the police academy or once they graduate, Tangen said.

The U.S. Justice Department has issued consent decrees mandating certain types of training following use-of-force complaints, but those orders focused mostly on de-escalation training, not firearms, he said.

Accidental shootings happen at agencies of all sizes. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, for example, reported 140 between 2012 and 2018. New York City police had 100 during that time, while the smaller Jackson, Mississippi, police department had 93, the AP found.

They also continue to occur at federal agencies, more than a decade after the Justice Department's inspector general documented high rates.

The watchdog office studied shootings by four federal agencies from 2000 to 2003. It found that of 267 shootings reported, 38 percent were unintentional.

According to the AP's review of records obtained through Freedom of Information Act requests, the FBI has had at least 48 accidental shootings in the past five years. U.S. Customs and Border Protection has had at least 122 since 2012, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives 27.

SURVIVAL STRESS

When SWAT officers searched the Las Vegas hotel room used by Stephen Paddock to massacre people attending the 91 Harvest Festival in 2017, they used an explosive device to breach a door to an adjoining room, and three loud blasts erupted.

Officers in the hallway flooded into the room, asking: "Where did those shots come from? Was that us?"

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 30 of 57

One of the officers called out that he accidentally fired his assault rifle, hitting a chair, cabinet and wall. No one was hurt.

The AP identified six cases where police accidentally fired their weapons while responding to reports of active shooters, including at schools. In all, 200 accidental shootings happened while officers were on duty or were responding to crimes.

In some cases, they were hyped up due to adrenaline, which can impair officers' hearing and vision and even skew their perception of time.

"When officers suffer survival stress, real survival stress, all of their senses start to degrade," said Sean Hendrickson, an instructor at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, which trains all police and sheriff's deputies in the state.

An Eden Prairie, Minnesota, police sergeant cited this phenomenon after he accidentally shot a motorcyclist in 2015.

Sgt. Lonnie Soppeland stopped the biker after a middle-of-the-night, high-speed chase along county roads, according to police and court records.

Soppeland drew his firearm as he stepped out of his patrol car, and a round went off, hitting the motorcyclist in the arm.

"You actually shot me!" a distressed and bleeding Matthew Hovland-Knase is heard telling the sergeant in his dashcam video. Soppeland starts swearing and rushes to his aid.

"It was not intentional, I can tell you that," he responds.

Soppeland later explained to Hennepin County sheriff's investigators that as he chased the motorcycle, he watched it nearly crash head-on into a tow truck.

"This added stress and adrenaline to my body," he told them. "It was not my conscious choice to discharge my firearm."

Soppeland was assigned to administrative work during the investigation and later returned to regular duties with no further disciplinary action.

MUSCLE CONTRACTIONS

Other accidental shootings by police have been attributed to muscle reflexes — one hand or arm jerks or contracts, causing the other hand or arm to jerk or contract — including the 2012 killing of a suspect in Alexander, Arkansas.

Officer Nancy Cummings says she stopped to check on Carleton Wallace, who was walking down the middle of the street, and he pulled a gun on her. She told him to drop it, and he threw it in the bushes.

Cummings then attempted to handcuff Wallace, but he yanked away, causing her to fall. As she tried to hold onto him, the gun fired, the court record said.

Wallace was shot in the back.

Cummings later said she didn't mean for the gun to go off and remembers looking at her hand and not knowing what happened, according to her statement in response to a federal wrongful death lawsuit.

She was charged with manslaughter. An agent who wrote the arrest affidavit said the way Cummings effected the arrest "with her gun in her hand with the finger on the trigger well was reckless," court records said.

Thomas Martin, an officer and firearms expert, testified at a trial in the lawsuit that the gun's firing was the result of a "natural reflex."

"If Ms. Cummings' finger were situated outside the trigger guard and Mr. Wallace's actions caused her to reflexively squeeze her right hand, it is possible that Cummings' finger inadvertently and unintentionally slipped into the trigger guard and in one fluid motion, disengaged the safety lever and pulled the trigger," he wrote in an affidavit.

Cummings was acquitted, and a jury ruled in her favor in the lawsuit.

A recent study by the Force Science Institute, the research and consulting group, cited involuntary muscle contractions as one of the potential main factors in accidental shootings by police.

The study categorized behaviors based on unintentional discharges outlined in 171 reports from four

law enforcement agencies. Other shootings occurred when officers lost their balance or experienced a "startle response."

In most cases, their finger was on the trigger when it shouldn't have been, the study found.

Injuries happened in 20% of the 171 reports — three-quarters of them to the officer, and the rest to fellow officers and suspects. Deaths occurred in 8%, with 85% being suspects and 15% fellow officers.

"These findings suggest that injuries and deaths may be more prevalent than previously reported," the study said.

TRAINING SHORTFALLS

Experts agree the way to reduce these shootings is to rethink firearms training, starting with the amount required.

While all academies require cadets to undergo a certain number of hours of firearms instruction, the AP found how many varies widely.

Georgia, Illinois and Indiana, for example, call for 40 hours of specific firearms training, while Florida requires 80, Utah 52 and Missouri 66 hours.

Cadets at Washington's academy must have 90 hours of firearms training. But once they go to work for a department, the amount of additional training they receive is uncertain, said Hendrickson, the instructor.

"Those skills that they receive here at the academy, firearms skills, degrade pretty rapidly after they leave the academy if they're not practicing or getting more training," he said.

Another issue is the type of training used. Most academies use "block and silo" methods, which bombard officers with information and don't present it in a coordinated manner, so they don't retain it, experts say.

What's lacking are standards for regular, ongoing training — including scenario-based exercises that mirror high-stress situations — at the academy and over the course of an officer's career.

Spending money up front on training reduces the possibility of having to spend it later — on lawsuits, said Jason Wuestenberg, executive director of the National Law Enforcement Firearms Instructors Association.

"Usually when something bad happens, it's due to a lack of training or leadership," he said.

More on AP's findings: <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/6570974/Accidental-shootings-by-police.pdf>

Agency-by-agency breakdown: <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/6569278/Spreadsheet.pdf>

Follow Martha Bellisle at <https://twitter.com/marthabellisle>

Accidental shootings raise questions about arming teachers

By **MARTHA BELLISLE** Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — As the country looks for ways to deal with mass shootings at schools, some have responded by saying more people should carry guns, including teachers.

"The only way to stop a bad guy with a gun is a good guy with a gun," President Donald Trump told the National Rifle Association convention in April. More states are allowing teachers to carry guns, he said, and "who better to protect our children than our teachers, who love them."

But a close look at unintentional shootings by law enforcement officers, including at schools, raises doubts about whether more guns would help keep students safe.

An Associated Press investigation has found accidental shootings occur at law enforcement agencies large and small across the United States every year. The examination of public records and media reports documented 1,422 unintentional shootings by officers at 258 agencies since 2012.

Twenty-two occurred at schools or college campuses.

At least nine states have passed laws allowing employees to carry firearms at K-12 school grounds, according to the National School Boards Association. Nineteen states allow anyone with permission from a school authority to be armed at schools, the association said.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 32 of 57

Experts say anybody carrying guns, including teachers, needs ongoing, intensive training to be able to handle their firearms proficiently and respond appropriately in stressful settings — and many law enforcement officers don't even get that.

"The idea that anybody can go to Joe Smith's School of Shooting for a day or a week and become proficient at shooting a handgun in a life-and-death situation is a little bit absurd," said Doug Tangen, firearms program manager at the Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission, the state police academy.

Shooting a gun requires psychomotor skills that must be practiced over and over, he said.

"Most people, cops included, don't devote that practice time to be able to shoot it responsibly or carry it responsibly," he said.

The AP's investigation found six accidental shootings that involved officers responding to reports of active shooters.

In 2016, for example, local, state and federal officers rushed to Alpine High School in the small town of Alpine, Texas, when a call came in about two shooters inside.

A half-dozen heavily armed officers and agents headed toward the cafeteria and then down the hallway toward classroom No. 24, thinking the shooter might be inside.

Just as Homeland Security Investigations Special Agent Jon Dangle touched the doorknob, a shot rang out, and he fell to the floor. The other officers grabbed him by his bulletproof vest and dragged him to safety.

No one knew where the shot came from or who fired it, Dangle said.

"We thought the shooter was in that classroom," which still contained a teacher and students, he told the AP. "If they (the other agents) had opened fire, more would be dead."

U.S. Marshal Douglas Mullens eventually admitted he had accidentally discharged his weapon. He was carrying a ballistic shield in one hand and fumbling with a handgun in the other when it went off, according to the Texas Rangers, who investigated the shooting.

Dangle suffered a shattered tibia and torn muscles and nerves. He was out of work for 15 months and eventually moved his family to Oklahoma so he could get better care.

Dave Oney, a spokesman for the U.S. Marshals Service, said the agency "does not discuss personnel matters" when asked if Mullens faced any disciplinary action or charges.

Other accidental shootings at schools occurred while officers chased or arrested suspects, taught gun safety classes, or attended school events while off-duty, the AP found. Some injured officers, teachers or students.

One happened the day after the mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida, when a sheriff's deputy shot himself in the leg while responding to a report of a person with a gun at a school in neighboring Coconut Creek.

Accidental shootings can occur when an officer is flush with adrenaline, gets startled or simply loses his balance. Ways to avoid them include following firearms safety rules and training regularly and in settings that mirror real life, experts say.

Steven Karnazes, president of Ventura, California-based Advanced Tactical Training Institute, trains people in schools and churches to prepare for armed attacks. After taking clients through classroom safety sessions, Karnazes teaches firearm handling by "making things as realistic as we can."

"If you are a person at a church or school and you want to carry a firearm, that commitment comes with a lot of responsibility," he said. "You have to be a lifelong student and continue to train."

Alan Gottlieb, founder of the Bellevue, Washington-based Second Amendment Foundation, supports arming teachers as a way to prevent violence, saying gun-free school zones are a "target-rich environment for people who are crazy."

He believes the average gun owner engages in more training than police due to budget constraint, and says trained school personnel could do a better job of protecting students.

Yet many educators have resisted the idea that they should carry guns.

National advocacy group Teach Plus in 2018 surveyed more than 1,200 teachers about being armed at schools, and 80% said they were strongly opposed.

Also last year, the National Education Association, the country's largest teachers union, asked roughly 1,000 members if they would be willing to carry a gun in school, even with training, and 82% said no.

"We reject the idea that putting more guns in schools will make schools safer," the group's president, Lily Eskelsen García, told the AP. "If a highly trained law enforcement officer can accidentally fire a weapon, let's talk about the third-grade teacher with a loaded pistol in her purse."

Follow Martha Bellisle at <https://twitter.com/marthabellisle>

Palestinians in Bethlehem look beyond religious tourism

By JOSEPH KRAUSS and MOHAMMAD DARAGHMEH Associated Press

BETHLEHEM, West Bank (AP) — For decades, the people of Bethlehem have watched tour buses drive up to the Church of the Nativity, disgorge their passengers for a few hours at the traditional birthplace of Jesus, and then return to Israel.

But in recent years a new form of tourism has taken root, focused on the West Bank town's Palestinian residents, their culture and history and their struggles under Israeli occupation.

As pilgrims descend on Bethlehem this Christmas, they have the option of staying in restored centuries-old guesthouses, taking food tours of local markets, and perusing the dystopian art in and around a hotel designed by the British graffiti artist Banksy.

The centerpiece of tourism, and the focus of Christmas celebrations in the coming weeks, is the 6th-century Church of the Nativity, built on the site where Jesus is believed to have been born in a manger. Extensive renovations in recent years have saved the roof from collapse and revealed colorful wall mosaics depicting angels and saints.

Earlier this month, the Vatican returned a small part of what Christians believe to be the original manger, which was sent to Rome as a gift to the pope in the 7th century. The thumb-sized relic, displayed in an ornate silver case, can be seen in a chapel adjoining the church.

In Manger Square, just outside the church, a massive Christmas tree has been set up and festivities are planned in the coming weeks as various denominations hold staggered Christmas celebrations. On Jan. 7, Bethlehem will host an international Santa convention.

Tourism has suffered in the past during outbreaks of violence between Israel and the Palestinians. But the Palestinian Tourism Ministry expects 3.5 million visitors to Bethlehem in 2019, up from 3 million the previous year, and many think there is still room for growth.

"The general situation in Palestine and the Holy Land is that there is very good security, better than most countries in the world, and so the people are visiting," said Elias al-Arja, chairman of the local hotel association.

He noted that while the Holy Land includes the most important sites in Christianity, including the places where tradition says Christ was born, where he grew up, was crucified and resurrected, it attracts far fewer visitors than the Vatican. "We have the opportunity to draw more people," he said.

Religious tourism is a boon for the local economy, but many Palestinians feel the city's modern residents are largely ignored.

Israel captured the West Bank, along with east Jerusalem and the Gaza Strip, in the 1967 Middle East war. The Palestinians view the territories as part of their national homeland and hope to one day establish an independent state.

Visitors travelling to Bethlehem pass through a sprawling Israeli checkpoint and then drive along the separation wall, which Israel began building during the second Palestinian intifada, or uprising, in the early 2000s. Israel says the barrier is needed to prevent attacks, but the Palestinians view it as a land grab because its route places almost 10% of the West Bank on the Israeli side. Bethlehem itself is almost completely surrounded by the barrier and a string of Jewish settlements.

The town's predicament is on vivid display in and around the Walled-Off Hotel, which was designed by Banksy and opened in 2017. The hotel looks out on the separation wall, which itself is covered with art-

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 34 of 57

work, graffiti and museum panels explaining life under occupation. Inside, a number of Banksy pieces are depicted in a haunting lobby, which this time of year is dimly lit with Christmas lights.

The hotel offers weekly performances by local musicians and daily tours of a nearby Palestinian refugee camp. Tours of Banksy's public artwork elsewhere in the town can be organized on request.

A different form of alternative tourism, conceived by Palestinians themselves, can be found in the city center, just a few hundred meters (yards) from the church. There the municipality, with Italian aid, has restored an 18th-century guesthouse and rented it out to Fadi Kattan, a French Palestinian chef.

The Hosh Al-Syrian Guesthouse includes 12 tastefully furnished rooms ranging from \$80-150 a night. At its Fawda Restaurant — Arabic for chaos — Kattan uses local ingredients to cook up traditional Palestinian cuisine with a modern twist.

"My vision was to say religious tourism will promote itself by itself, it doesn't need the private sector to promote it," he said. "Let's promote everything else. Let's promote our food, let's promote our culture, let's promote our history."

Kattan is especially keen to promote Palestinian cuisine, which he says has been appropriated by Israeli chefs and food writers. As with nearly everything else having to do with the Middle East conflict, there are two sides: Israeli cuisine owes much to Jewish immigrants from ancient communities across the Middle East and North Africa.

The guesthouse partners with a local group known as Farayek to offer food tours in which visitors wander through the local market, meeting farmers, butchers and bakers before having lunch at the guesthouse. Another program includes cooking classes taught by a Palestinian grandmother.

"What I was hoping to achieve is to have people stay three nights in Bethlehem, to have people go to the fruit and vegetable market, to have people meet the people of Bethlehem, not just the very short tour into the city," he said.

When the guesthouse opened in 2014, the average stay was one night, but now it has risen to three and a half, with steady occupancy throughout the low season, Kattan said.

A handful of other restored guesthouses have also opened in recent years, including Dar al-Majus, Arabic for House of the Maji, named for the three kings said to have visited the manger after Christ was born.

The guesthouse is part of a wider initiative by the Franciscan Custody of the Holy Land and a local association to support the Christian community. Bethlehem's Christian community, like others across the Middle East, has dramatically dwindled in recent decades as Christians have fled war and conflict or sought better economic opportunities abroad.

A local family living next to the guesthouse cooks breakfast and traditional meals for guests, and the guesthouse employs members of another two families. The guesthouse mostly supplies itself from the local market, and there are plans to expand to another restored house in the old quarter next year.

Bethlehem's mayor, Anton Salman, expects the recent growth in tourism to continue.

"Each season is more active and more organized and more attractive for the local community in Palestine and for the tourists," he said.

Rams stay in playoff hunt, end Seahawks' 5-game streak

By GREG BEACHAM AP Sports Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — When Todd Gurley flattened Tre Flowers with a brutal stiff arm on his path to Los Angeles' final touchdown, the Rams delivered a clear message right to the face of the Seahawks and the NFL.

Although it's too soon to say whether the Rams solved their offensive problems in time to make the playoffs, the team that dazzled the league in the past two seasons will be dangerous down the stretch.

"We're finally playing the way we should have been playing," Rams defensive tackle Aaron Donald said.

Jared Goff passed for 293 yards and two touchdowns, Gurley ran for 79 yards and that decisive fourth-quarter TD and the Rams prevented Seattle from clinching a playoff berth with a 28-12 victory Sunday night.

From start to finish in their final game under the Coliseum lights, the Rams (8-5) looked like their most

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 35 of 57

dangerous selves of the previous two seasons. In their fifth win in seven games, the Rams had little trouble derailing the powerful Seahawks' five-game winning streak.

"I think this is a different team now with a different mentality," left tackle Andrew Whitworth said. "I think we're shooting our shot in the next three weeks. You can certainly see signs of last year. You don't control your future, but we control how we come out here."

Robert Woods and Cooper Kupp caught TD passes while the Rams kept their playoff hopes burning with an aggressive, inventive game plan on both sides of the ball. They also left the Seahawks reeling from their first road defeat of the season after sacking Russell Wilson five times.

Los Angeles still trails Minnesota (9-4) by a game for the second wild card spot and its third straight playoff berth, but its chances improved with this critical division win.

The Seahawks (10-3) fell out of first place in the NFC West with just their second loss since Sept. 22.

"This was a rough night," coach Pete Carroll said. "We did not do what we planned to do at all. You've got to hand it to them. They played great. They did everything they wanted to do."

Wilson passed for 245 yards amid constant pressure from the Rams. Quandre Diggs returned an interception 55 yards for a touchdown early in the third quarter, but it was the Seahawks' only touchdown.

"Obviously it felt like we weren't ourselves out there," said Seattle tight end Jacob Hollister, who had a key drop. "They outplayed us, and we've just got to keep working."

Woods had seven catches for 98 yards and his first touchdown of the season, and tight end Tyler Higbee had seven catches for a career-high 116 yards as the Rams looked like the thrilling offensive unit led by coach Sean McVay in his first two seasons.

McVay called a clever game full of jet sweeps and tricky schemes. He also continued to give more late-season action to Gurley, who responded emphatically.

These NFC West rivals' first meeting of the season was decided by the Rams' missed field goal with 11 seconds left two months ago in Seattle. Los Angeles didn't let it get nearly that close this time.

The Rams' offense started off with two touchdown drives. Malcolm Brown punched in the opening TD after Higbee's 33-yard reception put Los Angeles on the goal line, and Woods then caught a short TD pass to cap an 85-yard drive.

Goff led another TD drive late in the first half, connecting with Kupp from 10 yards out with 51 seconds left, while Wilson was left frustrated by the Rams' defense and his own receivers' drops.

Goff and Woods miscommunicated at midfield on the opening drive of the second half, and Diggs returned it untouched for his second career touchdown and his second interception in his first four games with Seattle.

Diggs grabbed his third interception for the Seahawks on the next series, catching an overthrown pass by Goff. Former USC star Rasheem Green then blocked a field goal attempt by the Rams, but Seattle's offense was unable to capitalize, with Wilson repeatedly getting rocked by blitzing Rams.

Los Angeles' final 95-yard TD drive ended with Gurley flooring Flowers.

SEAHAWKS' STANDING

Seattle dropped a game behind San Francisco atop the NFC West, tied with New Orleans and Green Bay at 10-3 in the jumbled conference playoff picture. The Seahawks host the Niners in the regular-season finale Dec. 29.

LIGHTS OUT

This was likely the final NFL night game at the venerable Coliseum. The Rams move into their multibillion-dollar palace in Inglewood next year after four post-relocation seasons at the 96-year-old stadium, which staged the first Super Bowl and also housed the Rams and the Raiders at different times.

Carroll also might have made his final coaching appearance at the stadium where he led USC to a decade of excellence.

INJURIES:

Seahawks: RB Rashaad Penny sprained a left knee ligament on the opening drive and didn't play again. The busy backup running back had 203 yards rushing and two touchdowns in Seattle's previous two

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 36 of 57

games. ... Two defensive starters — DE Ziggy Ansah and LB Mychal Kendricks — didn't play.

Rams: Gerald Everett missed another game with a knee injury, and the absence of Goff's top tight end target has led to more chances for Higbee, who surpassed his career high in yards receiving for the second straight game.

UP NEXT

Seahawks: Visit the Carolina Panthers on Sunday for their final road game of the regular season.

Rams: Visit the well-rested Dallas Cowboys, who still lead the NFC East despite losing three straight, on Sunday.

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

Zellweger, Pitt and ... "Cats"? Here come the Golden Globes

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Renee Zellweger, Brad Pitt and Eddie Murphy are locks. But whether "Cats" has it in the bag, too, we won't know until the 77th annual Golden Globes are announced Monday morning.

The Hollywood Foreign Press Association will unveil their nominations in Los Angeles beginning at 8:04 a.m. EST. They will be live-streamed on the Golden Globes' Facebook page and their website, with the second wave of nominees carried live on NBC's "Today" show at 8:15 a.m. Dakota Fanning, Susan Kelechi Watson and Tim Allen will announce the nominations from the Beverly Hilton hotel.

The Globes separate their top categories between drama and comedy/musical, giving some movies well outside the awards conversation an opportunity.

While movies like Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman," Quentin Tarantino's "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood" and Noah Baumbach's "Marriage Story" are widely expected to come away with numerous nods, few would be surprised if the press association — a group known for its sometimes quirky picks, its penchant for A-listers and its fondness for musicals — also included the upcoming, much-memed big-screen adaptation of "Cats." The HFPA, a group with 87 voting members, was shown an unfinished cut of Tom Hooper's film.

More likely are nominations for the likes of Joaquin Phoenix ("Joker"), Jennifer Lopez ("Hustlers"), Murphy ("Dolemite Is My Name"), Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio ("Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood," slated as a comedy for the Globes), Zellweger ("Judy"), Awkwafina ("The Farewell") and the leads of "Marriage Story": Adam Driver and Scarlett Johansson.

In the early going, Netflix has dominated awards season. "The Irishman" last week won best film from the New York Film Critics Circle and the National Board of Review. "Marriage Story" virtually swept the IFP Gotham Awards.

On the television side, the Globes often relish being the first awards group where late fall series are eligible, meaning that Netflix's "The Crown" and Apple's "The Morning Show" could have a big morning, along with Emmy winners "Fleabag" and "Game of Thrones." HBO's "Watchmen" could also be a factor.

Ricky Gervais will host the Globes for the fifth time on January 5. Tom Hanks, a possible nominee for his performance as Mister Rogers in "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," will receive the Cecil B. DeMille Award. The Carol Burnett Award will go to Ellen DeGeneres.

Follow AP Film Writer Jake Coyle on Twitter at: <http://twitter.com/jakecoyleAP>

Saudi gunman tweeted against US before naval base shooting

By BRENDAN FARRINGTON and MIKE BALSAMO Associated Press

PENSACOLA, Fla. (AP) — The Saudi gunman who killed three people at the Pensacola naval base had apparently gone on Twitter shortly before the shooting to blast U.S. support of Israel and accuse America of being anti-Muslim, a U.S. official said Sunday as the FBI confirmed it is operating on the assumption

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 37 of 57

the attack was an act of terrorism.

Investigators are also trying to establish whether the killer, 2nd Lt. Mohammed Alshamrani, 21, of the Royal Saudi Air Force, acted alone or was part of a larger plot.

Alshamrani, who was killed by a sheriff's deputy during the rampage at a classroom building Friday, was undergoing flight training at Pensacola, where members of foreign militaries routinely receive instruction.

"We are, as we do in most active-shooter investigations, work with the presumption that this was an act of terrorism," said Rachel J. Rojas, the special agent in charge of the FBI's office in Jacksonville.

Authorities believe the gunman made social media posts criticizing the U.S. under a user handle similar to his name, but federal law enforcement officials are investigating whether he authored the words or just posted them, said the official, who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity.

Also, investigators believe the gunman visited New York City, including Rockefeller Center, days before the shooting and are working to determine the purpose of the trip, the official said.

All foreign students at the Pensacola base have been accounted for, no arrests have been made, and the community is under no immediate threat, Rojas said at a news conference. A Saudi commanding officer has ordered all students from the country to remain at one location at the base, authorities said.

"There are a number of Saudi students who are close to the shooter and continue to cooperate in this investigation," Rojas said. "The Saudi government has pledged to fully cooperate with our investigation."

Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis said the investigation was proceeding under "the presumption that this was an act of terrorism" and he called for better vetting of foreigners allowed into the U.S. for training on American bases.

Speaking at a news conference Sunday afternoon, DeSantis also said the gunman had a social media trail and a "deep-seated hatred of the United States."

He said he thought such an attack could have been prevented with better vetting.

"You have to take precautions" to protect the nation, DeSantis said.

"To have this individual be able to take out three of our sailors, to me that's unacceptable," the governor added.

Earlier in the week of the shooting, Alshamrani hosted a dinner party where he and three others watched videos of mass shootings, another U.S. official told the AP on Saturday.

Alshamrani used a Glock 9 mm weapon that had been purchased legally in Florida, Rojas said. DeSantis questioned whether foreigners should continue to be allowed under federal law to buy guns in the U.S. and called it a "federal loophole."

Republican DeSantis said he supports that the Second Amendment but that it "does not apply to Saudi Arabians."

Family members and others identified the three dead as Joshua Kaleb Watson, a 23-year-old graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy; Airman Mohammed Sameh Haitham, 19, of St. Petersburg, Florida, who joined the Navy after graduating from high school last year; and Airman Apprentice Cameron Scott Walters, 21, of Richmond Hill, Georgia.

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.

In a statement, the FBI confirmed Sunday that it had obtained base surveillance videos as well as cell-phone footage taken by a bystander outside the building, and had also interviewed that person.

Rojas would not directly answer when asked whether other students knew about the attack beforehand or whether there was anything "nefarious" about the making of the video. She said that a lot of information needs to be confirmed by investigators and that she did not want to contribute to "misinformation" circulating about the case.

Rojas said federal authorities are focused on questioning the gunman's friends, classmates and other associates. "Our main goal is to confirm if he acted alone or was he part of a larger network," she said.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 38 of 57

President Donald Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, said on CBS' "Face the Nation" that the shooting looked like "terrorism or akin to terrorism." But he cautioned that the FBI was still investigating.

"Look, to me it appears to be a terrorist attack," he said. "I don't want to prejudge the investigation, but it appears that this may be someone that was radicalized." O'Brien said he did not see evidence so far of a "broader plot."

The U.S. has long had a robust training program for Saudis, providing assistance in the U.S. and in the kingdom. 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.

Foreigners allowed into the U.S. for military training are subject to background checks to weed out security risks.

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

Saudi Arabia's government so far has not commented on a possible motive for the shooting, nor offered any information about the promised investigation.

Meanwhile, the daily Saudi newspaper Okaz published an interview with Othman Alshamrani, a man it described as an extended family member of the shooting suspect from his hometown in the kingdom's Asir province. "This individual act does not represent us, nor his family nor his tribe," the relative said, adding that the slain man was from a family with members who have well served their nation in military posts.

Balsamo reported from Washington. Associated Press reporters Lolita Baldor, Ben Fox, and Robert Burns in Washington; Jon Gambrell and Aya Batrawy in Dubai; Bobby Caina Calvin in Tallahassee, Florida; and Tamara Lush in Tampa, Florida, contributed to this report.

This story has been corrected to restore dropped words in Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis' quote.

'Benson,' 'Star Trek' actor René Auberjonois has died at 79

By ANDREW DALTON AP Entertainment Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — René Auberjonois, a prolific actor best known for his roles on the television shows "Benson" and "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" and his part in the 1970 film "M.A.S.H." playing Father Mulcahy, has died. He was 79.

The actor died Sunday at his home in Los Angeles of metastatic lung cancer, his son Remy-Luc Auberjonois told The Associated Press.

René Auberjonois worked constantly as a character actor in several golden ages, from the dynamic theater of the 1960s to the cinema renaissance of the 1970s to the prime period of network television in the 1980s and 1990s — and each generation knew him for something different.

For film fans of the 1970s, he was Father John Mulcahy, the military chaplain who played straight man to the doctors' antics in "M.A.S.H." It was his first significant film role and the first of several for director Robert Altman.

For sitcom watchers of the 1980s, he was Clayton Runnymede Endicott III, the hopelessly highbrow chief of staff at a governor's mansion on "Benson," the ABC series whose title character was a butler played by Robert Guillaume.

And for sci-fi fans of the 1990s and convention-goers ever since, he was Odo, the shape-shifting Changeling and head of space-station security on "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine."

"I am all of those characters, and I love that," Auberjonois said in a 2011 interview with the "Star Trek" website. "I also run into people, and they think I'm their cousin or their dry cleaner. I love that, too."

Fellow stars from "Star Trek" shows praised the actor on Twitter.

William Shatner said that "to sum up his life in a tweet is nearly impossible. To Judith, Tessa & Remy I send you my love & strength. I will keep you in my thoughts and remember a wonderful friendship with René."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 39 of 57

George Takei tweeted: ""Star Trek fans knew him as Odo from Deep Space Nine. We knew him as René. He was a wonderful, caring, and intelligent man. He shall be missed. When I look out to the stars, I shall think of you, friend."

Auberjonois was born in New York in 1940, the son of Fernand Auberjonois, Swiss-born foreign correspondent for U.S. newspapers, and the grandson of a Swiss post-impressionist painter also named René Auberjonois.

The younger René Auberjonois was raised in New York, Paris, and London, and for a time lived with his family in an artists' colony in Rockland County, New York, whose residents included the actors John Houseman, Helen Hayes and Burgess Meredith.

After graduating from college at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Institute of Technology, now Carnegie Mellon, Auberjonois hopped around the country joining theater companies, eventually landing three roles on Broadway in 1968, including playing the Fool in a long-running version of King Lear.

The following year he would play Sebastian Baye opposite Katharine Hepburn in "Coco," a play on the life of designer Coco Chanel that would earn him a Tony for best actor in a leading role in a musical.

He would later see Tony nominations for 1973's "The Good Doctor," 1984's "Big River," and 1989's "City of Angels."

In 1970, Auberjonois began his run with Altman, playing Mulcahy in "M.A.S.H."

In his most famous exchange from the movie, Sally Kellerman's Margaret Houlihan wonders how such a degenerate doctor as Donald Sutherland's Hawkeye Pierce could reach a position of responsibility in the U.S. Army.

A bible-reading Auberjonois responds, deadpan: "He was drafted."

"I actually made that line up when we were rehearsing the scene," Auberjonois said on the podcast "The Gist" in 2016. "And it became a kind of an iconic line for the whole film."

The same year he played an off-the-wall ornithologist in Altman's "Brewster McCloud," played a saloon-keeper alongside Warren Beatty in the director's western "McCabe & Mrs. Miller" in 1971 and appeared in Altman's "Images" in 1972.

He spent much of the rest of the 1970s doing guest spots on TV shows before joining the cast of "Benson" in its second season in 1980, where he would remain for the rest of the show's seven seasons, playing the patrician political adviser and chronic hypochondriac Endicott.

Much of his later career was spent doing voices for animation, most memorably as the French chef who sings the love song to fish-killing "Les Poissons" in Disney's 1989 "The Little Mermaid."

He played Odo on "Deep Space Nine" from 1993 until 1999 and became a regular at "Star Trek" conventions, where he raised money for Doctors Without Borders and signed autographs with a drawing of Odo's bucket, where the character would store himself when he returned to his natural gelatinous state.

Auberjonois was also a regular on the ABC law-firm dramedy "Boston Legal" from 2004 to 2008.

Late in his career, Auberjonois would work with independent filmmakers including the artful director Kelly Reichardt, for whom he appeared in 2016's "Certain Women" and 2019's "First Cow," his final role.

In addition to his son, he is survived by his wife of 56 years, writer Judith Auberjonois; sisters Marie-Laure Degener and Anne Auberjonois; daughter Tessa Auberjonois; son-in-law Adrian Latourelle, daughter-in-law Kate Nowlin and three grandchildren.

This story has been corrected to say that the "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" show ran until 1999.

AP Interview: Warren says voters are ready for female ticket

By MEG KINNARD Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) — Elizabeth Warren said Sunday she believes Americans are ready for a presidential ticket with two women at the top, rejecting concerns from some Democrats that a woman can't beat President Donald Trump.

"Sure, why not?" the Democratic presidential candidate told The Associated Press in an interview ahead

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 40 of 57

of a town hall campaign event in Charleston. "I think (voters) would support a lot of different combinations."

In the aftermath of Hillary Clinton's 2016 defeat, some Democrats have expressed hesitation about nominating another woman to take on Trump in 2020. But Warren argued that women notched historic wins during the 2018 midterms, suggesting voters are worried less about gender than the message candidates are offering.

Her comments come less than a week after California Sen. Kamala Harris abruptly dropped out of the race, prompting debate about whether a party that says it values diversity is shortchanging candidates of color and women. Other than Warren, the Democratic top tier is currently all male. They are also all white.

Warren has said she'd consider tapping Harris as a running mate. She also told the AP she would be "open" to asking former Vice President Joe Biden to reprise his old job.

"Look, it would be presumptuous of me to be talking about individuals, but I'm open to getting this right because that's what we want to do," Warren said. "We want to build a Democratic ticket and a stronger Democratic Party that's ready to get out there and compete at the national level, at the state level, at the local level."

Her openness to teaming with Biden is notable because the two candidates represent distinctly different visions of the Democratic Party's future. Warren has embraced calls for systemic reforms to the nation's economy and health care. Biden has urged more pragmatic approaches and has specifically rejected Warren's \$20 trillion plan to transition the U.S. to a single-payer health care system as unworkable.

Biden has the advantage in South Carolina, where he's leading in the polls because of his deep ties to the black community. He told the AP in October that Warren "doesn't affect my strategy, period" in the state.

But her trip to South Carolina on Sunday suggests she won't cede the state to Biden. She has upped her efforts to appeal to black voters, especially women. She delivered a well-received speech at a historically black college in Atlanta last month and a group of more than 100 black female activists endorsed her candidacy.

In the interview and the town hall that followed, Warren went after her billionaire opponents, particularly former New York City Mayor Mike Bloomberg. She has decried his multimillion-dollar ad spending as a way to try to buy the election, especially considering his decision not to compete in early-voting states, including South Carolina.

"The problem with the billionaires is that there's just no limit on how much they can spend. They can reach in their pockets and just spend and spend and spend," Warren told the AP. "That means they get to buy a bigger share of democracy than anyone else, and that's a real problem."

But Warren said the problem extends to candidates willing to hold big-dollar fundraisers in lieu of relying on a small-dollar donor base, referring to recent criticism she levied against fellow Democratic hopeful Pete Buttigieg.

"If the only way we're going to get a Democratic candidate is that you've either got to be a billionaire, or go suck up to the billionaires, then buckle up, because it means we're going to have a government that just keeps working better for the billionaires and not for everyone else," Warren said.

Regardless of who emerges from the crowded Democratic field, Warren said the party will have to find ways to attract Republicans who are disenchanted by Trump's presidency.

"We're going to need as many Democrats as we can to build up our turnout, and we're also going to need some Republicans to help us, some Republican women, some Republican men, who are turned off by how Donald Trump behaves," Warren said.

"I think we've got a path to victory, and I think the energy and enthusiasm of women is really what's going to carry us across the finish line with a good margin."

She said women will "not only help us win the White House but, just as has been happening, help us win up and down the ticket."

Rapper Juice WRLD dies after medical emergency in Chicago

By SOPHIA TAREEN and MESFIN FEKADU Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Rapper Juice WRLD, who launched his career on SoundCloud before becoming a streaming juggernaut and rose to the top of the charts with the Sting-sampled hit “Lucid Dreams,” died early Sunday after a “medical emergency” at Chicago’s Midway International Airport.

The rapper, whose legal name was Jarad A. Higgins, was 21. Authorities have not released details about his cause of death.

He was pronounced dead at a hospital around 3:15 a.m. and taken to the Cook County medical examiner’s office several hours later, according to office spokeswoman Natalia Derevyanny, who said an autopsy would take place Monday.

Chicago police launched a death investigation after a 21-year-old male experiencing a “medical emergency” was transported from Midway to an area hospital. Police said there were no signs of foul play and those aboard the aircraft were cooperating with authorities. Chicago Fire Department spokesman Larry Langford said the man experienced cardiac arrest and was taken to a hospital from a hangar operated by Atlantic Aviation at Midway, away from the main terminal, where private planes land. Atlantic didn’t return a message Sunday.

The rapper, who was named top new artist at the 2019 Billboard Music Awards in May, lived in the Chicago suburb of Homewood where he stood out as a musician early on.

Juice WRLD turned 21 only days earlier. He was only two years out of high school.

Like a good number of young hip-hop performers, Juice WRLD blended rapping and singing on his songs, sometimes mumbling words and focusing more on melody. His hit “Lucid Dreams,” which heavily samples Sting’s 1993 song “Shape of My Heart,” was a six-times platinum success and reached No. 2 on the all-genre Hot 100 chart. It reached No. 1 on Billboard’s Hot R&B/Hip-Hop Songs and Hot Rap Songs charts.

“I was very impressed by what he put on top of (my version),” Sting told The Associated Press this year. “It’s a really good song.”

Juice WRLD got his start on the music sharing platform SoundCloud before signing to a record label and finding major success on streaming services. His major-label debut album, “Goodbye & Good Riddance,” was a platinum success. It featured the hit “All Girls Are the Same,” which gained platinum status, alongside seven more platinum hits including “Armed & Dangerous,” “Robbery,” “Fine China” and “Legends,” which features the lyrics: “What’s the 27 Club?/We ain’t making it past 21.”

He’s had 10 songs reach gold status and also had success with 2018’s “Wrld on Drugs,” a collaborative album with rapper-singer-producer Future.

His second album, “Death Race for Love,” debuted on top of the Billboard charts this year and his most recent single, “Bandit” with YoungBoy Never Broke Again, reached the Top 10 of the pop charts in October.

Juice WRLD graduated in 2017 from Homewood-Flossmoor Community High School outside Chicago, where he gained a reputation as a talented musician among the nearly 3,000 students. School officials said Sunday that they would offer counseling services for students affected by his death.

“He is remembered by his teachers and staff as being a brilliant and creative student. Jared was extraordinarily talented in music and played many instruments,” said school spokeswoman Jodi Bryant. “He was a caring and outgoing person who always tried to reach out to others while at the same time he was introspective and had a great sense of humor.”

Fekadu reported from New York.

Father: Navy victim shot standing watch fresh from boot camp

By RUSS BYNUM Associated Press

SAVANNAH, Ga. (AP) — Fresh out of boot camp, Cameron Walters proudly told his father in Georgia during their nightly video chat that he had passed the exam qualifying him to stand watch and help secure building entrances at Naval Air Station Pensacola in Florida.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 42 of 57

When news broke the next morning of shots being fired on the base, Shane Walters called his son's cellphone repeatedly throughout the day. There was no answer. The 21-year-old airmen apprentice from Richmond Hill had been killed along with two other sailors by a gunman authorities later identified as a military aviation student from Saudi Arabia.

Shane Walters told The Associated Press on Sunday that his son died standing watch at the classroom building where the shooter opened fire.

"He was just looking forward to getting his wings and being a part of flying and whatever job they gave him," Shane Walters said. "He just wanted to earn his wings. He was looking so forward to having those wings pinned on his chest."

The attack also killed 23-year-old Joshua Watson, a recent graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy from Enterprise, Alabama, and 19-year-old Airman Mohammed Sameh Haitham of St. Petersburg, Florida. Eight others were wounded.

On Sunday afternoon, the caskets of the three fallen sailors were escorted aboard an aircraft, bound for Dover, Delaware. A military mortuary is based there. Funeral plans were not immediately known.

"Friday's senseless act of violence took these young men from us, physically wounded eight others and the hearts of countless more," said Rear Admiral Gary A. Mayes, the Navy's Southeast Region commander, during a Sunday news conference in Pensacola. "On behalf of the entire Navy, I extend my sincere and deepest sympathies to the families of the sailors whose lives were taken during this heinous act."

Authorities said two sheriff's deputies were wounded and eight others were hurt before a deputy killed the gunman, identified as 2nd Lt. Mohammed Alshamrani of the Royal Saudi Air Force.

Haitham's stepmother, Brenda Delgado Haitham, said Sunday that the family was still trying to come to grips with the tragedy.

"I continue to speak about him in present tense because it still hasn't sunk in that he's no longer here," she said in a statement to the AP.

Brenda Haitham said her stepson, whom she called "Mo," had been a star high school athlete who ran track and played basketball.

"After he graduated high school, he told his father and I that he was following his mother's footsteps and join the Navy," she said. "... Our hearts are broken, and he will be missed by many."

Watson's brother posted on Facebook that his sibling "died a hero" after giving first responders information on the shooter's location though he was mortally wounded by gunfire.

"After being shot multiple times he made it outside and told the first response team where the shooter was and those details were invaluable," Adam Watson wrote.

The Navy praised all three flight school students for their "exceptional heroism and bravery in the face of evil."

"When confronted, they didn't run from danger; they ran towards it and saved lives," Capt. Tim Kinsella, the commanding officer of Naval Air Station Pensacola, said in a statement Saturday.

Cameron Walters had just arrived in Pensacola after graduating from boot camp in Great Lakes, Illinois, on Nov. 22, the sailor's father said. Before enlisting, Walters had worked for a gun manufacturer headquartered near his hometown of Richmond Hill, about 20 miles (32 kilometers) outside of Savannah.

Walters joined the Navy, in part, because his father had served.

"Partly to follow in his dad's footsteps, to get a better purpose in life," Shane Walters said. "He was just that kind of kid."

He described his son as athletic, playing sports including basketball and soccer. Not surprising for a young man living near the coast, Cameron Walters also loved boating and fishing.

When Walters' birthday came around in June, his father said, the young man liked to spread out the celebration for as much as two weeks surrounding the actual day.

"When it came close to his birthday, he didn't think he should have to take out the trash. And it's not even his birthday yet," Shane Walters said. "We're supposed to have a cake every night. Things like that."

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 43 of 57

AP writers Tamra Lush in St. Petersburg, Florida, and Bobby Caina Calvan in Tallahassee, Florida, contributed to this story.

Schumer: Fed workers to get 12 weeks of paid parental leave

NEW YORK (AP) — The Senate's top Democrat said Sunday that congressional leaders have reached a "real breakthrough" deal to give 12 weeks of paid parental leave to millions of federal workers as part of the annual defense policy bill.

Sen. Charles Schumer said the agreement over the National Defense Authorization Act was reached late Friday night and a vote is expected later this week. The establishment of President Donald Trump's proposed Space Force is also included in the bill.

Trump administration officials have said Space Force is urgently needed to preserve U.S. dominance in space. A proposal from the Pentagon released earlier this year suggested the service would have about 15,000 personnel and begin in 2020. Space Force would reside within the Air Force, similar to how the Marine Corps exists within the Navy.

The must-pass bill includes a provision that would allow more than 2 million federal government workers to take paid leave to care for a new baby or for an adopted child. Parental leave was a priority for high-ranking Democrats, including Schumer and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

The provision is a victory for federal workers, who would face benefit cuts under the Trump administration's budget submission. Under the current federal law, civilian workers are eligible for 12 weeks of unpaid leave.

"It's a real breakthrough for families," Schumer said, adding that Democrats hope the move will encourage more private employers to offer similar parental leave benefits.

"Not only does it mean that federal employees will get what they're entitled to, the federal government is a pacesetter," Schumer added. "If you work for a private company, this means the pressure on your employer will be much greater to give you parental leave as well when the blessed event of a child comes around, or god forbid your child is really sick and needs serious care."

Ivanka Trump, the president's daughter and adviser, said Friday that such a provision would "mark a HUGE step forward towards making paid leave a reality for all Americans."

Banana, duct tape add up to \$150,000 at Art Basel Miami

By KELLI KENNEDY Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — 3D-printed cocktails, a traffic jam sculpture made of hundreds of tons of sand and more celebrity sightings than a Kardashian Christmas party were all part of over-the-top festivities during the week of Art Basel Miami, but it was a banana that stole the show.

The most talked-about artwork of the week was titled "Comedian" — a spotty banana duct-taped to a wall by artist Maurizio Cattelan.

According to artnet News, two pieces quickly sold for \$120,000. The Paris-based Perrotin gallery raised the price to \$150,000 for the third piece, which will be sold to a museum. The bananas were bought at a local grocery store. No instructions were given on what to do as the banana ages.

The gallery did not respond to several emails from The Associated Press seeking comment.

On Saturday, David Datuna removed the banana from the wall, unpeeled it and took a bite as a large crowd documented it with their phones.

"I respect Maurizio but it's art performance. Hungry artist," he said.

"You have more? \$150,000," he joked.

On Friday night, art collector Wayne Boich hosted a lavish dinner at his home that included Dan Marino, Dwyane Wade and Chris Bosh. The after-party crowd, including Floyd Mayweather, Hannah Bronfman, and Alesso, watched a performance by Wyclef Jean, who did a throwback to the Fugees with "Ready or Not," and later brought dozens of girls onstage to dance with him before passing the mic to "Country Grammar" singer Nelly. Rapper 2 Chainz closed out the night.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 44 of 57

Across town, rapper Travis Scott didn't take the stage until 3:30 a.m. at a sold-out performance at 24-hour nightclub E11even. Scott stood on top of the DJ booth tossing dollar bills into the crowd and yelling at partygoers to put away their phones and enjoy the moment.

The city of Miami Beach commissioned a million-dollar traffic jam by artist Leandro Erlich. It took 330 tons (300 metric tons) of sand to construct 66 life-sized sculptures of cars and trucks stuck in an imaginary traffic jam on the oceanfront of popular Lincoln Road. The installation alludes to Florida's fragile position in the large universal canvas, touching on climate crisis and rising sea levels.

The Shore Club South Beach also focused on global warming where a 36-foot-long (11-meter-long) floating ice sculpture inside the pool spelled out the words "HOW DARE YOU." The piece, titled "Climate Meltdown" by artist Rubem Robierb, lasted approximately eight hours.

Photographer David Yarrow's picture of real-life "Wolf of Wall Street" Jordan Belfort sold for \$200,000. The piece was signed by director Martin Scorsese and Leonardo DiCaprio.

Bulleit's novel 3D-printed bar also drew a curious crowd, where guests watched a robotic arm disperse microscopic drops of liquid into drinks in a pre-set pattern. The whiskey maker has printed more than 7,800 cocktails since partnering with a robotics engineer.

On Saturday, G-Eazy performed poolside at the Maxim magazine party, surprising guests when he brought rapper Wale onstage to perform their song, "Fashion Week," together.

Haute Living hosted a party for Fat Joe's new album "Family Ties." Wearing a baby blue track suit, the rapper entertained guests including DJ Khaled, Fabolous, Jeezy and Too Short.

"We grew up in the projects and now we in a 100 million dollar house rapping about our history," he told the crowd before pulling Swizz Beatz onstage to perform.

At various clubs over the weekend, Lil Wayne, A\$AP Rocky, Rick Ross and 2 Chainz performed. Sean Penn and DiCaprio partied late night at Rockwell x 1 Oak, where Gucci Mane took the stage. Brody Jenner, Meek Mill and Too Short hung out at LIV to hear Alesso play.

And "Cats" actor Idris Elba, who performs under the name DJ Big Driis, spun tracks along with Diplo at an extremely packed club Basement on Saturday night.

Watchdog expected to find Russia probe valid, despite flaws

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Justice Department's internal watchdog will release a highly anticipated report Monday that is expected to reject President Donald Trump's claims that the Russia investigation was illegitimate and tainted by political bias from FBI leaders. But it is also expected to document errors during the investigation that may animate Trump supporters.

The report, as described by people familiar with its findings, is expected to conclude there was an adequate basis for opening one of the most politically sensitive investigations in FBI history and one that Trump has denounced as a witch hunt. It began in secret during Trump's 2016 presidential run and was ultimately taken over by special counsel Robert Mueller.

The report comes as Trump faces an impeachment inquiry in Congress centered on his efforts to press Ukraine to investigate a political rival, Democrat Joe Biden — a probe the president also claims is politically biased.

Still, the release of Inspector General Michael Horowitz's review is unlikely to quell the partisan battles that have surrounded the Russia investigation for years. It's also not the last word: A separate internal investigation continues, overseen by Trump's attorney general, William Barr and led by a U.S. attorney, John Durham. That investigation is criminal in nature, and Republicans may look to it to uncover wrongdoing that the inspector general wasn't examining.

Trump tweeted Sunday: "I.G. report out tomorrow. That will be the big story!"

He previously has said that he was awaiting Horowitz's report but that Durham's report may be even more important.

Horowitz's report is expected to identify errors and misjudgments by some law enforcement officials,

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 45 of 57

including by an FBI lawyer suspected of altering a document related to the surveillance of a former Trump campaign aide. Those findings probably will fuel arguments by Trump and his supporters that the investigation was flawed from the start.

But the report will not endorse some of the president's theories on the investigation, including that it was a baseless "witch hunt" or that he was targeted by an Obama administration Justice Department desperate to see Republican Trump lose to Democrat Hillary Clinton in 2016.

It also is not expected to undo Mueller's findings or call into question his conclusion that Russia interfered in that election in order to benefit the Trump campaign and that Russians had repeated contacts with Trump associates.

Some of the findings were described to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity by people who were not authorized to discuss a draft of the report before its release. The AP has not viewed a copy of the document.

It is unclear how Barr, a strong defender of Trump, will respond to Horowitz's findings. He has told Congress that he believed "spying" on the Trump campaign did occur and has raised public questions about whether the counterintelligence investigation was done correctly.

The FBI opened its investigation in July 2016 after receiving information from an Australian diplomat that a Trump campaign adviser, George Papadopoulos, had been told before it was publicly known that Russia had dirt on the Clinton campaign in the form of thousands of stolen emails.

By that point, the Democratic National Committee had been hacked, an act that a private security firm — and ultimately U.S. intelligence agencies — attributed to Russia. Prosecutors allege that Papadopoulos learned about the stolen emails from a Maltese professor named Joseph Mifsud. Papadopoulos pleaded guilty to lying to the FBI about that interaction.

The investigation was taken over in May 2017 by Mueller, who charged six Trump associates with various crimes as well as 25 Russians accused of interfering in the election either through hacking or a social media disinformation campaign. Mueller did not find sufficient evidence to charge a criminal conspiracy between the Trump campaign and Russia.

He examined multiple episodes in which Trump sought to seize control of the investigation, including by firing James Comey as FBI director, but declined to decide on whether Trump had illegally obstructed justice.

The inspector general's investigation began in early 2018. It focuses in part on the FBI's surveillance of a former Trump campaign adviser, Carter Page. The FBI applied in the fall of 2016 for a warrant from the secretive Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court to monitor Page's communications, with officials expressing concern that he may have been targeted for recruitment by the Russian government.

Page was never charged and has denied any wrongdoing.

Sen. Lindsey Graham, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Committee, which is scheduled to hear testimony from Horowitz on Wednesday, said he expected the report would be "damning" about the process of obtaining the warrant.

"I'm looking for evidence of whether or not they manipulated the facts to get the warrant," Graham, R-S.C., said on Fox News Channel's "Sunday Morning Futures."

The warrant was renewed several times, including during the Trump administration. Republicans have attacked the procedures because the application relied in part on information gathered by an ex-British intelligence operative, Christopher Steele, whose opposition research into the Trump campaign's connections to Russia was funded by Democrats and the Clinton campaign.

In pursuing the warrant, the Justice Department referred to Steele as "reliable" from previous dealings with him. Though officials told the court that they suspected the research was aimed at discrediting the Trump campaign, they did not reveal that the work had been paid for by Democrats, according to documents released last year.

Steele's research was compiled into a dossier that was provided to the FBI after it had already opened its investigation.

The report also examined the interactions that senior Justice Department lawyer Bruce Ohr had with Steele, whom he had met years earlier through a shared professional interest in countering Russian orga-

nized crime. Ohr passed along to the FBI information that he had received from Steele but did not alert his Justice Department bosses to those conversations.

Ohr has since been a regular target of Trump's ire, in part because his wife worked as a contractor for Fusion GPS, the political research firm that hired Steele for the investigation.

This is the latest in a series of reports that Horowitz, a former federal prosecutor and an Obama appointee to the watchdog role, has released on FBI actions in politically charged investigations.

Last year, he criticized Comey for a news conference announcing the conclusion of the Clinton email investigation, and for then alerting Congress months later that the probe had been effectively reopened. In that report, too, Horowitz did not find that Comey's actions had been guided by partisan bias.

Climate scientists try to cut their own carbon footprints

By **SETH BORENSTEIN AP Science Writer**

For years, Kim Cobb was the Indiana Jones of climate science. The Georgia Tech professor flew to the caves of Borneo to study ancient and current climate conditions. She jetted to a remote South Pacific island to see the effects of warming on coral.

Add to that flights to Paris, Rome, Vancouver and elsewhere. All told, in the last three years, she's flown 29 times to study, meet or talk about global warming.

Then Cobb thought about how much her personal actions were contributing to the climate crisis, so she created a spreadsheet. She found that those flights added more than 73,000 pounds of heat-trapping carbon to the air.

Now she is about to ground herself, and she is not alone. Some climate scientists and activists are limiting their flying, their consumption of meat and their overall carbon footprints to avoid adding to the global warming they study. Cobb will fly just once next year, to attend a massive international science meeting in Chile.

"People want to be part of the solution," she said. "Especially when they spent their whole lives with their noses stuck up against" data showing the problem.

The issue divides climate scientists and activists and plays out on social media. Texas Tech's Katharine Hayhoe, an atmospheric scientist who flies once a month, often to talk to climate doubters in the evangelical Christian movement, was blasted on Twitter because she keeps flying.

Hayhoe and other still-flying scientists note that aviation is only 3% of global carbon emissions.

Jonathan Foley, executive director of the climate solutions think-tank Project Drawdown, limits his airline trips but will not stop flying because, he says, he must meet with donors to keep his organization alive. He calls flight shaming "the climate movement eating its own."

Over the next couple of weeks, climate scientists and environmental advocates will fly across the globe. Some will be jetting to Madrid for United Nations climate negotiations. Others, including Cobb, will fly to San Francisco for a major earth sciences conference, her last for a while.

"I feel real torn about that," said Indiana University's Shahzeen Attari, who studies human behavior and climate change. She calls Cobb an important climate communicator. "I don't want to clip her wings."

But Cobb and Hayhoe are judged by their audiences on how much energy they use themselves, Attari said.

Attari's research shows that audiences are turned off by scientists who use lots of energy at home. Listeners are more likely to respond to experts who use less electricity.

"It's like having an overweight doctor giving you dieting advice," Attari said. She found that scientists who fly to give talks bother people less.

In science, flying is "deeply embedded in how we do academic work," said Steven Allen, a management researcher at the University of Sheffield, who recently organized a symposium aimed at reducing flying in academia. He said the conference went well, with 60 people participating remotely from 12 countries.

Pennsylvania State University's Michael Mann, who flies but less than he used to, said moderation is key.

"I don't tell people they need to become childless, off-the-grid hermits. And I'm not one myself," Mann

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 47 of 57

said in an email. "I do tell people that individual action is PART of the solution, and that there are many things we can do in our everyday lives that save us money, make us healthier, make us feel better about ourselves AND decrease our environmental footprint. Why wouldn't we do those things?"

Mann said he gets his electricity from renewables, drives a hybrid vehicle, doesn't eat meat and has one child.

When Hayhoe flies, she makes sure to bundle in several lectures and visits into one flight, including 30 talks in Alaska in one five-day trip. She said more people come out to see a lecture than if it were given remotely, and she also learns from talking to the people at lectures.

"They need a catalyst to get to the next step and me coming could be that catalyst," Hayhoe said.

Marshall Shepherd of the University of Georgia will receive a climate communications award at the American Geophysical Union conference Wednesday in San Francisco. But he won't pick it up in person, saving 1.2 tons of carbon by not flying. He said he doesn't judge those who fly but wrote about his decision to stay grounded in hopes that people "think about choices and all of the nuances involved in these decisions."

Former Vice President Al Gore, who has long been criticized by those who reject climate science for his personal energy use, said he has installed 1,000 solar panels at his farm, eats a vegan diet and drives an electric vehicle.

"As important as it to change lightbulbs," he said in an email, "it is far more important to change the policies and laws in the nation and places where we live."

Teen activist Greta Thunberg drew attention when she took a zero-carbon sailboat across the Atlantic instead of flying.

"I'm not telling anyone else what to do or what not to do," Thunberg told The Associated Press before her return boat trip. "I want to put focus on the fact that you basically can't live sustainable today. It's practically impossible."

Cobb is trying. In 2017, she started biking to work instead of driving. She's installed solar panels, dries clothes on a line, composts and gave up meat. All these made her feel better, physically and mentally, and gave her more hope that people can do enough to curb the worst of climate change.

But when she did the math, she found "all of this stuff is very small compared to flying."

Cobb began turning down flights and offering to talk remotely. This year she passed on 11 flights, including Paris, Beijing and Sydney.

"There hasn't been a single step I have taken that has not brought me a deeper appreciation for what we're up against and what's possible," Cobb said. "This gave me a profound appreciation for how individual action connects to collective action."

But there's a cost.

Cobb was invited to be the plenary speaker wrapping up a major ocean sciences conference next year in San Diego. It's a plum role. Cobb asked organizers if she could do it remotely. They said no. She promised to do many roles for the conference from Atlanta. Conference organizers withdrew the offer.

Brooks Hanson, executive vice president of the American Geophysical Union, which runs the conference, said in an email that the group supports remote presentations whenever possible. But the wrap-up speaker position "requires in-person interactions with attendees to get the vibe of the meeting and discussions," Hanson said.

Foley said that shows the problem: "Climate scientists and activists should walk the walk. But we can only walk so far. Then you bump into other things."

Associated Press writer Ben Finley in Hampton, Va., contributed to this report. Follow Seth Borenstein on Twitter at @borenbears .

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

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

By HYUNG-JIN KIM Associated Press

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.

President Donald Trump reacted to the development by saying that North Korea "must denuclearize." "Kim Jong Un is too smart and has far too much to lose, everything actually, if he acts in a hostile way," Trump tweeted Sunday.

"North Korea, under the leadership of Kim Jong Un, has tremendous economic potential, but it must denuclearize as promised," he said.

Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, added that North Korea has a choice to make. "And we hope they make the right choice," he said in an interview Sunday on CBS' "Face the Nation."

On Saturday, 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 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

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 49 of 57

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.

North Dakota county may become US's 1st to bar new refugees

JAMES MacPHERSON Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — Reuben Panchol was forced to leave war-torn Sudan decades ago as a child, embarking on an odyssey that eventually brought him to the American Midwest and left him eternally grateful to the country that took him in.

"I am an American citizen, a North Dakotan," said Panchol, a 38-year-old father of four. "And without North Dakota, I couldn't have made it."

Panchol hopes to share his story on Monday with members of a local commission who are set to vote on whether their county will stop accepting refugees. If they vote to bar refugees, as expected, Burleigh County — home to about 95,000 people and the capital city of Bismarck — could become the first local government to do so since President Donald Trump issued an executive order making it possible.

The county postponed a vote last week when more than 100 people showed up and overflowed the commission's normal meeting space. Monday night's meeting will be held in a middle school cafeteria to accommodate public interest that Chairman Brian Bitner said is the most intense he's seen in more than a decade on the commission.

Though he declined to predict which way the commission would go, Bitner said he would vote against accepting additional refugees.

"The overwhelming public opinion is so clear to me, that I think if you vote for it, you're not going to be reelected if you choose to run again," he said.

Trump's executive order this fall came as he had already proposed cutting the number of refugees next year to the lowest level since Congress passed the Refugee Act of 1980. He declared that refugees should be resettled only in places where the state and local governments — counties — gave consent. Since then, many governors and counties around the country have declared that they would continue taking refugees.

Republican Gov. Doug Burgum said last month that North Dakota would continue accepting refugees where local jurisdictions agreed, and his spokesman said the governor saw it as a local decision. Soon after, Cass and Grand Forks counties, which are home to the state's largest city, Fargo, and third-largest

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 50 of 57

city, Grand Forks, respectively, declared they would continue taking refugees. Fargo Mayor Tim Mahoney said refugees were needed to boost the city's economy, and that 90% were fully employed within three months of resettling in his city.

But the idea was quickly opposed in more conservative Burleigh County. Among the opponents was Republican state Rep. Rick Becker, of Bismarck, an ultraconservative who took to social media to criticize the program as unrestrained and a possible drain on social service programs, schools and law enforcement, though the county said it doesn't track any costs directly related to refugees.

"This isn't about skin color," said Becker, a plastic surgeon and former gubernatorial candidate. "In the past, nobody had any say whatsoever. Now we have something that should have been in place decades ago.

"Now, if they want to accept them, they can, and if they don't want to they shouldn't," he said.

Bismarck Mayor Steve Bakken said the city government has no say in the matter, but he sides with those who want to stop taking in more refugees.

"Right now it's a blank check and that equates into a lot of questions," Bakken said of the number of refugees that could be placed in the area. "We have burgeoning school enrollment, veterans' needs, homeless needs, and Native American needs.

"This isn't about heartstrings, this is about purse strings," he said.

Shirley Dykshoorn, a vice president for Lutheran Social Services, which handles all of North Dakota's refugee resettlement cases, said her agency used to handle about 400 cases per year, but that number dropped to 124 in fiscal 2019, which ended in September. The program has been in existence in North Dakota since 1948.

LSS settled 24 refugees in Bismarck in fiscal 2019, after settling 22 in fiscal 2018. Dykshoorn said Burleigh County had been projected to get no more than 25 refugees annually in the coming years.

"We always look at the capacity of a community to handle these," she said.

"I'm trying to understand the basis for believing how 25 people will dramatically change the fabric of a community," she said. "What does it say to the rest of the country when a county where your capital city is located would choose not to participate?"

For decades, North Dakota considered any population gain a good thing. Its population declined by more than 21,000 between 2000 and 2007 until an oil boom sparked a rush of workers into the state. Many jobs remain unfilled even though the state has added nearly 100,000 residents in the past decade. Though many new arrivals work in the oil patch, many are also attracted to Fargo, which has a burgeoning tech industry, and Grand Forks, which is an aviation hub.

Burgum, who has said he'll seek a second term, acknowledged that Burleigh County's vote could be seen as unwelcoming in a state that has about 30,000 more jobs than takers.

"It sends a very negative signal" if Burleigh County refuses refugees, he said.

The Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service, which works with Lutheran Social Services, is one of three national organizations that is suing to block Trump's executive order. The group's president and chief executive, Krish O'Mara Vignarajah, said her organization has closely tracked the response and is aware of no other local government that has voted to reject refugees.

Panchol, the father of four, moved to North Dakota in 2001 as one of the "Lost Boys," Sudanese orphans who fled thousands of miles on foot during the civil war that ravaged his country. His path wound through Ethiopia and Kenya before he ended up in Fargo and later in Lincoln, a small community outside of Bismarck.

"I ran from bullets every day," he said. "We moved from country to country not to disturb anyone's life but to stay alive."

Since moving to the state, he has earned degrees from North Dakota State University in Fargo and the University of Mary in Bismarck. He works now at the state Department of Environmental Quality, heading its underground storage tank program, and has become enough of an Upper Midwesterner that he occasionally drops a "You betcha" into the conversation.

Panchol said he understands the reservations that people may have about new arrivals, but he believes any fear is more politically driven than reality.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 51 of 57

"Honestly, North Dakotans have been very welcoming to me and I give North Dakota credit for helping people like me better their lives," he said. "It wasn't my choice to come to North Dakota, but I'm glad I did. Big time."

Associated Press writer Doug Glass in Minneapolis contributed to this report.

America's influence, once so dominant, waning under Trump

By TIM SULLIVAN Associated Press

It's whispered in NATO meeting rooms and celebrated in China's halls of power. It's lamented in the capital cities of key U.S. allies and welcomed in the Kremlin.

Three years into Donald Trump's presidency, America's global influence is waning. In interviews with The Associated Press, diplomats, foreign officials and scholars from numerous countries describe a changing world order in which the United States has less of a central role.

And in many ways, that's just fine with the White House. Trump campaigned on an "America First" foreign policy and says a strong United States will mean a stronger world.

"The future doesn't belong to globalists," Trump told the U.N. General Assembly in September. "The future belongs to patriots."

Trump insists he's abandoning globalism for bilateral ties more beneficial to the U.S..

But there's little sign of that.

Instead, once-close allies — France, Egypt, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Mexico, Turkey, Germany and more — have quietly edged away from Washington over the past three years.

Sometimes it's not so quiet.

In a Buckingham Palace reception room during the recent NATO summit, a TV camera caught a cluster of European leaders grinning as Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau appeared to mock Trump.

"You just watched his team's jaws drop to the floor," Trudeau said, apparently speaking about his meeting with Trump, talking to a group that included the leaders of France, Britain and the Netherlands.

Trudeau quickly tried to walk back his words, telling reporters that he and Trump have a "good and constructive relationship." But the footage brought into the open the increasing divide between the United States and its allies.

This is a major change. For generations, America saw itself as the center of the world. For better or worse, most of the rest of the world has regarded the U.S. as its colossus — respecting it, fearing it, turning to it for answers.

"We are America," said Madeleine Albright, secretary of state in the Clinton administration. "We are the indispensable nation."

To be sure, America is still a global superpower. But now, the country's waning influence is profoundly redrawing the geopolitical map, opening the way for Washington's two most powerful foes — Russia and China — to extend their reach into many countries where they had long been seen with suspicion.

Because those longtime friends of Washington? Many are now looking elsewhere for alliances. Very often, they look to China or Russia.

In Islamabad, for example, where the U.S. was once seen as the only game in town, Pakistan's government now gets military aid and training from Russia and billions of dollars in investment and loans from China. In the Philippines, President Rodrigo Duterte is nurturing closer ties to Beijing despite his nervousness over its expansionism in the South China Sea. In Egypt, long one of America's closest Middle Eastern allies, Cairo now lets Russian military planes use its bases and the two countries recently held joint air force exercises. In Ukraine, which has looked to U.S. military aid for years to try to keep an expansionist Russia in check, Trump's questionable loyalty is seen as creating a dangerous vacuum.

"Once the U.S. role in Europe weakens, Russia's influence inevitably grows," Vadim Karasev, head of the Kyiv-based Institute of Global Strategies said.

Or there's France, whose friendship with America goes back to the days of George Washington. Perhaps

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 52 of 57

more than any other Western leader, French President Emmanuel Macron has made clear that Europe should look to Beijing, not Washington, when it comes to addressing global issues from trade wars to Iran's nuclear ambitions. Macron's recent trip to China was choreographed in part to convey that the European Union has little faith in Washington anymore.

Europe is on "the edge of a precipice," Macron told *The Economist* magazine in a recent interview. "What we are currently experiencing is the brain death of NATO," he said, a reference to the announced U.S. withdrawal from northern Syria.

Perhaps no U.S. ally is more worried than the Kurds, America's longtime battlefield allies. They bore the brunt of the combat as the Islamic State group was driven from the territory it held across a swath of Iraq and Syria.

"Betrayal process is officially complete," a Kurdish official said in a WhatsApp message sent to journalists after Trump's defense secretary announced U.S. troops would fully withdraw from northeastern Syria. That pullout paved the way for a Turkish offensive against Kurdish fighters and signaled to the world that U.S. may no longer be as reliable as it once was.

The Kurds weren't taken completely by surprise. Kurdish officials had been holding back -channel talks with Syria and Russia for more than a year before the announcement. The Kurds feared they would be abandoned by Washington.

China has been delighted by what it sees as the voluntary abdication of U.S. leadership, particularly on free trade and climate change.

Trump's pullout from the planned Trans-Pacific Partnership, for example, opened the way for Beijing to push ahead with its own alternative free-trade agreement.

Meanwhile, China has gone from being a climate change curmudgeon to sometimes reaping praise as a global leader on the issue.

The White House's National Security Council did not respond to requests for comment about this story.

Trump insists he is not pulling the U.S. off the world stage. He cites partnerships with other nations to fight terrorism and his administration highlights a recent high-profile raid in Syria that killed the leader of the Islamic State group.

Trump has successfully coaxed NATO allies to spend billions more on their own defense to lessen the burden on the U.S. He complains that America should not be the world's policeman or its piggy bank, and needs to get out of what he calls "endless wars."

Some former administration officials have cited Trump's business background to describe him as having a "transactional" approach to foreign policy. He has pulled out of multilateral agreements, such as the Iran nuclear deal, yet he needs international support to pressure Tehran for its regional aggression and nuclear program. He gets credit for opening dialogues with the Afghan Taliban and North Korea, although efforts to end America's longest war and get Kim Jong Un to give up his nuclear weapons have so far been unsuccessful.

He also has set about negotiating bilateral trade agreements with many countries because he says deals made by previous administrations were unfair to the U.S. He had success with South Korea, yet has not yet sealed a deal with China.

In some ways, Washington's declining influence is simply a reflection of history: America is no longer the singular economic and military giant that overshadowed nearly every other nation.

In 1945, America had the world's only nuclear weapons and produced roughly half the world's gross domestic product. Today, the U.S. has perhaps 15 percent of global GDP and even North Korea has nuclear weapons. Other countries have grown immensely. China, once a poverty-battered behemoth, has become a financial giant and an emerging superpower. Countries from Brazil to India to South Korea have become serious regional powers.

But if history plays a role, the diplomatic shifts of the Trump years are more about a White House unapologetically focused on the U.S.

Globalism was once one of Washington's few unifying themes. Now, it's an insult in the capital, and the

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 53 of 57

U.S. gets more attention for rejecting multilateral agreements, from Trump pulling out of the Asia-Pacific deal to his rejection of the Paris climate accords. The president has hosted only two state dinners and has repeatedly sought to slash the State Department budget.

Trump insists talk of American decline is nonsense.

"The Fake News Media is doing everything possible to belittle my VERY successful trip to London for NATO," Trump tweeted after the summit, adding that there was "only deep respect" for the United States.

America still has enormous power.

A 2018 Pew Research Center survey done across 25 countries found that only 25 percent of people believed the U.S. plays a less important role now than it did a decade ago.

Another of the survey's findings: People in nearly every country said they preferred a world order led by the United States.

Associated Press writers Kathy Gannon in Islamabad, Maggie Hyde in Cairo, Zeina Karam and Sarah El Deeb in Beirut, Yuras Karmanau in Kyiv, Ukraine, Sylvie Corbet in Paris, Jim Gomez in Manila, Philippines, and Deb Riechmann in Washington, contributed to this report.

Andrew Yang having fun, but Democrat's message is serious

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Of all the many Democrats running for president, Andrew Yang is having the most fun. Unburdened by expectations and unbothered by political convention, the tech entrepreneur has spent months cruising around the country, mixing his dark warnings about America's new tech economy with doses of humor and unscripted bluntness.

He has crowd-surfed, skateboarded and made memorable quips at nationally televised debates. At a new office opening in New Hampshire, he sprayed whipped cream from an aerosol can into the mouths of hyped-up supporters. Later this month in Las Vegas, he'll raise money for his campaign at a high-roller poker tournament featuring World Series of Poker champions.

The formula has made him one of this 2020 campaign's phenomenons. His outsider bid is fueled by policy, personality and technology. It's outlasted the White House campaigns this year of some governors and senators, and seems to be following the advice of a former state party chairman who said voters can tell whether candidates are enjoying themselves.

Yang's campaign may not have him on track to winning the nomination, but it may be delivering sober warnings to conventional Democrats about the kinds of voters they're leaving behind.

"You can tell if someone's like gritting their teeth or if they're genuinely happy to be there and want to talk to you," Yang said between events at two Chicago universities this past week, including a rally that drew about 1,500 people. The former state chairman's guidance, he said, has "made it easier for me to lean into just how I would naturally be as a person."

"I think if people dig into my campaign they see it's a very, very serious message," Yang said. "We are going through the greatest economic transformation in our country's history and we need to rewrite the rules of this economy to work for us. So people, I believe, are savvy enough to know that you can have a very, very serious message and actually enjoy yourself while you're delivering it."

Yang is on the bubble to qualify for this month's debate after appearing in the first five. He has hovered in the low single digits in polling along with several candidates who trail former Vice President Joe Biden, Sens. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts and Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Mayor Pete Buttigieg of South Bend, Indiana.

But what started out as overwhelmingly online fan base of predominantly male techie types has broadened its appeal. After initially self-funding, Yang raised \$10 million in the third quarter. That's more than most rivals, and he said that "we are going to beat that by a mile" in the final three months of this year.

His supporters, known as the Yang Gang, often say the other Democrats in the race to take on President Donald Trump aren't speaking to them or their fears. Many of these backers are young people who say

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 54 of 57

they don't feel aligned with either party.

Several who attended the Chicago events said they supported Sanders in 2016 but grew disillusioned after he didn't win the nomination. Many supported third-party candidates or just stayed home that Election Day, when Hillary Clinton led the ticket. And if Yang isn't the party's nominee, they may do so again in 2020.

"A lot of people aren't trusting the mainstream political candidates and pundits on TV. Yang is kind of like a breath of fresh air," said Ethan Daniels, 23, who supported Sanders in 2016 but voted for Libertarian Gary Johnson in the general election. "I think that's the reason why Trump won the election because a lot of people are kind of getting tired of the staleness of these politicians who come through, and then nothing in their life changes."

Daniels finished college with degrees in sociology and criminal justice but is still looking for a job in his field. He said he first learned about Yang on a podcast hosted by comedian and former TV host Joe Rogan; that interview has more than 4.5 million views on YouTube. Daniels likes what Yang has to say about artificial intelligence, universal basic income and video game addiction, topics he says other Democrats "don't want to talk about."

Daniels was among the supporters at Thursday's rally wearing blue caps and other items with MATH — for "Make America Think Harder" — on them. It's Yang's twist on Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan. Yang says it's aimed at getting people to blame job losses across the Rust Belt on the changing economy, rather than immigrants. He argues Americans just need to "think harder" about solutions.

Yang's parents are Taiwanese immigrants. He says he was a "nerdy Asian kid" who skipped a grade in school and was especially scrawny. He was called racial epithets and got in a lot of fights, "which I generally lost."

After college at Brown University and law school at Columbia Yang worked in the tech industry before starting a nonprofit that provided money to entrepreneurs. As he became focused on the toll of automation, he decided the best and necessary policy solution was a universal basic income. He decided that the fastest way to promote the ideas was "to run for president and win."

The "Freedom Dividends" that are now the signature policy of his campaign would provide every adult \$1,000 per month, no strings attached, through a new tax on the companies benefiting most from automation. Yang says the money would give people breathing room to pay off debt, care for a sick family member or buy things, and would improve Americans' mental health by alleviating financial stress.

His campaign has been trying it out, giving the \$1,000 monthly checks to about a dozen people. That plan, announced during a debate this fall, led to questions about whether he was trying to pay for votes.

Joy McKinney, a Republican and evangelical, said she carefully researched universal basic income and Yang's other policies before joining the "Yang Gang." The 50-year-old financial planner didn't vote in 2016 because she didn't like either Trump or Clinton. But she's been moved to tears by videos of the people receiving those first \$1,000 checks.

"Can you imagine a U.S. where everybody matters?" McKinney said. That's what's compelling to me."

Presidential campaigns have long been a stage for new personalities or novel ideas that may catch on for a time. The 2012 cycle had Herman Cain and his "9-9-9" tax plan. The 1992 campaign had Ross Perot and his debt charts. Still, Yang's durability has caught many people by surprise. That may be a product of Yang's tech and marketing savvy, said presidential historian Mike Purdy.

"I think for most people he's still an aberration," he said.

But Yang said he sees the race in terms of odds. His odds of winning, he says, are better than the odds he had of getting this far.

"We've already done the hard part," he said.

Associated Press writers Hunter Woodall in Manchester, New Hampshire, Emily Swanson in Washington and Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

The story has been corrected to reflect that it was a former state party chairman, not a state party chairman, who gave advice about voters able to tell whether candidates are enjoying themselves.

Hong Kong protests mark 6-month mark with massive rally

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Almost hidden among the throngs of demonstrators who marched in Hong Kong on Sunday was one woman who crawled, literally on hands and knees on the rough road surface — an apt metaphor for the arduous path traveled by Hong Kong's protest movement in the past six months.

Dragging bricks and empty soda cans on pieces of string behind her, the young woman elicited shouts of encouragement from fellow protesters. "Go for it!" they yelled.

"Her performance art is about the difficulty, or the repetitiveness, of demonstrations," said one of her friends, who walked alongside and identified herself by her surname, Chan. "This is really a long-term struggle."

And one that shows few, if any, signs of flagging.

Hundreds of thousands of demonstrators crammed into Hong Kong's streets, their chants echoing off high-rises, in a mass show of support for the protest movement entering its seventh month.

Chanting "Fight for freedom" and "Stand with Hong Kong," the 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). It was one of the biggest rallies in months, and remarkably peaceful.

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." Organizers said 800,000 people participated, while police had no immediate estimate.

The demonstrator who crawled part of the route wouldn't give her name. But her protest turned heads, gave pause for thought and raised the question: How much longer can Hong Kong keep up its push to preserve its freedoms that make it unique among China's cities?

She offered this cryptic response.

"We have too much burden, but perhaps we have enough hope to make us go further," she said.

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 months of sustained protests.

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 mass 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 anti-government campaign, 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.

Violence was limited, with a bank vandalized and police reporting that gasoline bombs were thrown outside Hong Kong's High Court.

Rally organizer Eric Lai had 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.

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 56 of 57

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."

Associated Press videojournalist Katie Tam contributed to this report.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Monday, Dec. 9, the 343rd day of 2019. There are 22 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 9, 1990, Solidarity founder Lech Walesa (lek vah-WEN'-sah) won Poland's presidential runoff by a landslide.

On this date:

In 1608, English poet John Milton was born in London.

In 1911, an explosion inside the Cross Mountain coal mine near Briceville, Tennessee, killed 84 workers. (Five were rescued.)

In 1940, British troops opened their first major offensive in North Africa during World War II.

In 1958, the anti-communist John Birch Society was formed in Indianapolis.

In 1960, the Domino's Pizza chain had its beginnings as brothers Tom and James Monaghan started operating a pizzeria in Ypsilanti, Mich.

In 1962, the Petrified Forest in Arizona was designated a national park.

In 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed a \$2.3 billion seasonal loan-authorization that officials of New York City and State said would prevent a city default.

In 1984, the five-day-old hijacking of a Kuwaiti jetliner that claimed the lives of two Americans ended as Iranian security men seized control of the plane, which was parked at Tehran airport.

In 1987, the first Palestinian intefadeh, or uprising, began as riots broke out in Gaza and spread to the West Bank, triggering a strong Israeli response.

In 1992, Britain's Prince Charles and Princess Diana announced their separation. (The couple's divorce became final in Aug. 1996.)

In 2000, the U-S Supreme Court ordered a temporary halt in the Florida vote count on which Al Gore pinned his best hopes of winning the White House.

In 2013, scientists revealed that NASA's Curiosity rover had uncovered signs of an ancient freshwater lake on Mars.

Ten years ago: Five young American Muslims were arrested in Pakistan over possible links to terrorism. Iran claimed that a newly-built U.N. station to detect nuclear explosions was built near its border to give the West a post to spy on the country. Former Costa Rican President Rodrigo Carazo Odio, 82, died in San Juan. Actor Gene Barry, 90, died in Woodland Hills, California.

Five years ago: U.S. Senate investigators concluded the United States had brutalized scores of terror suspects with interrogation tactics that turned secret CIA prisons into chambers of suffering and did

Groton Daily Independent

Monday, Dec. 9, 2019 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 161 ~ 57 of 57

nothing to make Americans safer after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. Britain's Prince William and his wife, Kate, paid a solemn, rain-drenched visit to the National Sept. 11 Memorial and Museum as they wrapped up their first visit to New York. Mary Ann Mobley Collins, 77, a former Miss America and actress, died in Beverly Hills, California.

One year ago: A massive storm brought snow, sleet and freezing rain across a wide swath of the South, cutting power to hundreds of thousands. Melvin Dummar, the former Utah gas station owner who claimed that billionaire Howard Hughes had left him \$156 million for rescuing him on a desert road, died in Nevada at the age of 74; courts had determined that he lied, and that the will in which he was named as a beneficiary was a fake.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Kirk Douglas is 103. Actor-writer Buck Henry is 89. Actress Dame Judi Dench is 85. Actor Beau Bridges is 78. Football Hall of Famer Dick Butkus is 77. Comedian-songwriter Neil Innes is 75. Actor Michael Nouri is 74. Former Sen. Thomas Daschle, D-S.D., is 72. World Golf Hall of Famer Tom Kite is 70. Singer Joan Armatrading is 69. Actor Michael Dorn is 67. Actor John Malkovich is 66. Country singer Sylvia is 63. Singer Donny Osmond is 62. Rock musician Nick Seymour (Crowded House) is 61. Comedian Mario Cantone is 60. Actor David Anthony Higgins is 58. Actor Joe Lando is 58. Actress Felicity Huffman is 57. Empress Masako of Japan is 56. Country musician Jerry Hughes (Yankee Grey) is 54. Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, D-N.Y., is 53. Rock singer-musician Thomas Flowers (Oleander) is 52. Rock musician Brian Bell (Weezer) is 51. Rock singer-musician Jakob Dylan (Wallflowers) is 50. TV personality-businessperson Lori Greiner (TV: "Shark Tank") is 50. Country musician Brian Hayes (Cole Deggs and the Lonesome) is 50. Actress Allison Smith is 50. Songwriter and former "American Idol" judge Kara DioGuardi (dee-oh-GWAHR'-dee) is 49. Country singer David Kersh is 49. Actress Reiko (RAY'-koh) Aylesworth is 47. Rock musician Tre Cool (Green Day) is 47. Rapper Canibus is 45. Actor Kevin Daniels is 43. Actor-writer-director Mark Duplass is 43. Rock musician Eric Zamora (Save Ferris) is 43. Rock singer Imogen Heap is 42. Actor Jesse Metcalfe is 41. Actor Simon Helberg is 39. Actress Jolene Purdy is 36. Actor Joshua Sasse is 32. Actress Ashleigh Brewer is 29. Olympic gold and silver medal gymnast McKayla Maroney is 24.

Thought for Today: "The real question is not whether machines think but whether men do. The mystery which surrounds a thinking machine already surrounds a thinking man." — B.F. Skinner, American behaviorist (1904-1990).

Copyright 2019, The Associated Press. All rights reserved.