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“WE SPEND PRECIOUS HOURS
FEARING THE INEVITABLE.
IT WOULD BE WISE TO USE
THAT TIME ADORING OUR
FAMILIES, CHERISHING
OUR FRIENDS AND
LIVING OUR LIVES.”
-MAYA ANGELOU

Thursday, December 19, 2019

Boys Basketball hosts Redfield - JV at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game

Friday, December 20, 2019

Debate at Brookings High School (Brookings Bell Tournament)

End of Second Quarter

Elementary Christmas Concert at 1 p.m. at GHS Gym

School Dismisses for Christmas Vacation at 2 p.m.

Girls Basketball at Redfield

Combined 7th/8th Grade game 5 p.m.

Junior varsity game at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game

Saturday, December 21, 2019

Debate at Brookings High School (Brookings Bell Tournament) Brookings Bell

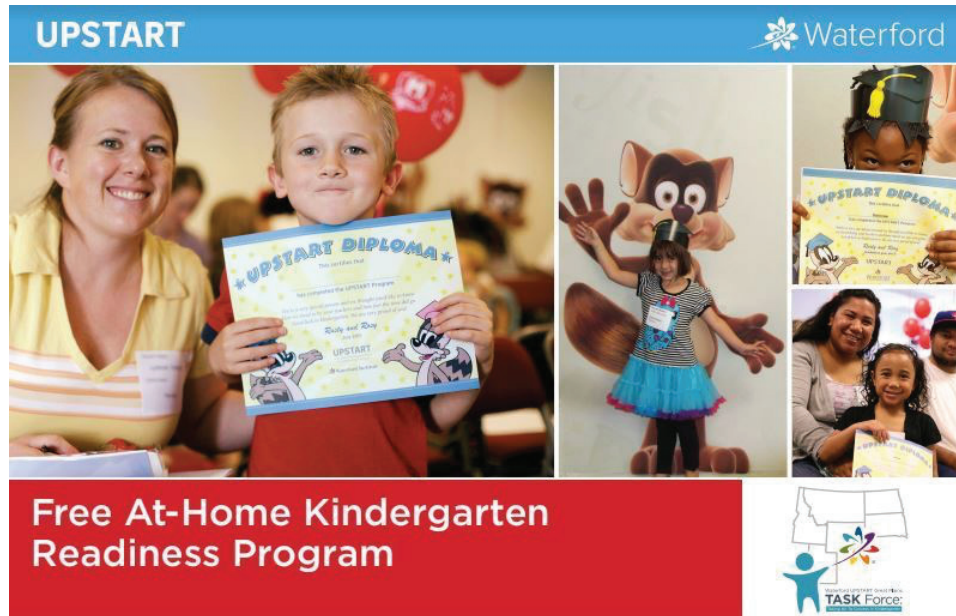
9:00am: Wrestling: Varsity Tournament at Madison

10:00am: Wrestling: Boys 7th/8th Tournament at Watertown HS Arena

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

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

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UPSTART Waterford

Free At-Home Kindergarten Readiness Program

Waterford UPSTART logo with a stylized figure and the text 'TASK Force'.

Kindergarten Readiness Program by Joe Schwan

Families in the Groton Area School District are eligible to participate in a no-cost Kindergarten Readiness program. This unique opportunity for South Dakota families allows for participation in the Waterford UPSTART program to support home-based kindergarten readiness delivered via technology.

This program, sponsored by a US Department of Education grant, is free of charge to families. This grant is focused on providing services to 250 children in the 2020-2021 school year.

To be eligible, children must have a birth date between 9/16/2015 and 9/15/2016. Families can register for Waterford UPSTART directly by completing the pre-registration form online at www.waterfordupstart.org or by calling 1-888-982-9898.

Through involvement in the program, families will receive

- Research-based, award-winning instruction delivered to each child for 15-20 minutes daily
- Weekly family support through a family education liaison to encourage the family through literacy knowledge, preparation for supporting a school-age child, and usage tracking.
- All necessary hardware, software, and infrastructure for each family (including a laptop computer for each family, software, and internet when needed).
- Software licenses for all children in the home, including those who are not participating in the program directly, but may require additional reading, math, and science support.

Click on the following link for more information: https://core-docs.s3.amazonaws.com/documents/asset/uploaded_file/544095/EIR-upstart-Flyer_rev-2019_-_Copy.pdf

It's Boys' Basketball Action on GDILIVE.COM



**Redfield
Pheasants VS**



Groton Area Tigers

8:00 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 19, 2019

Groton Area Arena

Today's Broadcast Sponsors Are
Allied Climate Professionals
Blocker Construction
Groton Dairy Queen
Jark Real Estate
John Sieh Agency
Milbrandt Enterprises
Tyson DeHoet Trucking

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The Life of Harry Pharis, Jr.

Memorial services for Harry "Sonny" Pharis, Jr., 81, of Groton will be 10:30 a.m., Monday, December 23rd at the Groton United Methodist Church. Rev. Brandon Dunham will officiate. Inurnment will follow at a later date in Union Cemetery under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Visitation will be held at the church on Sunday, Dec. 22, from 5-7 p.m. with a prayer service at 7:00 p.m.

Harry passed away Saturday, December 14, 2019 at Avera St. Lukes Hospital.

Henry Harrison Pharis, Jr. was born on June 16, 1938 in Aberdeen, SD to Henry and Evelyn (Bonde) Pharis.

Harry attended Putney Grade School and graduated from Groton High School in 1956. On October 26, 1958, he was united in marriage to Gloria Bourassa, and together they were blessed with five children. Harry farmed near Putney his entire life, eventually being joined by his son, Kevin.



Harry was a member of the United Methodist Church in Groton. He served on many boards including the Groton School, Putney Township and Putney Farmers Elevator, SD Farm Bureau, and the Minneapolis Grain Exchange. Harry's hobbies included snowmobiling, fishing, hunting, watching football and cooking. He was an avid gardener who loved to share his produce with others. He enjoyed going to casinos and hosting poker night with his friends. Grandpa Harry took great pride in watching his grandchildren in all of their activities.

Harry will be forever loved and greatly missed by his wife of 61 years, his children: Kim (Craig) Weber, Karla Pasteur, Kelli (Lars) Hanson, Kami (Tom) Lipp, Kevin (Kara) Pharis, 17 grandchildren, 12 great-grandchildren, a special nephew, Cory (Becky) Barber, several other nieces and nephews and his aunt, Nita Geranen.

Preceding him in death were his parents, Henry and Evelyn, and siblings Roland "Bud" Pharis, Mary Lou Swinter, Charlotte (Eugene) Barber, and Larry Pharis.

Urnbearers will be his grandsons: Jeremy Weber, Eric Lipp, Cody Hanson, Dylan Hanson, Reilly Ell, Kyler Ell, Kale Pharis, Pierce Kettering and Henry Pharis, III.

Honorary Urnbearers will be Rich Bures, Glenn Cooper, Doug Craig, Richard Kolker, Jack Oliver, Jim Oliver, Dr. Tom Reynolds, Wayne Simon, Marc Sippel, Roger Solaas, Sherman Solaas, Rich Squire, and Jim Stephenson.

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The gift that keeps
on giving and
saving you money!

Bahr Spray Foam
605/380-2931
www.bahrsprayfoam.net

 Bahr Spray Foam

We also can raise
concrete with foam.
100% warranty



**Merry Christmas
from your home
away from home!**

Base Kamp Lodge

**Your Premier Destination
Lodge in Groton
www.basekamlodge.com**

Est. 2015 Groton, SD

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THIS
SEASON,
LET HIM BE
BORN INSIDE
YOUR HEART

*Merry Christmas from BK Custom T's & More
bkcustomsd.com*

Clown Around Daycare

is on track in wishing everyone a very
Merry Christmas!



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Today



Mostly Cloudy

High: 26 °F

Tonight



Mostly Cloudy

Low: 5 °F

Friday



Mostly Sunny

High: 23 °F

Friday
Night



Partly Cloudy

Low: 17 °F

Saturday



Partly Sunny

High: 35 °F

The graphic features three horizontal text boxes on a textured, golden-brown background. Each box is preceded by a circular icon. The first box has a sun behind a cloud icon and contains the text: "Today: Considerable Cloudiness. Highs 22-42°F. (mild west, cold east)". The second box has a blue circle with the word "FOG" in white and contains the text: "Tonight: Partly Cloudy. Lows 7-23°F. (fog possible)". The third box has a sun behind a cloud icon and contains the text: "Friday: Partly Cloudy. Highs 21-42°F. (mild west, cold east)".

ISSUED: 5:39 AM - Thursday, December 19, 2019, National Weather Service, Aberdeen SD

The next couple of days will continue the tranquil pattern across the region. It will be mild west, but colder in the east. Some fog is possible tonight and Friday morning. Milder temperatures are expected for the weekend.

Today in Weather History

December 19, 1968: Snow and near-blizzard conditions existed across west-central Minnesota, with 5 to 7 inches of new snow reported. Heavier snowfall amounts were reported further to the southeast in Minnesota. Six inches of snow was reported in Artichoke Lake in Big Stone County.

December 19, 1990: Snow began to fall over the northwest part of Minnesota by early afternoon on the 19th, and fell heavily during the night into the early afternoon of the 20th, spreading over the entire northern 2/3 of the state and into some of northeastern South Dakota overnight. By mid-morning, a swath of snow of 6 inches or more was deposited over much of the northern half of the state, or north of a line from Elbow Lake to Garrison to near Two Harbors. In west-central Minnesota, Wheaton received 6 inches, Browns Valley received 4 inches, and Artichoke Lake received 3 inches. In South Dakota, Webster reported 8 inches, Britton reported 7 inches, Sisseton reported 5 inches, and Aberdeen reported 4 inches.

1777 - The Continental Army moved into encampment at Valley Forge amidst stormy winds and piercing cold. A relatively moderate winter followed. (David Ludlum)

1924 - The Riverside Ranger Station in Yellowstone Park, WY, reported a low of 59 degrees below zero, a December record for the U.S. (David Ludlum) (The Weather Channel)

1957 - A tornado, 200 yards in width, killed two persons along its 15-mile path from near Waldo to near Bueana Vista in southwestern Arkansas. People from one house were carried 250 yards, and cars were said to have been carried 600 yards. (The Weather Channel)

1967 - A record 83 inches of snow covered the ground at Flagstaff, AZ. The heavy snows inflicted great hardships on reservations. (David Ludlum)

1987 - Thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds in eastern Texas and the Lower Mississippi Valley. Thunderstorms produced wind gusts to 90 mph at Venus TX and Providence LA. Rain prevailed from the Southern Plains to the Middle Mississippi Valley. Small stream flooding was reported around Columbia MO. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Low pressure and a trailing cold front in the central U.S. brought snow and high winds to parts of the Rocky Mountain Region. Winds in Colorado gusted to 67 mph at La Junta. Thunderstorms along the same cold front produced wind gusts to 65 mph at Kansas City MO. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - High winds and heavy snow plagued the northern and central Rockies. Snowfall totals in Montana ranged up to 12 inches at Lincoln, and wind gusts in Colorado reached 97 mph at Squaw Mountain. Twelve cities in the north central U.S. reported record low temperatures for the date, including Dickinson ND with a reading of 26 degrees below zero. Bismarck ND was the cold spot in the nation with a morning low of 35 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2008 - A snow and ice storm on December 19 affected parts of the U.S. Midwest. Over 220,000 homes and businesses across Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio were left without electric services. No fatalities were reported (Reuters).

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 27 °F at 2:58 PM

Low Temp: 7 °F at 3:24 AM

Wind: 26 mph at 10:53 AM

Day Rain: 0.00

Record High: 57° in 1893

Record Low: -29° in 1916

Average High: 24°F

Average Low: 5°F

Average Precip in Dec.: 0.30

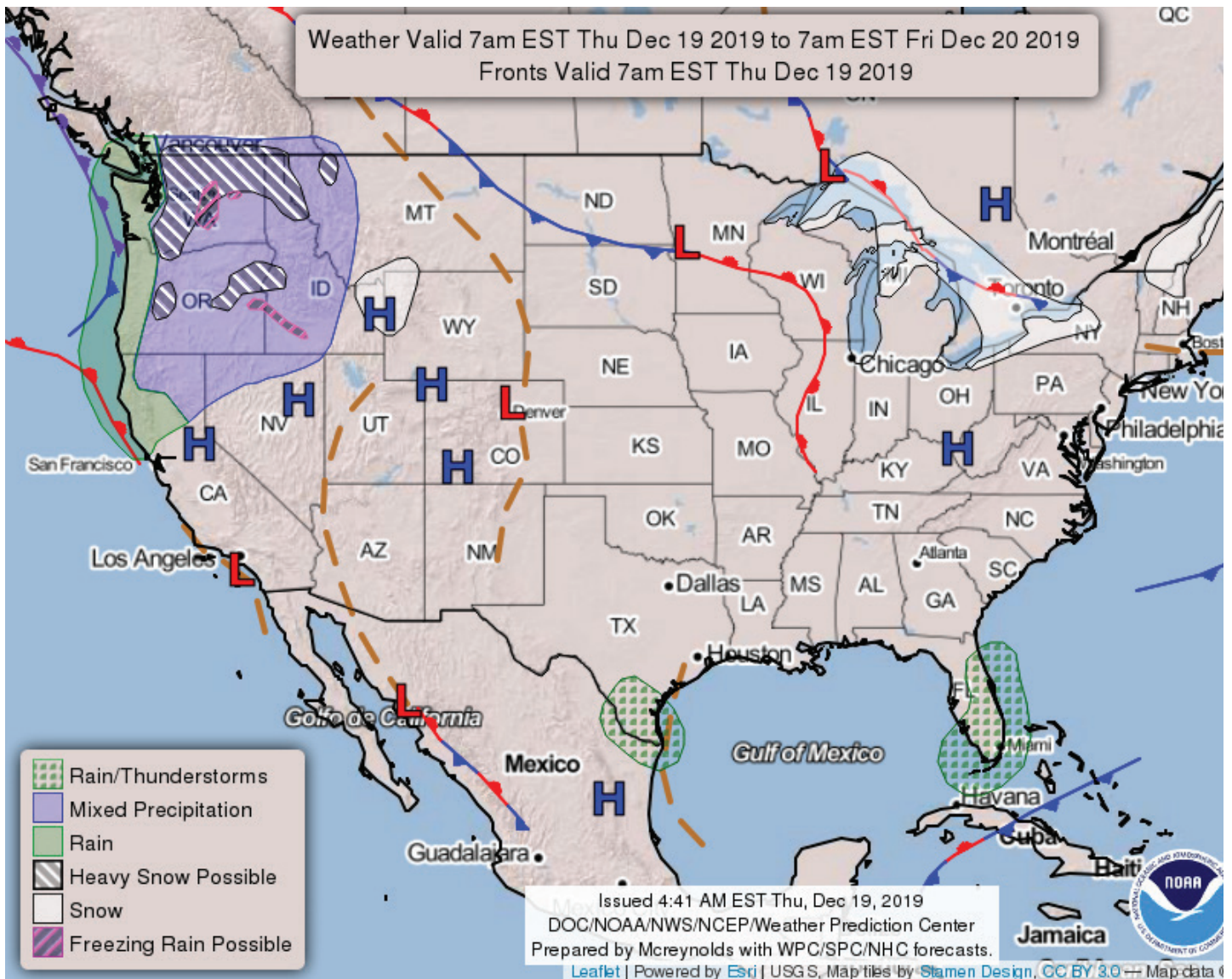
Precip to date in Dec.: 0.11

Average Precip to date: 21.50

Precip Year to Date: 28.06

Sunset Tonight: 4:52 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:10 a.m.



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NO MISTAKE

Walter came home from Sunday school with a question all over his face. "Mom," he asked, "did the shepherds have washing machines where they kept their sheep?"

"Shepherds? Washing machines?" After a moment she said, "No, darling, they did not have washing machines. Why do you ask?"

"Well, Mrs. Mathis was reading the story of the birth of Jesus and she said, 'While shepherds washed their socks that night...' and I didn't understand what was going on."

While we often think of the shepherds in the field that night, the glory that appeared with the angel and the fear that gripped them, we seldom connect the shepherds in that field with the Good Shepherd.

Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd" twice in John's Gospel. In those statements, he summarized all of the prophetic images of His role as prophet in the Old Testament. This declaration is a claim to His divinity as revealed in the Old Testament and focuses on His love, protection, and guidance of us – His lambs – in the New Testament.

But there is more. Not only is He our Shepherd but He chose to identify Himself as the "good shepherd" – and good is a term that carries with it nobility. It stands in sharp contrast to shepherds who were hired hands who worked and cared only for their own self-interests.

Prayer: We thank You, Lord, for loving us, for being our Good Shepherd and for laying down Your life for us. May we always follow You, our "Good Shepherd!" In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Luke 2:8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

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2019 Groton SD Community Events

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

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

- Bingo: every Wednesday at the Legion Post #39

2020 Groton SD Community Events

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

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press

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

Dakota Cash

10-15-24-31-32

(ten, fifteen, twenty-four, thirty-one, thirty-two)

Estimated jackpot: \$406,000

Lotto America

01-04-17-18-30, Star Ball: 1, ASB: 4

(one, four, seventeen, eighteen, thirty; Star Ball: one; ASB: four)

Estimated jackpot: \$6.12 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$40 million

Powerball

14-18-26-39-68, Powerball: 9, Power Play: 2

(fourteen, eighteen, twenty-six, thirty-nine, sixty-eight; Powerball: nine; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$160 million

Wednesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Lakota Nation Tournament=

First Round=

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 84, Lower Brule 55

Crow Creek 67, Oelrichs 42

Omaha Nation, Neb. 83, Little Wound 70

Pine Ridge 82, St. Francis Indian 64

Red Cloud 68, Crazy Horse 20

Tiospa Zina Tribal 68, Marty Indian 52

Todd County 59, Custer 54

White River 94, Santee, Neb. 34

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

Lakota Nation Invitational=

First Round=

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 46, Marty Indian 38

Crow Creek 76, Omaha Nation, Neb. 40

Custer 51, Lower Brule 40

Little Wound 76, Tiospa Zina Tribal 28

Pine Ridge 72, Crazy Horse 20

Red Cloud 71, Santee, Neb. 29

Todd County 73, St. Francis Indian 53

White River 75, Oelrichs 25

Some high school basketball scores provided by Scorestream.com, <https://scorestream.com/>

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Wilson leads S. Dakota St. over Florida Gulf Coast 75-56

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Douglas Wilson had 20 points as South Dakota State won its seventh straight home game, topping Florida Gulf Coast 75-56 on Wednesday night.

Matt Dentlinger had 15 points for South Dakota State (8-6). David Wingett added 12 points and Baylor Scheierman had seven rebounds.

Caleb Catto had 13 points for the Eagles (2-11), whose losing streak stretched to six games. Justus Rainwater added 12 points. Zach Scott had 5 points. The Eagles' leading scorer, Zach Scott, came into the matchup averaging 12 points per game. Against the Jackrabbits he was 1-for-7 from the perimeter and finished with five points.

South Dakota State plays Idaho at home on Saturday. Florida Gulf Coast plays St. Thomas (FL) at home on Saturday.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Portions of this were generated by Automated Insights, <http://www.automatedinsights.com/ap>, using data from STATS LLC, <https://www.stats.com>

3 states file lawsuit seeking to block ERA ratification

By KIM CHANDLER Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Alabama, Louisiana and South Dakota have filed a federal lawsuit seeking to block the addition of the Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, Alabama's attorney general announced Wednesday.

The lawsuit filed in federal court in Alabama comes in response to a renewed push to get the required 38th state to ratify the Equal Rights Amendment, which would ban discrimination on the basis of sex. The lawsuit notes that Congress set a 1982 deadline to get the required 38 states to agree and seeks to prevent David Ferriero, the archivist of the United States, from accepting a new ratification from a state.

"The people had seven years to consider the ERA, and they rejected it. To sneak it into the Constitution through this illegal process would undermine the very basis for our constitutional order," Alabama Attorney General Steve Marshall said in a statement announcing the lawsuit.

Marshall said Alabama, Louisiana and South Dakota are committed to equality but contended the "ERA would not promote true equality, but rather a far-left agenda." He argued the amendment could be used to strike down abortion restrictions or require boys and girls to compete against each other in sports.

The Republican Alabama attorney general also noted that five states that previously ratified the amendment later moved to rescind their support.

The amendment, submitted to the states in the early 1970s, would ban any discrimination based on sex. It fell short of the required 38 states needed to make it the 28th amendment to the Constitution.

There is an effort in Congress to try to remove the 1982 deadline.

The ERA Coalition, a group working for the ratification of the amendment, criticized the lawsuit as a "disgraceful exercise in fear mongering."

"The filing of a lawsuit by Alabama's Attorney-General to stop the Equal Rights Amendment is a shameful effort to keep women from gaining Constitutional equality," the organization said. "Alabama has filed this lawsuit to thwart the democratic process, and the will of the overwhelming majority of Americans to enshrine the fundamental right to sex equality in our Constitution. The Attorney General of Alabama has done a disservice to women, including the women of Alabama."

Virginia is among the states considering ERA ratification. Charlotte Gomer, press secretary for Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring, said their office will examine the suit to see if they need to get involved.

"It is absolutely ridiculous that in 2019 states would preemptively sue to block equality from being enshrined in the Constitution. When Virginia ratifies the ERA in the upcoming legislative session Attorney

General Herring is prepared to take any steps necessary to ensure it is added to the Constitution, as it should be," Gomer wrote in an email.

New insect pest found in Christmas greenery in South Dakota

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A new insect pest is appearing in Christmas greenery sold in South Dakota and surrounding states, South Dakota agricultural officials said Wednesday.

The pest is known as the elongate hemlock scale. South Dakota's state forester Greg Josten said the Asian insect was detected by the state's forest health team in wreaths last Christmas.

The insect was found on wreaths made of fir that were shipped in from the southern U.S., Josten said. The insect has appeared on similar greenery this year.

The South Dakota Department of Agriculture has put a stop order on the sale of the material. But wreath material does not have to be destroyed until after the holidays.

The insect made its way to New York and then to the southeastern U.S., where it has infested fir trees sheared to make wreaths. The insect will infest hemlock, fir and spruce trees and suck sap from the foliage, causing the foliage to become discolored and drop.

The pest has not been found on Christmas trees in South Dakota.

Lawmakers bemoan absence of Noem representative at meeting

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A South Dakota legislative committee set aside plans Wednesday to discuss a new proposal to punish so-called "riot boosting" after a representative for Gov. Kristi Noem didn't attend the meeting.

The Republican governor has proposed new laws that would make it illegal to "urge" or "incite" violent protests ahead of expected opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline construction. Riot-boosting laws have been a sore spot between the governor and the tribes since March, when the Legislature passed bills offered by Noem shortly before the end of the session. Parts of that law were nullified in a settlement with the American Civil Liberties Union in October.

The governor's recently proposed legislation would clarify the definition of "incitement to riot" to meet constitutional protections of free speech, according to a letter she sent lawmakers last week. The proposed legislation would define riot boosting as actions like "inciting, directing, or threatening" violence by three or more people, and exempts oral and written advocacy that does not urge violence.

Noem's spokeswoman Kristin Wileman said the governor's proposal is designed "to protect people, property, and the environment."

The State-Tribal Relations Committee invited Tribal Relations Secretary Dave Flute to answer questions on Wednesday about the proposal, but he said he had prior commitments and could not attend. Some lawmakers and tribal leaders were rankled by his absence.

Wileman said in an email that Flute "cannot be two places at once." She said the governor's staff was monitoring the committee meeting and had asked for input on the legislation from tribes, legislators, and the ACLU.

Some lawmakers were also unhappy that no one from the administration was at the meeting to discuss another proposal that would create an emergency fund for cleanup of any Keystone XL spill.

"As a Republican, I am embarrassed that the leader of my party would not give us any indication as to this bill draft," said Sen. Lance Russell, R-Hot Springs.

Separately, tribal leaders at the meeting also said they disapproved of plans to have Flute give the State of the Tribes address in January. The speech has been given by a chairman of one of the tribes for the last four years. It is intended to promote cooperation between tribal and state governments.

In November, Flute said he would be giving the address. He was chairman of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe but left that position before joining Noem's cabinet.

"I think it's important to continue that tradition" of a current chairman giving the address, said Harold Frazier, the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe chairman. "I probably won't be there if a state employee is giving that address."

Wileman said the Legislature's Executive Board requested that Flute give the address and that he has a "broad perspective on the issues facing tribes across the state." She said he has asked the tribal chairmen and presidents for input on the address.

Group asks panel to consider Native American charter schools

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A coalition of Native American advocacy groups pressed South Dakota lawmakers on Wednesday to create a network of Native American-focused charter schools.

The group offered a bill to the State-Tribal Relations Committee that would create charter schools to teach Oceti Sakowin language and culture. The network of schools would be customized to the needs and culture of Native American students and would be funded with public money. South Dakota is one of five states that does not have legislation for charter schools. The legislation would be limited to Native American-focused charter schools.

The South Dakota Education Equity Coalition said it is planning schools on the Rosebud Indian Reservation, the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation and in Rapid City. The South Dakota Education Equity Coalition was created by NDN Collective, a Native American advocacy group based in Rapid City.

New Jersey company sues North Dakota over anti-spoofing law

BISMARCK, N.D. (AP) — A New Jersey company that sells caller identification spoofing services is suing North Dakota over its new law which makes it a crime to use false caller ID information with intent to defraud or mislead.

SpoofCard LLC says the law is unconstitutional and that federal law takes precedence. SpoofCard and CEO Amanda Pietrocola are asking a federal judge to stop the state from enforcing the law that took effect in August and to award them unspecified monetary damages, according to the Bismarck Tribune.

Spoofing involves altering or disguising the number that shows up on the caller ID of the person being called.

Robocalls and spoof calls are the number one consumer complaint in North Dakota, according to Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem. He estimated those calls number in the "hundreds of thousands" in the state.

"We worked closely with the Legislature to enact a statute that we think complies with federal law and the Constitution but also enables us to try to do what we can to try to put a stop to this type of activity," Stenehjem said.

The anti-spoofing law carries a maximum punishment of a year in jail and a \$3,000 fine. A provision in the law also allows spoofing victims to file a civil lawsuit for up to \$10,000 in damages per violation.

School of Mines receives biggest gift ever, \$3.6 million

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota School of Mines & Technology has received its largest gift in the university's history. The donation of \$3.6 million from 1969 graduate Willard Goodman and his wife, Billie Kay Goodman, was made to the school's Department of Civil Engineering and doubles its annual operating budget that funds scholarships, graduate student stipends, faculty endowments, student activities and lab facilities.

Willard Goodman, who grew up in Philip and died in 2013, was appreciative of the support he received as a student from the head of the civil engineering department, Bill Coyle, a news release said.

"When he would talk about his professor, Bill Coyle, he would start by saying, 'I'm probably going to start to cry when I tell you this.' He was very open about how South Dakota Mines changed his life," Brad Johnson, vice president for development of the South Dakota Mines Foundation, said.

The Willards owned Plant and Flanged Equipment Company in Minneapolis, according to the Rapid City

Journal. South Dakota School of Mines President Jim Rankin said it was pleasing to know alumni are helping future scientists and engineers.

Police: Intoxicated woman accused of endangering child

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Police say an intoxicated woman was arrested after a 1-year-old child, improperly dressed for the cold weather, fell from a stroller she was pushing in Sioux Falls.

Someone who witnessed the incident called police Monday, saying the stroller tipped over and the child had tumbled out, police spokesman Sam Clemens said Tuesday. The boy wasn't wearing shoes or mittens in the 22-degree weather and a responding officer noted the child's exposed skin was bright red, Clemens said.

The child wasn't seriously injured, he added.

Police said a field sobriety test showed the woman had a blood alcohol content of .31, which is nearly four times the legal limit to drive. The 37-year-old Sioux Falls woman was arrested for child endangerment and possession of a controlled substance.

Officers found the woman possessed several pills but didn't have a prescription, Clemens said.

Trump ally US Rep. Mark Meadows won't seek reelection

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Republican congressman Mark Meadows, a top ally to President Donald Trump, said Thursday that he won't seek reelection.

His announcement comes just a day after the U.S. House voted to impeach Trump on charges that he abused his power and obstructed Congress. In a statement, the North Carolina congressman said he struggled with the decision and came to it after discussion with his family.

"My work with President Trump and his administration is only beginning. This President has accomplished incredible results for the country in just three years, and I'm fully committed to staying in the fight with him and his team to build on those successes and deliver on his promises for the years to come," Meadows said in the statement. "I've always said Congress is a temporary job, but the fight to return Washington, DC to its rightful owner, We The People, has only just begun."

Meadows is a longtime leader of the House Freedom Caucus, which pushed hard-line conservative policies, often rebelling against House Republican leaders. Meadows is a staunch Trump loyalist, and talks with him often.

Throughout Trump's presidency — and especially during the impeachment proceedings — Meadows has been a defender of Trump, along with another Freedom Caucus leader, Rep. Jim Jordan of Ohio. Meadows' name has been floated inside the White House as a possible replacement for Acting White House Chief of Staff Mick Mulvaney.

In 2015, Meadows stunned his Republican colleagues by filing a motion to oust the powerful GOP House Speaker John Boehner, which eventually led to Boehner's resignation. At the time, the Freedom Caucus was a solid bloc of conservative lawmakers that wielded considerable clout in the House, often thwarting the GOP leadership.

But Meadows also drew attention for his friendship with progressive Democratic Rep. Elijah Cummings, who died earlier this year.

"There was no stronger advocate and no better friend than Elijah Cummings," Meadows tweeted after his death.

Associated Press writer Zeke Miller in Washington contributed to this report.

AP Analysis: Impeachment forever changes Trump's legacy

By JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The first line of President Donald Trump's obituary has been written.

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While Trump is all but certain to avoid removal from office, a portion of his legacy took shape Wednesday when he became just the third president in American history to be impeached by the U.S. House.

The two articles of impeachment approved along largely partisan lines on Wednesday stand as a constitutional rebuke that will stay with Trump even as he tries to trivialize their meaning and use them to power his reelection bid.

"It'll be impossible to look back at this presidency and not discuss impeachment. It is permanently tied to his record," said Julian Zelizer, a presidential historian at Princeton University. "Trump now always becomes part of the conversation about misusing presidential power. Ukraine will be his Watergate. Ukraine will be his Lewinsky."

History books will add Trump to the section that features Bill Clinton, impeached 21 years ago for lying under oath about sex with White House intern Monica Lewinsky, and Andrew Johnson, impeached 151 years ago for defying Congress on Reconstruction. Richard Nixon, who avoided impeachment by resigning during the Watergate investigation, is there, too.

Trump himself is keenly aware of the impact that impeachment may have on his legacy.

Allies in recent months have described him as seething over the prospect, taking impeachment more as a personal attack and an attempt to delegitimize his presidency than a judgment on his conduct. Trump said Tuesday that he took "zero" responsibility for his expected impeachment.

"Few people in high position could have endured or passed this test," Trump wrote in a fiery six-page letter to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi on the eve of his impeachment. "You do not know, nor do you care, the great damage and hurt you have inflicted upon wonderful and loving members of my family."

The letter, rife with exclamation points, random capitalizations and scores of grievances, portrayed the president as the victim of an unfair and politically motivated attack.

"One hundred years from now, when people look back at this affair, I want them to understand it, and learn from it, so that it can never happen to another President again," he wrote.

White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham conceded Thursday that Trump was unhappy with the outcome. "The president has said many times that this isn't something he necessarily wants on his resume," she said in an interview with ABC's "Good Morning America."

With Republicans in control of the Senate, Trump's acquittal in a January trial there seems assured.

He has asserted that a public backlash to impeachment may help him politically by firing up loyal supporters and attracting more independents to his cause. He's mused about taking a post-verdict victory lap, a veritable "Not Guilty Tour" akin to the "Thank You Tour" he conducted during the 2016 presidential transition.

Presidential historian Jon Meacham said impeachment will make Trump "the first insurgent incumbent president in American history." He compared the reflexive partisanship of this moment to the 19th-century tribalism that surrounded Johnson and Reconstruction, requiring a divided nation "to assess what's being said instead of simply saluting the person saying it."

Uniquely able to command attention, Trump has held sway over his adopted Republican Party, reshaping it in his image even while defying its orthodoxy. He has thrilled his base of supporters with his confrontational style and tough rhetoric, using his combative Twitter account to fight political rivals and dispute from the outset accusations of foreign electoral interference during special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia probe.

While Trump escaped that episode with his grip on power unchanged, the Ukraine story stunned the White House with the speed that it overwhelmed Washington. Trump fell back on the same playbook -- deny, delay, denounce -- but could not avoid an impeachment inquiry at the hands of the Democratic-controlled House.

Kellyanne Conway, senior counselor to the president, on Wednesday rejected the notion that Trump believes his legacy will be tarnished by impeachment.

"No, he doesn't," Conway said. "He sees it as a stain on the legacy of people who have been so focused and hell-bent on removing him from office."

While Clinton apologized for his behavior and Nixon stepped aside, Trump has remained unbowed, sticking to his contention that he had a "perfect" phone call with Ukraine's president. Trump and many of his

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Republican defenders have rejected the testimony of a parade of government witnesses who testified about Trump's efforts to push Kyiv to investigate potential election rival Joe Biden.

At a rally in Michigan that began mere minutes after the House began its historic vote, Trump tried to publicly downplay the stain on his record.

"It's impeachment lite. With Richard Nixon, I could see it as a very dark era," Trump said. "I don't know about you, but I'm having a good time. But I also know we have a great group of people behind us in the Republican Party."

The president's approval rating has largely remained unchanged during the impeachment inquiry, his pugnacious personality and populism helping cement his hold with supporters.

Extraordinary polarization around impeachment is not new, but the fierce partisanship this time has been heightened by a unique aspect of this moment: Trump is standing for reelection, while Clinton and Nixon were halfway through their second terms when they faced the threat of impeachment.

The outcome of that election may alter how Trump's impeachment is ultimately remembered.

"Donald Trump is now going to be synonymous with impeachment. There is no way to market it like a badge of honor. It's a medallion of shame," said Douglas Brinkley, presidential historian at Rice University.

"But if he wins, the impeachment looks somewhat smaller. It means he defied it and remade the modern Republican Party in his own image and kept them loyal."

Jonathan Lemire has covered the White House and politics for The Associated Press since 2013.

Follow Lemire on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/@JonLemire>

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press

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

1. 'THE PRESIDENT IS IMPEACHED' Donald Trump becomes only the third American chief executive to be formally charged under the Constitution's ultimate remedy for high crimes and misdemeanors.

2. PELOSI STOKES IMPEACHMENT TRIAL UNCERTAINTY The House speaker, dismayed by comments from Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, refuses to say when she'll send the impeachment articles to the chamber for the trial.

3. HOW LAST DEBATE OF 2019 IS SHAPING UP The tug-of-war between the progressive and moderate wings of the Democratic party is deadlocked and each of the four front-runners has glaring flaws.

4. WHERE TRUMP WILL GET A BIG WIN The Democratic-led House is expected to overwhelmingly pass a signature trade bill for the president, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement.

5. BRITISH MONARCH TO UNVEIL NEW GOVERNMENT'S AGENDA Queen Elizabeth II will open a new session of Parliament, with a speech giving the first concrete details of what Boris Johnson plans to do with his House of Commons majority.

6. INDIA BANS PROTESTS AMID CITIZENSHIP LAW OUTRAGE There are hundreds of arrests too — the legislation has sparked anger at what many see as New Delhi's push to bring the secular country closer to a Hindu state.

7. PORTRAITS OF RESILIENCE AFTER CLERGY ABUSE For those abused by priests, the violations are spiritual, the damage inflicted not just on the body and mind, but a system of beliefs, AP reports.

8. INCOME GROWTH GREATEST IN TECH HUBS Since 2013, household income grew the most in tech and entertainment centers like Austin, Texas; Nashville, Tennessee; and large chunks of the West Coast.

9. TOYOTA'S HUMANOID MIRRORS HUMAN MOVEMENTS The human-shaped robot T-HR3 now has faster and smoother finger movements because the wearable remote-control device has become lighter and easier to use.

10. HOW ROGER FEDERER VIEWS HIS FUTURE Now 38, the 20-time major champion tells the AP he isn't sure when he will retire but says leaving on top is not a priority, because he doesn't think "the end,

per se, is that important.”

After vote, Pelosi stokes impeachment trial uncertainty

By MARY CLARE JALONICK and LAURIE KELLMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Minutes after the House impeached President Donald Trump, House Speaker Nancy Pelosi threw uncertainty into the process by refusing to say, repeatedly, when or whether she would send two articles to the Senate for a trial.

Her comments came as a surprise in a news conference late Wednesday that was intended to express Democrats’ somber closing message after voting to impeach Trump for abuse of power and obstruction of Congress. She started by praising her fellow Democrats for having “moral courage” and said it was “a great day for the Constitution of the United States of America.”

But then she declined to say when she would send the articles to the Republican-led Senate. Until the articles are submitted, the Senate cannot hold the trial that is nearly certain to acquit the Republican president.

White House press secretary Stephanie Grisham blasted Pelosi’s move that would potentially delay the Senate trial, where she said Trump was sure to get a “fair shake” compared to the House.

In an interview with ABC’s “Good Morning America,” Grisham said Pelosi’s announcement was “Just another gimmick and more changing of the rules.”

Pelosi said House Democrats could not name impeachment managers — House prosecutors who make the case for Trump’s conviction and removal from office — until they know more about how the Senate will conduct a trial.

“We cannot name managers until we see what the process is on the Senate side,” Pelosi said. “And I would hope that that will be soon. ... So far we haven’t seen anything that looks fair to us. So hopefully it will be fair. And when we see what that is, we’ll send our managers.”

Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., rejected a proposal earlier this week from Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., to call several witnesses. McConnell also said that he is coordinating with the White House and declared that “I am not an impartial juror.”

Pelosi said that McConnell “says it’s OK for the foreman of the jury to be in cahoots with the lawyers of the accused. That doesn’t sound right to us.”

Schumer and Pelosi are set to meet Thursday morning, according to a person familiar with the planning who was not authorized to discuss the private meeting.

Asked again if she could guarantee that she would send the articles to the Senate, Pelosi said at the news conference: “That would have been our intention.” But they will see what the Senate decides, she said.

“We are not having that discussion. We have done what we set out to do,” Pelosi said.

An aide to McConnell said he did not have an immediate comment on Pelosi’s remarks. But he tweeted that McConnell would speak about “House Democrats’ precedent-breaking impeachment of the President of the United States” on Thursday morning.

Rhode Island Rep. David Cicilline, a member of Pelosi’s leadership team, said after her remarks that Democrats want impeachment proceedings that are “judicious and responsible and deliberative.”

He said that while Senate will decide its own procedures, “the speaker’s only point is before she sends it over she needs to understand what that is” because it will influence who the impeachment managers are.

Asked about never sending the articles over, Cicilline said, “I would not speculate that anyone’s even contemplating that.”

Associated Press writer Alan Fram in Washington contributed to this report.

Queen lays out Johnson's Brexit plans at Parliament opening

By JILL LAWLESS Associated Press

LONDON (AP) —

Queen Elizabeth II formally opened a new session of Britain's Parliament on Thursday, with a speech laying out Prime Minister Boris Johnson's plans to use his commanding majority to take Britain out of the European Union and shake up the country's public services.

Johnson's Conservative Party won an 80-strong majority in the 650-seat house in last week's election on a pledge to "get Brexit done" by leaving the European Union on Jan. 31, and a broad promise to end years of public spending austerity.

Now Johnson has to turn his election pledges into political reality.

The Queen's Speech — written by the government but read out by the monarch from atop a golden throne in the House of Lords — rattled through several dozen bills that the government plans to pass in the coming year.

The first will be Johnson's Withdrawal Agreement Bill, the law needed to make Brexit a reality. It must become law before Jan. 31 if Johnson is to stick to his timetable, and the government plans to hold the first significant vote on it Friday.

The bill commits Britain to leaving the EU on Jan. 31 and to concluding trade talks with the bloc by the end of 2020. Johnson insists he won't agree to any more delays — a vow that has set off alarm bells among businesses, who fear that means the country will face a "no-deal" Brexit at the start of 2021.

Trade experts and EU officials say striking a free trade deal within 11 months will be a struggle. European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen on Wednesday called the timetable "extremely challenging."

The government also plans to pass several other Brexit-related measures, including a new immigration system that will be introduced after Brexit, when EU citizens will lose the automatic right to live and work in the U.K., and new structures for agriculture and fishing.

Johnson also promised "an ambitious program of domestic reform," including a law committing the government to spend more on the National Health Service, which has struggled to keep up with growing demand during a decade-long funding squeeze by previous Conservative governments.

There were tough-sounding announcements on law and order, including longer sentences for people convicted of terrorist offenses and other serious crimes.

Several of the measures are likely to prove contentious. The government plans to set up a "Constitution, Democracy and Rights Commission" that could lead to reform of the Supreme Court. The court angered the government by ruling in September that Johnson's decision to suspend Parliament was illegal.

The government also intends to pass a law protecting military veterans from "vexatious" prosecutions. The question of whether veterans who served decades ago in Northern Ireland should be open to war crimes prosecution is hugely controversial.

Johnson also promised to lessen regional inequality and bring greater unity to the United Kingdom, which is made up of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. But Brexit is making that more difficult. Scotland voted to remain in the EU in Britain's 2016 referendum, and last week most Scottish seats in Parliament were won by the Scottish National Party, which opposes Brexit and wants Scotland to become independent of the U.K.

SNP leader Nicola Sturgeon says that means Scotland should be able to hold a vote on independence, an option Scots rejected in a 2014 referendum that was billed as a "once in a generation" event.

Sturgeon said Thursday she had formally written to the prime minister requesting the power to hold a new independence vote.

"The alternative is a future that we have rejected being imposed upon us," Sturgeon said in Edinburgh. "Scotland made it very clear last week it does not want a Tory government led by Boris Johnson taking us out of the European Union."

Johnson has said he will refuse, and the two sides look set for a slow-burning constitutional showdown.

The Queen's Speech was the centerpiece of the State Opening of Parliament, a blend of politics and

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pageantry that usually takes place about once a year. Britain saw its last state opening just two months ago, soon after Johnson took over as prime minister from Theresa May through a Conservative Party leadership contest and shortly before the early election that returned him to power.

The pomp was toned down for the queen's second visit this year. There were still officials with titles like Black Rod, scarlet-clad yeomen of the guard and lords in ermine-trimmed robes. But the 93-year-old monarch was driven from Buckingham Palace to Parliament in a car, rather than a horse-drawn carriage, and wore a pale blue dress and matching hat rather than robes and a diamond-studded crown.

Johnson will make his mark on the government more decisively in the new year. He's expected to shake up his Cabinet and merge or even eliminate some ministries — all under the guiding eye of chief adviser Dominic Cummings, a self-styled political disruptor.

Johnson will also have to wait to see how Brexit affects the U.K. economy. A downturn could hamper the government's plans to spend more on public services.

Thursday's speech will give the British public some idea of what drives Johnson, a politician whose core beliefs remain a mystery, even to his allies.

He sometimes acts like a Donald Trump-style populist — dubbing his administration a "People's Government" and banning his ministers from attending the elitist World Economic Forum next month in Davos, Switzerland. But he also claims to be a socially liberal "one nation" Tory who welcomes immigration and wants Britain to be a leader in tackling climate change.

Tim Bale, professor of politics at Queen Mary University of London, said Conservative prime ministers from Margaret Thatcher to Theresa May all took office promising, like Johnson, to "heal the nation" and tackle social injustice.

"But actually in the end ... they don't want to spend too much money, they don't want to raise taxes too high, they don't want to regulate the economy -- and actually nothing much happens," he said. "So don't hold your breath."

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

Putin: Trump impeachment 'far-fetched,' Senate will acquit

By VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV and HARRIET MORRIS Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin called the U.S. impeachment process "far-fetched" Thursday, making a seemingly obvious prediction that Donald Trump will be acquitted in the Senate.

Putin said Thursday at his annual news conference in Moscow that the move is a continuation of the Democrats' fight against Trump.

"The party that lost the (2016) election, the Democratic Party, is trying to achieve results by other means," Putin said.

He likened Trump's impeachment to the earlier U.S. probe into collusion with Russia, which Putin downplayed as being groundless.

Putin noted that the impeachment motion "is yet to pass the Senate where the Republicans have a majority." He added that "they will be unlikely to remove a representative of their own party from office on what seems to me an absolutely far-fetched reason."

Trump was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming only the third American chief executive to be formally charged under the Constitution's ultimate remedy for high crimes and misdemeanors.

The historic vote split along party lines Wednesday night in the U.S., much the way it has divided the nation, over a charge that the 45th president abused the power of his office by enlisting a foreign government to investigate a political rival ahead of the 2020 election. The House then approved a second charge, that he obstructed Congress in its investigation. The articles of impeachment, the political equivalent of an indictment, now go to the Senate for trial.

Turning to a spat with Germany over the killing of a Georgian citizen in Berlin in August, which German prosecutors alleged had been ordered by Moscow or authorities in the Russian province of Chechnya, Putin

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described the victim as a "bloodthirsty killer." He said the man, an ethnic Chechen who was accused of being responsible for the killing of 98 people in just one raid in Russia's North Caucasus and masterminding bombings on the Moscow subway system.

Russian officials have denied that Moscow had any relation to the killing,

Putin said that Russian law enforcement agencies had spoken to their German counterparts to demand the man's extradition, but were given the cold shoulder and never sent a formal extradition request. He likened the victim to Islamic State group militants in custody in Turkey, some of whom come from Germany, France and other European nations.

"If those people come your way, will you like it?" Putin said. "Will you let them freely roam the streets like that?"

He argued that law enforcement agencies in Russia and Europe need to cooperate more closely to fend off terror threats.

Putin spoke on a variety of issues during the marathon news conference that was dominated by local issues, such as Russia's ailing health care system and federal subsidies for the regions.

He opened it by warning about new challenges posed by global climate change, saying that global warming could threaten Russian Arctic cities and towns built on permafrost.

The Russian leader added that climate changes could trigger fires, devastating floods and other negative consequences.

Putin emphasized that Russia has abided by the Paris agreement intended to slow down global warming. At the same time, he noted that factors behind global climate change have remained unknown and hard to predict.

Putin, who has been in power for two decades, also hailed the economic achievements of his rule. He emphasized that Russia has become the world's largest grain exporter, surpassing the U.S. and Canada — a dramatic change compared to the Soviet Union that heavily depended on grain imports.

The Russian leader also pointed at industry modernization, saying that three quarters of industrial equipment is no older than 12 years.

He said that the country has built three new airports, 12 new railway stations and the number of major highways has doubled.

The Russian economy had suffered a double blow of a drop in global oil prices and Western sanctions that followed Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea. It has seen a slow recovery since 2017 after a two-year stagnation.

Russia's ties with the West have remained at post-Cold War lows, but Putin argued that Russia has recovered and become more resilient to shocks from Western penalties and fluctuations in global energy prices.

Putin voiced hope for further moves to settle the conflict in eastern Ukraine following his talks in Paris on Dec. 9 with the leaders of Ukraine, France and Germany.

He said that the 2015 peace agreement signed in Minsk and brokered by France and Germany must be observed, rejecting Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy's push for revising it.

The fighting in eastern Ukraine that flared up in 2014 after Russia's annexation of Crimea has killed more than 14,000 and ravaged Ukraine's eastern industrial heartland.

The Minsk deal envisaged that Ukraine can regain control over the border with Russia in the separatist-held regions only after they are granted broad self-rule and hold local elections. The agreement was a diplomatic coup for Russia, ensuring that the rebel regions get a broad authority and resources to survive on their own without cross-border support.

Zelenskiy pushed for tweaking the timeline laid out in the accord so that Ukraine gets control of its border first before local elections are held, but Putin firmly rejected that.

"There is nothing but the Minsk agreement," Putin said. "If we start revising the Minsk agreement, it will lead to deadlock."

He said that Russia still hopes to negotiate a new gas deal with Ukraine that will allow his country to maintain transit shipments of gas to Europe via Ukrainian territory. The Russian leader noted that Moscow

would be ready to continue pumping gas via Ukraine even though the new prospective Nord Stream 2 pipeline under the Baltic Sea is expected to come online next year.

Putin, who once lamented the breakup of the Soviet Union as the greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the 20th century, had some harsh words to say about Soviet founder Vladimir Lenin.

He lambasted Lenin's policies on ethnic issues, saying that his idea to grant broad autonomy to ethnic-based Soviet republics, including their right to secede, paved way for the Soviet breakup once the Communist Party's hold on power started to loosen.

At the same time, Putin rejected the push for taking Lenin's embalmed body out of the Red Square tomb and burying it, saying that it would offend older people who still see the Soviet founder as a powerful symbol.

He noted that the Soviet demise spawned expectations of a "unipolar world" in which the U.S. dictates terms to others, adding that such "illusions" quickly collapsed. Putin said that China has come to challenge the U.S. as the global economic powerhouse and hailed increasingly close ties between Moscow and Beijing.

Putin, whose current term runs through 2024, remained coy about his political future. He wouldn't answer if he could potentially extend his rule by shifting into a new governing position to become the head of a Russia-Belarus union.

He left the door open to amending the Russian Constitution, such as changing the powers of the president and the Cabinet, but noted that changes must be made carefully after a broad public discussion.

Indian police ban protests amid citizenship law outrage

By **EMILY SCHMALL** and **ASHOK SHARMA** Associated Press

NEW DELHI (AP) — Police detained several hundred protesters in some of India's biggest cities Thursday as they defied bans on assembly that authorities imposed to stop widespread demonstrations against a new citizenship law that opponents say threatens the country's secular democracy.

Protests raged around the country despite the bans as opposition widened to the law, which excludes Muslims. The legislation has sparked anger at what many see as the government's push to bring India closer to a Hindu state.

Authorities erected road blocks and disrupted internet and phone services, including in parts of New Delhi, and tightened restrictions on protesters in the northeastern border state of Assam, which is where the protests first began last week.

The new citizenship law applies to Hindus, Christians and other religious minorities who are in India illegally but can demonstrate religious persecution in Muslim-majority Bangladesh, Pakistan and Afghanistan. It does not apply to Muslims.

Critics say it's the latest effort by Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Hindu nationalist-led government to marginalize India's 200 million Muslims, and a violation of the country's secular constitution.

Modi has defended it as a humanitarian gesture.

Rather than contain uprisings, the protest bans appear to be helping them spread — from Assam and a handful of university campuses and Muslim enclaves in the capital — to campuses and cities from coast to coast.

"I think what is wonderful is that young people all in their 20s have so vividly understood the game plan, which is to divide people," said Zoya Hasan, a political scientist in New Delhi. "What people are saying is that you are going to divide, we are going to multiply."

The protests come amid an ongoing crackdown in Muslim-majority Kashmir, the restive Himalayan region stripped of its semi-autonomous status and demoted from a state into a federal territory last summer. They also follow a contentious process in Assam meant to weed out foreigners in the country illegally. Nearly 2 million people were excluded from an official list of citizens, about half Hindu and half Muslim, and have been asked to prove their citizenship or else be considered foreign.

India is also building a detention center for some of the tens of thousands of people the courts are expected to ultimately determine have entered illegally. Modi's interior minister, Amit Shah, has pledged

to roll out the process nationwide.

Critics say the process is a thinly veiled plot to deport millions of Muslims.

The Modi government, which won a landslide re-election in May, had been able to push through those parts of its agenda without much opposition. That changed with the citizenship law.

"This may be a crack in the edifice" of the Modi government, said Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, a political analyst and Modi biographer.

Some of the country's unwieldy and divided opposition parties have found common ground in condemning what they say has been a heavy-handed official response to the protests.

It's a good rallying point for the opposition because it is "a battle for liberal and democratic values," said Asaduddin Owaisi, a lawmaker and president of the All India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen party.

Video on Thursday captured historian Ramchandra Guha, a biographer of independence leader Mohandas Gandhi, manhandled by police as he was detained in Bangalore, the capital of southern Karnataka state, where the government issued a ban on groups of more than four people gathering.

Reached by phone, Guha said he was in a bus with other detainees and did not know where police were taking them.

In New Delhi, Yogendra Yadav, a well-known political activist and the chief of the Swaraj India party, was among the more than 100 protesters detained at the city's iconic Red Fort and the surrounding historic district.

Protesters loaded into buses and jeeps shouted "down with Delhi police" as they were driven away.

Also worrying to protesters was the blocking of internet and phone services, a tactic authorities often use in Kashmir to try to prevent protests, but one rarely used in the capital.

"In this country we do not even have freedom to protest. It's very disappointing," said Upika Chahan, a social worker who took the day off work to protest at Red Fort.

Chahan, who is Sikh, said that while the citizenship law doesn't discriminate against her religious group, it doesn't augur well for India.

"If it's affecting one element of the ecosystem, sooner or later it's going to affect everyone in the ecosystem," she said.

Associated Press writer Sheikh Saaliq in New Delhi contributed to this report.

Philippines convicts key clan members in 2009 massacre

By JIM GOMEZ Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines (AP) — A Philippine court on Thursday found key members of a powerful political clan guilty of a 2009 massacre in a southern province that left 57 people dead, including 32 media workers, in a brazen execution-style attack that horrified the world.

Families of the victims and media watchdogs welcomed the convictions but said the fight for justice was far from over.

Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes sentenced eight members of the Ampatuan family led by former town Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr., who she said oversaw and led the killings, and 20 others to life imprisonment without parole. Their time in prison is limited to 40 years, the maximum punishment allowed by law. They were also ordered to compensate the victims' families.

The judge acquitted more than 50 police officers and other members of the Ampatuan family, citing a lack of evidence, while 15 people were given 6- to 10-year prison terms as accomplices.

Applause and cheers rang out in the courtroom, where some relatives of the victims heard the reading of the verdict from a 761-page decision.

"This is a partial victory," Rep. Esmael Mangudadatu, who lost his wife, sisters, an aunt and many supporters in the Nov. 23, 2009, killings, told reporters outside the packed and heavily secured courtroom.

Mangudadatu raised his right fist to show he would fight on with the expected appeals of those convicted.

"This momentous verdict should help provide justice to the families of the victims, and build toward

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greater accountability for rights abuses in the country," said Phil Robertson, deputy Asia director of Human Rights Watch.

Nicholas Bequelin of Amnesty International said that even with the convictions, "the families' search for justice remains far from over. Some 80 other people accused have yet to be arrested."

President Rodrigo Duterte's spokesman said the rule of law had prevailed and urged those who disagree with the verdict to continue seeking legal remedies up to the Supreme Court.

The case involved more than 100 detained suspects and is seen as a test of the Southeast Asian nation's notoriously clogged and vulnerable judicial system.

While the mass killing has largely unraveled as an offshoot of a violent electoral rivalry common in many rural areas, it has also showcased the threats faced by journalists in the Philippines. Thirty-two of those gunned down were local reporters and media workers in the worst single attack on journalists in the world.

"If I have the power to kill them all in a blink of an eye, I would have done it. But I realized in the end that I'm not a demon like them," said Mary Grace Morales. Her husband, a reporter for a provincial newspaper, and her elder sister, the paper's publisher, were among those killed, mostly in a blaze of automatic rifle fire as they begged for their lives.

Ampatuan Jr. was convicted of leading nearly 200 armed followers who blocked a seven-vehicle convoy carrying the relatives and lawyers of Mangudadatu, a politician who decided to run for governor of Maguindanao province. He challenged the powerful Ampatuan clan, which held sway over almost every aspect of life in the impoverished region long wracked by a Muslim insurgency.

The journalists joined the convoy to cover the filing of Mangudadatu's candidacy in an election office in Maguindanao's capital. Mangudadatu, now a legislator in the House of Representatives, did not join the convoy to ensure his safety.

The gunmen commandeered the convoy, including the passengers of two unsuspecting cars that got stuck in the traffic, to a nearby hilltop, where a waiting backhoe had dug huge pits to be used to bury the victims and their vehicles.

The court found that Ampatuan Jr. and his followers opened fire on the victims at close range and hurriedly escaped after sensing that army troops were approaching. The mutilated bodies were found inside the vans, sprawled on the ground or buried in the pits with some of the vehicles, in a gruesome scene that drew international outrage and shocked many even in a country long used to political violence.

The Ampatuans have denied the charges against them.

Prosecutors have insisted for years that there were 58 people killed but the court on Thursday declared there were only 57 victims because the body of one media worker, Reynaldo Momay, was never found although parts of his dentures were located.

At least three witnesses who testified against the Ampatuans have been killed over the years, according to Nena Santos, a lawyer for Mangudadatu and families of several other victims. She said she had been threatened with death multiple times and offered a huge amount of money to withdraw from the case.

Gloria Teodoro, whose journalist husband was among the victims, said the government should work to eradicate the lethal mix of problems that allowed the massacre to happen, including the large number of high-powered firearms in the hands of many politicians and clans and a long-entrenched culture of impunity.

Otherwise, she said, such political violence, even on a less gruesome scale, would go on.

Associated Press journalists Aaron Favila, Francisco Rosario and Basilio Sepe in Manila, Philippines, contributed to this report.

Trump impeached on charges of abuse of power, obstruction

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives, becoming only the third American chief executive to be formally charged under the Constitution's ultimate remedy for high crimes and misdemeanors.

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The historic vote split along party lines Wednesday night, much the way it has divided the nation, over a charge that the 45th president abused the power of his office by enlisting a foreign government to investigate a political rival ahead of the 2020 election. The House then approved a second charge, that he obstructed Congress in its investigation.

The articles of impeachment, the political equivalent of an indictment, now go to the Senate for trial. If Trump is acquitted by the Republican-led chamber, as expected, he still would have to run for reelection carrying the enduring stain of impeachment on his purposely disruptive presidency.

"The president is impeached," Pelosi declared after the vote. She called it "great day for the Constitution of the United States, a sad one for America that the president's reckless activities necessitated us having to introduce articles of impeachment."

Trump, who began Wednesday tweeting his anger at the proceedings, pumped his fist before an evening rally in Battle Creek, Michigan, boasting of "tremendous support" in the Republican Party and saying, "By the way it doesn't feel like I'm being impeached."

The votes for impeachment were 230-197-1 on the first charge, 229-198-1 on the second.

Democrats led Wednesday night's voting, framed in what many said was their duty to protect the Constitution and uphold the nation's system of checks and balances. Republicans stood by their party's leader, who has frequently tested the bounds of civic norms. Trump called the whole affair a "witch hunt," a "hoax" and a "sham," and sometimes all three.

The trial is expected to begin in January in the Senate, where a vote of two-thirds is necessary for conviction. While Democrats had the majority in the House to impeach Trump, Republicans control the Senate and few if any are expected to diverge from plans to acquit the president ahead of early state election-year primary voting.

Pelosi, once reluctant to lead Democrats into a partisan impeachment, gaveled both votes closed, risking her majority and speakership to follow the effort to its House conclusion.

No Republicans voted for impeachment, and Democrats had only slight defections on their side. Voting was conducted manually with ballots, to mark the moment.

On the first article, abuse of power, two Democrats, Jeff Van Drew of New Jersey, who is considering switching parties to become a Republican, and Collin Peterson of Minnesota voted against impeaching Trump. On the second article, obstruction, those two and freshman Rep. Jared Golden of Maine voted against. Democratic Rep. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, who is running for president, voted "present" on both.

What Pelosi called a sad and solemn moment for the country, coming in the first year after Democrats swept control of the House, unfolded in a caustic daylong session that showcased the nation's divisions.

The House impeachment resolution laid out in stark terms the articles of impeachment against Trump stemming from his July phone call when he asked the Ukrainian president for a "favor" — to announce he was investigating Democrats including potential 2020 rival Joe Biden.

At the time, Zelenskiy, new to politics and government, was seeking a coveted White House visit to show backing from the U.S. as he confronted a hostile Russia at his border. He was also counting on \$391 million in military aid already approved by Congress. The White House delayed the funds, but Trump eventually released the money once Congress intervened.

Narrow in scope but broad in its charges, the impeachment resolution said the president "betrayed the nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections," and then obstructing Congress' oversight like "no president" in U.S. history.

"President Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office," it said.

Republicans argued that Democrats were impeaching Trump because they can't beat him in 2020.

Said Rep. Chris Stewart of Utah: "They want to take away my vote and throw it in the trash."

But Democrats warned the country cannot wait for the next election to decide whether Trump should remain in office because he has shown a pattern of behavior, particularly toward Russia, and will try to corrupt U.S. elections again.

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"The president and his men plot on," said Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., of the Intelligence Committee that led the inquiry. "The danger persists. The risk is real."

The outcome brings the Trump presidency to a milestone moment that has been building almost from the time the New York businessman-turned-reality-TV host unexpectedly won the White House in 2016 amid questions about Russian interference in the U.S. election.

Democrats drew from history, the founders and their own experiences, as minorities, women and some immigrants to the U.S. spoke of seeking to honor their oath of office to uphold the Constitution. Rep. Lou Correa of California spoke in Spanish asking God to unite the nation. "In America," said Hakeem Jeffries of New York, "no one is above the law."

Republicans aired Trump-style grievances about what Arizona Rep. Debbie Lesko called a "rigged" process.

"We face this horror because of this map," said Rep. Clay Higgins of Alabama before a poster of red and blue states. "They call this Republican map flyover country, they call us deplorables, they fear our faith, they fear our strength, they fear our unity, they fear our vote, and they fear our president."

The political fallout from the vote will reverberate across an already polarized country with divergent views of Trump's July phone call when he asked Zelenskyy to investigate Democrats in the 2016 election, Biden and Biden's son Hunter, who worked on the board of a gas company in Ukraine while his father was the vice president.

Trump has repeatedly implored Americans to read the transcript of the call he said was "perfect." But the facts it revealed, and those in an anonymous whistleblower's complaint that sparked the probe, are largely undisputed.

More than a dozen current and former White House officials and diplomats testified for hours in impeachment hearings. The open and closed sessions under oath revealed what one called the "irregular channel" of foreign policy run by Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, which focused on investigating the Bidens and alternative theories of 2016 election interference.

The question for lawmakers was whether the revelations amounted to impeachable offenses.

Few lawmakers crossed party lines.

Van Drew, who is considering changing parties over his opposition to impeachment, sat with Republicans. Rep. Justin Amash, the Michigan conservative who left the Republican party and became an independent over impeachment, said: "I come to this floor, not as a Republican, not as a Democrat, but as an American."

Beyond the impeachments of Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton, this first impeachment of the 21st century is as much about what the president might do in the future as what he did in the past. The investigation of Richard Nixon ended when he resigned rather than face the House vote over Watergate.

Rank and file Democrats said they were willing to lose their jobs to protect the democracy from Trump. Some newly elected freshmen remained in the chamber for hours during the debate.

Top Republicans, including Rep. Devin Nunes on the Intelligence Committee, called the Ukraine probe little more than a poor sequel to special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election.

Mueller spent two years investigating the potential links between Moscow and the Trump campaign but testified in July that his team could not establish that Trump conspired or coordinated with Russia to throw the election. Mueller did say he could not exonerate Trump of trying to obstruct the investigation, but he left that for Congress to decide.

The next day, Trump called Ukraine. Not quite four months later, a week before Christmas, Trump was impeached.

Associated Press writers Laurie Kellman, Matthew Daly, Alan Fram and Andrew Taylor contributed to this report.

SUNDAYS AFTER: Portraits of resilience after clergy abuse

By WONG MAYE-E and JULIET LINDERMAN Associated Press

They came from different towns and cities, from different ethnic and economic backgrounds. They were A-students and outcasts, people of all ages. From their churches they sought love or guidance, a better education or a place that felt like home.

They were believers before their trust was tested, fractured or blown apart entirely by sexual abuse at the hands of a priest.

For the faithful, the Catholic Church isn't only a place of worship but the center of social and cultural life, its doctrines and customs woven into the fabric of families and communities. And its priests and deacons are more than holy men but confidantes, teachers, father figures with unparalleled power. To many, they're the closest thing to God on earth.

For those abused by priests, the violations are spiritual, the damage inflicted not just on the body and mind, but a system of beliefs.

"Their faith becomes a victim of the abuse," said Marianne Sipe, a psychiatrist and former nun who works with clergy abuse survivors.

But children grow up. Some learn to cope with the horrors they experienced, some try to forget, others struggle to survive in the aftermath, and to come to terms with the harm that's been done to them.

Sexual abuse survivors often share symptoms: nightmares, isolation, anger, problems with trust and authority. Some battle substance abuse, depression, have trouble with physical intimacy. Survivors can be triggered by sensory experiences like a familiar smell or the feel of a certain fabric on their skin. For others, stories in the newspaper conjure dark memories.

"I'll go to my grave with them," John Vai, 67, said of his wounds. He was abused by a priest at his Catholic school as a teenager. "They will never heal."

With these wounds, survivors endure. They lead dynamic lives, build careers and families.

Some remain devout, steadfast in their commitment to the church. Some leave Catholicism for other denominations or abandon organized religion for personal spiritual practices. Some stop believing altogether, their old devotion to the institution replaced by a desire to tear it all down. Many grapple with what's left of their faith.

For the project "Sundays After," Associated Press photographer Wong Maye-E and writer Juliet Linderman traveled across the U.S. and sought out men and women who were willing to share their experiences -- both how they were abused by Catholic clergy, and how they survived.

Wong captured the subjects with digital and Polaroid cameras. She soaked the instant photos, freeing the images on fragile membranes -- wrinkled, torn, distressed -- and pasting them on watercolor paper. The film transfers themselves, with their imperfections and rough edges, are resilient, much like the survivors they portray.

Salvador Bolivar doesn't like to talk about what happened to him without first summoning the spirit of his ancestors to give him courage. It was the awareness of these ancestors 11 years ago, in a sweat lodge in Colombia, that first compelled him to break his silence about the sexual abuse he suffered at the hands of his Catholic high school dean. Bolivar's belief that his suffering must be part of a plan, meant to arm him with the experience necessary to help other survivors, helps him get through the most difficult days. Still, such trauma takes a toll. "I knew this spiritual task would come at a price," he said.

Read More: Spirits guide survivor in quest for healing

For many years Patrick Shepard wouldn't touch a basketball -- his molester, a priest, had taught him the game and as much as he loved it, he had "so many bad memories." The abuse sent him spiraling down, through anger and alcohol abuse and sadness. But now he has a loving partner, a son he adores, and the responsibilities and joys of fatherhood help eclipse his pain. He still finds himself crying sometimes, but

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the tears do not come as often as they once did. And he has taught his son to play basketball.

Read More: Patrick Shepard finds healing in basketball

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Dorothy Small was 60 years old when she met the priest. She thought it was love — that was the only way to make sense of what happened. But another priest had a different word for it. “You were raped,” he told her. She reported the encounter, the priest was sent back to the Philippines and Small was ostracized by the church community that once was her lifeline. It left her shattered. Now, she does not go to any church. She finds spiritual fulfillment in private rituals and meaning in her advocacy for adult survivors of priest abuse. “The healing came from standing up for myself, finally,” she says. “It came from not going away.”

Read More: For priest’s victim, home is a sanctuary

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John Vai doesn’t think about the abuse, he doesn’t talk about the abuse. It took him four decades to tell anyone: The Catholic church was the heartbeat of his working-class, Italian-American Delaware neighborhood. But so many years later he took a risk, went to trial and won. He unboxed those memories and the experience almost ripped him apart, he said. He will not do it again. And so, he wakes up at the same time each morning. He plays golf, swims in the country club pool, sips a cocktail when the sun goes down. Happiness isn’t what he’s after. Stability, he said, is what he needs to survive. “Get into a routine,” he said, “and the pain goes away.”

Read More: For survivor, routine brings some relief

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The nine Charbonneau sisters never forgot the beatings and harsh discipline they endured at the St. Paul’s Indian Mission School in South Dakota. But in their 50s and 60s they remembered, one by one, something even worse: the sexual abuse they suffered at the hands of priests and nuns. Most have given up their fight to sue the church, and want to forget. But four of them (pictured wrapped in a quilt made by their mother, left to right: Francine Soli, Barbara Dahlen, Joann Braget and Louise Aamot) persist. Says Dahlen: “Sometimes I wish the hell we never remembered anything.”

Read More: Sisters bonded, and broken, in wake of abuse

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More than four decades have passed since the year Jacob Olivas was molested, one of more than 100 children victimized by the Rev. Edward Anthony Rodrigue. Olivas, now 50, is prone to fear, nightmares, crippling panic attacks. He finds strength in his unshakable Catholic faith -- “When you think you’re most alone is when God is closest to you”-- and solace in the mountains. But the pain is still with him. Years ago the priest wrote Olivas a letter of apology from prison. He cannot bring himself to read it.

Read More: Amid daily struggles, working to conquer fear

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Mark Belenchia didn’t stay quiet. He told his mother and his uncle, in the mid-1970s. He told a parish priest, then the vicar general, in 1985. Still, the clergyman Belenchia said sexually abused him when he was a child in Shelby, Mississippi, remained in collar and cassock. “It showed me that the system says you’re insignificant. It doesn’t matter what you said, or what happened to you,” Belenchia says. Over the years, his quest to make sense of his own tragedy transformed into a crusade against clergy abuse that’s become his life’s focus. Activism, he said, gives him purpose and direction. Through this work he’s able to make use of his pain, to help other survivors struggling to cope with theirs.

Read More: Survivor makes use of pain through activism

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The Associated Press produced this project with support from the International Women’s Media Foundation’s Howard G. Buffett Fund For Women Journalists.

Australia's most populous state declares wildfire emergency

By **TRISTAN LAVALETTE** Associated Press

PERTH, Australia (AP) — Australia's most populous state of New South Wales declared a seven-day state of emergency Thursday as oppressive conditions fanned around 100 wildfires.

Around 2,000 firefighters were battling the blazes, half of which remain uncontrolled, with the support of U.S. and Canadian backup teams and personnel from the Australian Defence Force.

The last state of emergency ran for seven days in mid-November amid "catastrophic" fire risk and was the first implemented in New South Wales since 2013. Central Sydney reached a maximum of 39 degrees Celsius (102 Fahrenheit) on Thursday, while outer suburbs scorched at 42 Celsius (108 F).

A statewide total fire ban announced on Tuesday will remain in place until midnight on Saturday.

Around 3 million hectares (7.4 million acres) of land has burnt nationwide during a torrid past few months, with six people killed and more than 800 homes destroyed.

The annual Australian fire season, which peaks during the Southern Hemisphere summer, started early after an unusually warm and dry winter.

New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian said authorities were concerned with the unpredictable conditions.

"With extreme wind conditions, extreme hot temperatures, we have a good idea, a good sense, of where the most concerning areas are, but again when you've got those turbulent conditions, embers and spot fires can occur very unpredictably," she told reporters.

Sydney's air pollution levels on Thursday ranged from poor to hazardous. During the past month, hazardous smoke has often blanketed Australia's most populous city and made its iconic skyline barely visible.

Hospitals have recorded a 10% increase in visits from patients with respiratory conditions during the past week.

The Australian Medical Association has recommended people keep hydrated, cool and out of the sun.

Wildfires are also burning in Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia.

The Bureau of Meteorology said Tuesday was the hottest day on record in Australia with an average of 40.9 Celsius (105.6 F) nationwide.

Perth, the capital on the west coast, is experiencing its hottest December with average temperatures for the month at 36 Celsius (97 F) and seven degrees above the mean.

Adelaide, in the southeast, is currently experiencing a four-day heatwave culminating in a sizzling 45 Celsius (113 F) on Thursday.

The unprecedented conditions has reignited debate on whether Australia's conservative government has taken enough action on climate change. Australia is the world's largest exporter of coal and liquefied natural gas.

Protesters on Thursday camped outside Prime Minister Scott Morrison's Sydney residence demanding urgent action on climate change.

Morrison, who is currently on holidays, conceded last week that "climate change along with many other factors" contributed to the wildfires.

Federer says a star's legacy isn't at risk with late decline

By **HOWARD FENDRICH** AP Tennis Writer

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Roger Federer arrives for his interview at the precise appointed time, steering his white sedan into a parking spot in an industrial area dotted by art galleries about 15 minutes from his luxury apartment in this home-away-from-home.

After obliging a selfie request from someone on the street, Federer makes his way up to a second-story loft area and sits. He crosses his legs, kneads his right calf and winces.

"Just started training. I'm surprised I could walk the stairs as good as I have," Federer says with a laugh. "My calves are, like, killing me. Just getting back into it. The shock on the body is, I don't want to say

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'immense,' every time, but I've been on vacation for two weeks. The shock just hits you hard."

Ah, the ravages of age.

Federer, who won the first of his men's-record 20 Grand Slam titles when he was 21 and now is 38, explains to The Associated Press that he must "go back to the drawing board" after "just missing out on The Big One," a reference to his fifth-set tiebreaker loss to Novak Djokovic in the Wimbledon final in July. So all of just two days into Federer's preparation for next season -- he flies to Melbourne on Jan. 9, a week before the Australian Open draw -- he is taking a 48-hour break, sitting out his two-a-day fitness sessions and not lifting a racket.

No one this old has won a Grand Slam title in the professional era.

As a younger man, Federer says, he didn't allow himself such a respite, working six or eight days in a row to get going. But now? The "waves," he calls them, making an undulating motion with his famous right arm -- time on, then time off -- offer his body a chance to recover. They also let him "go through the wall" on the day before a rest period, because "otherwise, you maybe would hold back just ever so slightly, because you just don't know how you're going to feel the next day."

Federer recognizes that continuing to play tennis at a high level long past the age when many greats of the past were done (his idol, Pete Sampras, competed for the final time at 31) means he repeatedly faces questions -- from fans, from the media, from those around him -- about how long he will continue on tour.

And while he can't provide a definitive answer -- because, quite simply, he says he doesn't have one -- Federer is willing to discuss this aspect of the subject: He does not consider it important to walk away at the top of his game and the top of his sport.

When he's told about a newspaper opinion piece from way back in 2013 -- 2013! -- that posited he should quit then to avoid ruining his legacy, Federer just smiles and waves his hand. He knows, of course, that he's managed to reach another seven Grand Slam finals since the start of 2014, winning three.

But he also says the notion that an older athlete could harm his or her status by hanging around too long is nonsense, no matter what the decline looks like.

"I don't think the exit needs to be that perfect, that you have to win something huge ... and you go, 'OK. I did it all.' It can be completed a different way, as long as you enjoy it and that's what matters to you," Federer says. "People, I don't think, anyway, remember what were the last matches of a John McEnroe, what were the last matches of a Stefan Edberg. Nobody knows. They remember that they won Wimbledon, that they won this and that, they were world No. 1. I don't think the end, per se, is that important."

That doesn't mean, of course, that he isn't as competitive as ever or doesn't want to win a 21st major championship -- above all, No. 9 at Wimbledon, after it slipped away despite two match points in 2019 -- or his first Olympic singles gold at the Tokyo Games next year.

Or win any tournaments, for that matter, which would push him closer to Jimmy Connors' professional era record of 109 trophies (Federer has 103).

He's still good enough, after all, to be ranked No. 3 -- having spent a record 310 weeks at No. 1, he is currently behind No. 1 Rafael Nadal and No. 2 Djokovic -- and to go 53-10 with four titles this season.

If it seems as though the rest of the world is insisting it needs to know when and how retirement will arrive, Federer says it's not something on which he expends a lot of energy.

Not anymore, anyway.

"I mean, I don't think about it much, to be honest," Federer says. "It's a bit different (now) that I know I'm at the back end of my career. But I feel like I've been toward 'the back end of my career' for a long, long time."

So much so that when he got sick while on a skiing trip in January 2008 with what eventually was diagnosed as mononucleosis, he vowed to stay off the slopes, a decision he stuck to, although not without some regret. His children -- twin daughters, 10, and twin sons, 5 -- all ski, and he and his wife, Mirka, have a home in a resort in his native Switzerland.

Yet Federer sticks to his role as "the chief 'getting the kids ski-ready' operator guy."

"I was like, 'OK, you know what? That's a sign. I'm going to stop skiing, because I don't want to get hurt

at the back end of my career. Maybe I have another four good years left in me. This was (12) years ago now. So it shows you how long ago I've been thinking: 'Maybe I have another four years. Maybe I have another three years. Maybe I have another two years.' ... I've been on this sort of train for long enough for me not to actually think about it a whole lot," he says. "But sure, sometimes with family planning, discussions with my wife, we talk a little bit sometimes. But never like, 'What if?' Or, 'What are we going to do?' Because I always think, like, we have time for that and then we'll figure it out when that moment comes."

Even his agent, Tony Godsick, who has represented Federer since 2005, raises the topic.

"It would help make my job easier," Godsick says in a telephone interview. "I don't want to know for my own personal travel. Or I don't want to know to have the scoop before anyone else. I want to know so I can plan. ... I mean, he won't go on a retirement tour, but I'd like to have some advance notice, maybe throw some more cameras around when he's out playing, so we can capture some more footage."

Godsick pauses, then spaces out the next five words for emphasis: "But. He. Really. Doesn't. Know."

"I really do think he has the flexibility to actually not decide ... until he feels like it's the time. And that will come when Mirka says, 'I can't do it anymore,' and 'I can't be on the road with the kids,' and 'The kids are not enjoying it.' Or his body might say, 'Hey, Rog, stop pushing me so hard,'" Godsick says. "Maybe it's a time when he realizes on the practice court he doesn't either have the motivation or the ability to get better. And at that point, then maybe he says, 'I certainly have squeezed all the juice out of this lemon in terms of innovating and getting better.' And I don't think that time is there yet. Which is good news."

Follow Howard Fendrich on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/HowardFendrich>

More AP Tennis coverage: <https://www.apnews.com/apf-Tennis> and https://twitter.com/AP_Sports

Income growth greatest in tech hubs over past 5 years

By **MIKE SCHNEIDER** Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — From the middle of the Obama administration to the midpoint of the Trump presidency, household income grew the most in tech and entertainment centers like Austin, Texas; Nashville, Tennessee; and large chunks of the West Coast.

Congressional districts that attract highly educated workers around areas like Denver and Charlotte, North Carolina, were among the communities that saw mean household income rise the most from 2013 to 2018, according to new figures released Thursday by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Other congressional districts that had the highest household income growth were in or around Houston; Pittsburgh; Provo, Utah; parts of South Florida and the wealthy retirement haven of Sarasota, Florida.

Most of the income growth in these areas came from wages, said Mark Vitner, a senior economist at Wells Fargo Securities.

"Metro areas tied to technology have tended to perform best, although global gateways and energy markets had their moment in the sun earlier in the decade," Vitner said.

Household income grew more in Democratic-leaning districts than Republican ones, according to an Associated Press analysis of the data by congressional districts. Household income grew by an average of more than \$12,000 in Democratic-leaning congressional districts, compared to more than \$9,000 in Republican-leaning districts.

What impact that has going into the 2020 elections remains to be seen, experts said.

"Surely new evidence of income level rises in coastal and more highly educated districts relative to others plays to the Democrats' strength," said William Frey, a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution. "But it also makes clear they need to redouble their efforts to court non-college voters in less prosperous districts in the run-up to the 2020 election."

The greater income growth in Democratic-leaning districts likely had to do with the fact that they're in cities where incomes tend to be higher, Vitner said.

"Republican districts tend to be more rural and have lower wages," he said.

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In some areas, the growth in household income was enormous. In House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's district, located in San Francisco, the epicenter of the last decade's tech boom, household income jumped by a third from almost \$110,500 to more than \$150,000.

In other areas, income growth was significantly more modest.

In the district that covers Huntington, West Virginia, average household income only went up 5% to about \$52,500. The area represented by Republican Rep. Carol Miller has been gripped by the struggles of the coal industry and is losing population.

Some industrial areas also have struggled to adjust to changing circumstances.

"The difficulty that some manufacturing areas have been facing is that they have not been able to reposition their economies quick enough to stem the outflow of younger workers," Vitner said.

Follow Mike Schneider on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MikeSchneiderAP>

Among public, a great divide at moment of Trump impeachment

By **BOBBY CAINA CALVAN, KATHLEEN RONAYNE and CALVIN WOODWARD** Associated Press

We interrupt the holiday spirit to bring you the impeachment of a president.

In festive haunts, buzzing stores and rush-hour frenzy, Americans absorbed the moment Donald Trump became only the third president branded with the mark of impeachment, the Constitution's gravest political indictment.

Depending whom you ask in this deeply polarized country, Americans saw the House vote Wednesday night as a just expression of the nation's founding document, or a gross distortion of it. They saw Trump getting what he deserves, or being hunted by witches.

They reflect the polling that finds a great divide over whether Trump should be driven from office. On this, though, they might agree with Mark McQueen, a state government worker in Tallahassee, Florida: "Tensions are high across the land."

The Associated Press asked people about the impeachment in a half-dozen states important in the 2020 election or in the primaries that will choose Trump's Democratic rival.

TEMPE, Arizona

At the moment of Trump's impeachment, the loudspeaker at the Tempe Marketplace blared "Feliz Navidad." Children danced on a stage next to a Christmas tree taller than the surrounding buildings at this outdoor mall in the Phoenix suburbs.

Ana Daugeterre, a 34-year-old claims adjuster from nearby Mesa, responded "yay!" when she saw the impeachment news on Snapchat while waiting to meet a friend. "He's very disrespectful, not just to women but to everyone," she said of Trump.

Few were paying attention to the historic vote, among the young people taking selfies by the tree and the parents watching their children play in the specks of soapy water sprayed from the roof — what counts as snow in the desert.

"Sad day," pharmacist Rudy Dragone said when he learned what had just happened. "I think they should leave the man alone," he added. "I don't think you can run a country without breaking a few eggs."

Sports and an occasional holiday movie played on more than two dozen televisions at the assorted bars, restaurants, yogurt shops and hair salons. None showed the proceedings in Congress.

Stevie Anderson, a 30-year-old pastry chef from Mesa, found the news a bit anti-climactic. "Part of me is like, 'It's about time.' But part of me is like, 'We could've just let him finish his term because he's almost finished.'"

"But, good riddance."

LAS VEGAS

Eddie Ramos, a Las Vegas activist, followed the weeks of proceedings closely but missed the impeachment

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vote because he was attending a meeting of Latino leaders and Cory Booker, a Democratic presidential contender and senator from New Jersey. Impeachment didn't come up at the meeting.

Ramos clung to hope that the Senate would remove Trump from office — against all expectations. "The concerns right now I'm having is with the Republicans, and the reason is because they don't see the evidence," Ramos said. "The evidence is right there. They don't want to listen to anybody."

As House members started voting, Booker drove across town to meet members of the Asian American and Pacific Islander community at a boba shop in the Las Vegas' Chinatown district. Booker again didn't bring up the impeachment, instead joking around and chatting with voters before heading off to a town hall.

MANCHESTER, New Hampshire

Two televisions by the bar of the Puritan Backroom restaurant in Manchester showed the impeachment debate and vote. Chris Pappas, a Democratic congressman from New Hampshire, is a co-owner of the restaurant and announced just days before that he would support both impeachment articles.

At the restaurant, one person briefly cheered when the first impeachment article reached the necessary number of votes while one woman called out that it was a sad day.

Watching from a table near the television screens showing the vote, Susan Berntsen, a 54-year-old Republican and senior mortgage underwriter at a local bank, said she had voted for Trump in 2016 and felt the House has "tried to get rid of my vote."

She had voted for Pappas in the past but "I will not vote for him again," she said. She added, though: "We'll frequent his restaurant."

Walking outside the Thirsty Moose Taphouse, James Adamonis, a 39-year-old Navy veteran, voiced support for the impeachment. "He does absolutely nothing for this country, especially for veterans like myself," Adamonis said. "He's just an awful president. Everything he's done has been a lie right from the get go."

LOS ANGELES

Robert James, 72, was people-watching at a Los Angeles mall and waiting to meet a friend. He felt no need to watch the House debate because he's heard all the talking points already. "It's kind of like, how much can I listen to, you know?"

He found the impeachment to be a waste of time, even while thinking Trump needed to be "marked" somehow for improper conduct.

But Jake Murphy, 25, who works at a store in the mall, saw value in what was done and noticed plenty of people keeping tabs on developments. Murphy said the process can feel futile when the outcome — impeachment in the House, acquittal in the Senate — is essentially preordained.

Yet, he said, "I think 20, 30, 40 years from now, we'll look back when something else worse happens and we'll have this to stand by. We didn't remove him from office but we still did something."

DENVER

Morgan O'Sullivan, a 31-year-old Denver brewpub owner and Democrat, kept glancing at his phone as it sent him alerts.

His immediate wish: that his state's Republican senator, Cory Gardner, doesn't just fall into partisan lock-step during the Senate trial on the House articles of impeachment. If Gardner shows some independence, he said, "I'd gain a significant amount of respect for the Republican Party and I'd start to believe there was some bipartisanship out there."

The holiday song "It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year" played at Denver's Union Station as the House voted. Couples sipped drinks and commuters rushed for trains. Almost everyone else was looking at laptop or phone screens but not at the goings-on in Washington.

"That's happening right now?" Sonia Chacon, a 2016 Trump voter, asked incredulously as she sipped drinks with Loney Mascarenas, who backed Hillary Clinton.

Chacon quickly became disenchanted with Trump after the election and wants him out. She doubted

impeachment will accomplish that but said that "it shows we have a voice as a people."

TALLAHASSEE, Florida

"Any time you impeach a president, it's a historic moment," said Aimee Brewer, 49, a nurse from Monticello, Florida, who voted for Trump in 2016. "Being impeached is bad, but I don't know if it's going to be just a blemish or something bigger. Either way, I'm going to support him."

She said of the Democrats: "They never really made a decent case against him. We needed a little more proof; it was all circumstantial."

Concerning her support for Trump, she said: "I don't necessarily like listening to him and reading his tweets, but I like everything else he's doing."

Mark McQueen, 46, is an informational technology engineer with the state government and a Democrat. "We are divided as a society," he said. "Tensions are high across the land. I think people risk losing faith in the political process."

Calvan reported from Tallahassee, Florida; Ronayne from Los Angeles; and Woodward from Washington. Associated Press writers Nicholas Riccardi in Denver, Hunter Woodall in Manchester, New Hampshire; Jonathan J. Cooper in Tempe, Arizona; and Michelle L. Price in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

Defiant Trump rallies supporters as House impeaches him

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE, ZEKE MILLER and JILL COLVIN Associated Press

BATTLE CREEK, Mich. (AP) — Defiant in the face of a historic rebuke, President Donald Trump labeled his impeachment by the House of Representatives on Wednesday "a suicide march" for the Democratic Party as he delivered a rambling two-hour rally speech that overlapped the vote.

"Crazy Nancy Pelosi's House Democrats have branded themselves with an eternal mark of shame," Trump told the crowd in battleground Michigan, where he took the stage just minutes before becoming only the third president in U.S. history to be impeached. "It's a disgrace"

It was a dramatic and discordant split-screen moment, with Trump emerging from a mock fireplace like Santa Claus at the Christmas-themed rally as the impeachment debate in Washington played out. It was also Trump's longest rally ever, according to the tracking site Factbase, clocking in at two hours and one minute.

As Trump spoke — seemingly unaware for a stretch that the votes had been tallied — the House moved to impeach him on two counts. The first charges him with abuse of power for allegedly pressuring the president of Ukraine to investigate his Democratic rivals while crucial U.S. security aid was being withheld. The second charges him with obstruction of Congress for stonewalling investigative efforts.

Yet there is little chance Trump will be convicted by the Republican-controlled Senate and removed from office — a fact that Trump and his allies have pointed to as they have tried to minimize the votes' significance. Still, Trump clearly was stung by the stain that an "ugly" impeachment will attach to his legacy.

Throughout the rally, Trump unleashed his anger at the Democrats, slammed their effort as "illegal" and accused the party of demonstrating "deep hatred and disdain" for voters.

"After three years of sinister witch hunts, hoaxes, scams, tonight the House Democrats are trying to nullify the ballots of tens of millions of patriotic Americans," Trump said, claiming that it was the Democrats who were "interfering in America's elections" and "subverting American democracy."

Mid-rally, an aide held up a sign notifying Trump of the impeachment vote count and the president announced to the crowd that "every single Republican voted for us. Whoa. Wow, wow. ... And three Democrats voted for us."

During the rally, Trump went after several legislators by name, including Democratic Rep. Debbie Dingell of Michigan, whose husband, former Rep. John Dingell, died earlier this year. Trump said Debbie Dingell had thanked him for "A-plus treatment" after her husband's death, telling Trump that if her husband were looking down he would be thrilled.

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"I said, 'That's OK. Don't worry about it,'" Trump told the crowd. "Maybe he's looking up. I don't know." Some in the crowd gasped.

Dingell responded by tweet, saying Trump's "hurtful words just made my healing much harder."

Trump spent much of his marathon speech zigzagging between impeachment and unrelated topics, punctuating his remarks with more profanity than usual. He offered an extended riff on U.S. pilots being more attractive than "Top Gun" star Tom Cruise, went after Democratic presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg's difficult-to-pronounce last name and reveled — yet again — in his 2016 victory.

And after a day of harsh tweets, Trump at times projected a less-concerned attitude toward what he called "impeachment lite."

"It doesn't really feel like we're being impeached," he said shortly after taking the Christmas tree-adorned stage. Later, he added: "I don't know about you, but I'm having a good time. It's crazy."

At another point, he declared: "I'm not worried. I'm not worried."

Trump also worked to highlight the Republicans who have stood with him, telling the crowd that the Republican Party has "never been so united" and predicting victory in 2020.

Aides had said that Trump would wait until the House had finished voting before speaking at the rally, but he appearing onstage ahead of the votes and promised "the best speech you've ever heard."

Throughout the day, Trump had stared down the impending vote as he has every obstacle in his presidency: by broadcasting his grievances via tweet.

"Can you believe that I will be impeached today by the Radical Left, Do Nothing Democrats, AND I DID NOTHING WRONG!" Trump wrote in one of 45 tweets posted before noon. He asked his followers to "Say a PRAYER!"

Trump's urgency appeared to escalate later in the day as he switched to all capital letters: "SUCH ATROCIOUS LIES BY THE RADICAL LEFT, DO NOTHING DEMOCRATS. THIS IS AN ASSAULT ON AMERICA, AND AN ASSAULT ON THE REPUBLICAN PARTY!!!!"

As the impeachment debate wore on, Trump aides, including White House counselor Kellyanne Conway, fanned out across Capitol Hill to bolster the president's message that impeachment is helping Republicans and damaging Democrats. Vice President Mike Pence got to Michigan ahead of Trump for a daylong bus tour before the Battle Creek rally.

Serving as a warm-up act at the rally, Pence labeled the impeachment drive "a disgrace" and told the crowd that Democrats were "trying to impeach this president because they know they can't defeat this president."

Pelosi and the Democrats are "having their say tonight," he said, "but the Republican Senate is going to have their say in January."

Trump's campaign has experienced a surge in contributions and volunteers during the impeachment inquiry and aides were hoping to raise an additional \$2 million Wednesday ahead of the votes.

Colvin reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Amer Madhani and Kevin Freking in Washington and Jonathan Lemire in New York contributed to this report.

6 big questions ahead of Democrats' final debate of 2019

By STEVE PEOPLES AP National Political Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Just seven Democrats will take the stage for the sixth and final round of presidential debates in 2019. That's down from 20 candidates six months ago.

The field may be winnowing, but the primary contest remains deeply unsettled. The tug-of-war between the progressive and moderate wings of the party is deadlocked. There are essentially four front-runners, each with his or her own glaring flaws. And suddenly, one of the strengths of the Democratic Party's 2020 class — its diversity — has disappeared. Those issues and more will play out Thursday night when the Democratic Party's top candidates face off in Los Angeles, 46 days before primary voting begins.

Six big questions heading into the debate, to be carried live on local PBS channels and simulcast on CNN:

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WHY?

Forgive us for asking this question first, but why are Democrats debating this week at all? It's just six days before Christmas, Congress is making history on multiple fronts in Washington and primary voters have shown decreasing interest in each of the first five rounds. That's not to mention that most of the candidates — those in the top tier, at least — would happily skip this end-of-year clash. While the three lower-tier candidates in the debate will be desperate to make a splash, much of the political world will be focused elsewhere. That makes the bar extraordinarily high for a narrative-changing moment.

IS BIDEN THE FRONT-RUNNER AGAIN?

What a road it's been for Joe Biden. He opened the year in a dominant position, struggled to perform like a front-runner, lost the confidence of his party's establishment and somehow appears to be on solid footing again. The former vice president's rise and fall and rise again may have more to do with the inability of those around him to take a big step forward. Regardless of the reason, Biden enters the night in as strong a position as he's been in all year. He needs to avoid any major gaffes to stay there.

THE END OF 'MEDICARE FOR ALL'?

It was a litmus issue for ambitious Democrats a year ago. But now, only one of the seven Democrats on the debate stage is promising to fight for Medicare for All immediately after taking office. That would be the bill's author, Bernie Sanders, who is nothing if not consistent. The other progressive firebrand onstage, Elizabeth Warren, has settled on a plan to transition to Medicare for All by the end of her first term, while none of the other candidates would go even that far. Most support a hybrid system that would give consumers the choice to join a government-run system or keep the private insurance they have. No issue has symbolized the fight for the soul of the Democratic Party in 2020 more than this one. And yet, for now, the centrists appear to be winning.

CAN WARREN STEADY THE SHIP?

Speaking of health care, Warren's inability to maintain a consistent position on the issue is directly tied to her recent struggles. Lest anyone suggest debates don't matter, it was her awkward explanation for how she'd pay for Medicare for All in October's debate that sparked her slide. The Massachusetts senator tried to change the narrative in recent days by seizing on her more moderate rivals' connection to wealthy donors. But amid her evolving positions on health care, she's almost certain to face some tough questions of her own. We've noted that fewer people will likely be paying attention to this late-December affair, but it probably matters more for Warren than anyone else.

CAN BUTTIGIEG HOLD HIS GROUND?

The man you hadn't heard of a year ago enters the night as a legitimate top-tier presidential contender. And as such, Pete Buttigieg is finally being forced to answer some of the tough questions he's sidestepped for much of the year as the political world focused on the 37-year-old South Bend, Indiana, mayor's underdog story. There's a lot to dig into. Over just the last week, Buttigieg hosted wealthy donors at a California wine cave, disclosed consulting work for a big insurance company that preceded big layoffs and released a list of his bundlers that turned out to be incomplete. His challenges with black voters are well documented, but suddenly, Buttigieg's corporate connections are beginning to alienate the party's progressive activists. Danger.

DOES DIVERSITY STILL MATTER TO DEMOCRATS?

Democrats are fighting to convince black and brown voters that they're not taking their vote for granted in 2020. That fight will no doubt get harder if those voters tune into Thursday night's debate, where just one nonwhite candidate will appear on stage. That's Andrew Yang, the son of Taiwanese immigrants who

just barely met the polling threshold to qualify. Cory Booker, one of two African Americans still in the race, was not so lucky. Neither was Julián Castro, the only Latino running. Age could be a challenge as well: Three of the four top-tier candidates are in their 70s. This issue is not going away for Democrats, who need a young and racially diverse coalition to beat President Donald Trump, now 73, next November.

Catch up on the 2020 election campaign with AP experts on our weekly politics podcast, "Ground Game."

Democratic-led House expected to give Trump big win on trade

By KEVIN FREKING Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — One day after impeaching President Donald Trump, the Democratic-led House is expected to overwhelmingly pass one of his signature priorities, a rewrite of the 25-year-old free trade agreement he blames for shipping U.S. manufacturing jobs to Mexico.

A bill implementing terms of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement is expected to pass Thursday with bipartisan support after House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and her colleagues won key concessions from an administration anxious to pass the trade deal before next year's election season makes that task more difficult.

The agreement is projected to have only a modest impact on the economy. But it gives lawmakers from both parties the chance to support an agreement sought by farmers, ranchers and business owners anxious to move past the months of trade tensions that have complicated spending and hiring decisions.

Trump made tearing up the North American Free Trade Agreement a hallmark of his presidential run in 2016 as he tried to win over working-class voters in states such as Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania. The vote offers evidence that he followed through.

"We wouldn't even be discussing USMCA if it were not for President Trump," said Rep. Jason Smith, R-Mo. "You can't debate that."

It's unclear how many Democrats will vote for the bill. Some say the agreement still doesn't do enough to prevent U.S. jobs from relocating to Mexico, but it has won praise from Democrats who have routinely voted against prior trade agreements.

"I'll probably get some flak from some of my friends back in Chicago," said Rep. Danny Davis, D-Ill. "But I'm going to vote for this agreement because I believe that it moves us forward."

The House Ways and Means Committee advanced the bill by voice vote Tuesday. If the House passes it as expected, the Senate will likely take it up when its members return from the holidays and after dealing with impeachment.

The original NAFTA phased out nearly all tariffs on goods produced and traded within North America. It was extraordinary because it linked two wealthy, developed countries with a poor, developing country. Since then, trade with Canada and Mexico has increased more rapidly than trade with most other countries.

Democrats for years have charged that NAFTA led to massive losses of high-paying manufacturing jobs in the U.S. as companies moved production to low-wage Mexico. Trump distinguished himself from free-trade Republicans in the presidential primary with his NAFTA-bashing rhetoric, and his administration got Canada and Mexico to negotiate a rewrite.

The International Trade Commission projected in April that the USMCA would boost the economy by \$68 billion and add 176,000 jobs six years after taking effect.

Some of the biggest impacts would be felt in the U.S. automotive industry. The agreement aims to see more cars produced where workers earn an average of at least \$16 an hour.

The commission found that the new agreement would create 30,000 jobs in American auto parts plants. On the down side, the commission found the pact would increase the cost of pickup trucks and cars. That would hurt demand and reduce the number of jobs in factories that assemble cars by about 1,500.

Business and farm groups had been hitting the airwaves and the halls of Congress to get lawmakers to support the pact, putting pressure on Democrats to work with the administration even as labor unions remained wary that the new deal represented much of an improvement from NAFTA.

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Trump, at times, seemed resigned to the assessment that the two sides would never reach a compromise. "She's incapable of moving it," Trump asserted of Pelosi just a few weeks ago.

But behind the scenes, Trump's pointperson on trade, U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, was working with House Democrats on changes to address their concerns. The agreement includes a process that could lead to inspections of factories and facilities in Mexico that are not living up to labor obligations. It secures more than \$600 million for environmental problems in the NAFTA region. It also scrapped giving pharmaceutical companies 10 years' protection from cheaper competition in a category of ultra-expensive drugs called biologics, which are used to fight such illnesses as cancer, rheumatoid arthritis and diabetes.

In the end, the AFL-CIO endorsed the pact, as have the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and other major business groups. Trump can show he was able to follow through on a signature campaign issue while Democrats can say they were able to pursue impeachment while passing major legislation.

Some Republicans are grumbling that Democrats took too long to get USMCA across the finish line, but many are quite happy with the result. Rep. Mike Kelly, R-Pa., said the pact reminded him of when he would write a letter to Santa, and it would be answered with most of the presents he wanted on Christmas morning.

"This is certainly one of those times when the letter to Santa Claus actually got answered," Kelly said. ___ Associated Press writer Paul Wiseman contributed to this report.

Court: Part of 'Obamacare' invalid, more review needed

By **REBECCA SANTANA, MARK SHERMAN and RICARDO ALONSO-ZALDIVAR** Associated Press

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — A federal appeals court on Wednesday struck down "Obamacare's" now-toothless requirement that Americans carry health insurance but sidestepped a ruling on the law's overall constitutionality. The decision means the law remains in effect for now.

The 2-1 ruling handed down by a panel of the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans means the ultimate fate of the rest of the Affordable Care Act including such popular provisions as protections for those with pre-existing conditions, Medicaid expansion and the ability for children under the age of 26 to remain on their parents' insurance remains unclear.

The panel agreed with Texas-based U.S. District Judge Reed O'Connor's 2018 finding that the law's insurance requirement, the so-called "individual mandate," was rendered unconstitutional when Congress, in 2017, reduced a tax on people without insurance to zero.

The court reached no decision on the big issue — how much of the Affordable Care Act must fall along with the insurance mandate.

"It may still be that none of the ACA is severable from the individual mandate, even after this inquiry is concluded. It may be that all of the ACA is severable from the individual mandate. It may also be that some of the ACA is severable from the individual mandate, and some is not," Judge Jennifer Elrod wrote.

The decision sends the case back to a judge who already ruled once to throw out the entire ACA but with some guidance. O'Connor has to be more specific about which parts of the law can't be separated from the mandate, and also must take into account Congress' decision to leave the rest of the law essentially unchanged when it reduced the penalty for not having insurance to zero, Elrod wrote.

In dissent, Judge Carolyn Dineen King said her colleagues were prolonging "uncertainty over the future of the healthcare sector." King would have found the mandate constitutional, although unenforceable, and would have left the rest of the law alone.

California Attorney General Xavier Becerra, who is leading state efforts to defend the law, promised a quick appeal to the Supreme Court.

"For now, the President got the gift he wanted -- uncertainty in the healthcare system and a pathway to repeal -- so that the healthcare that seniors, workers and families secured under the Affordable Care Act can be yanked from under them," Becerra said in a statement.

Attorney General Ken Paxton of Texas, which spearheaded the lawsuit seeking to throw out the ACA,

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applauded the court's decision to declare the mandate unconstitutional.

"As the court's opinion recognized, the only reason the Supreme Court upheld Obamacare in 2012 was Congress' taxing power, and without the individual mandate's penalty that justification crumbled," Paxton wrote. "We look forward to the opportunity to further demonstrate that Congress made the individual mandate the centerpiece of Obamacare and the rest of the law cannot stand without it."

President Donald Trump also applauded the decision, calling it a "win for all Americans."

A legal analyst who has followed the health law from its early days said the ruling seems to indicate that the lower court judge who struck the entire statute down as unconstitutional overreached.

"The opinion suggests that Judge O'Connor went too far in invalidating the entire statute, and that he should have considered what Congress intended in 2017 when it zeroed out the mandate penalty," said Tim Jost, a retired law professor at Washington and Lee University in Virginia. Jost supports the ACA.

The court's ruling ensures "Obamacare" will remain a political issue during the 2020 election campaign, giving Democrats a line of attack against Trump and congressional Republicans. With the health law's ultimate fate still in doubt, Democrats will argue that Republicans are trying to strip coverage away from 20 million Americans.

Democratic House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called the ruling a "chilling threat" to those who rely on the Affordable Care Act.

All the Democratic presidential candidates favor expanding coverage to the remaining 27 million uninsured, although their ideas range from building on the Obama health law to replacing America's mix of private and public insurance with a single plan run by the government.

The decision comes after the conclusion of sign-up season for ACA coverage in most states. Technical glitches over the weekend had led to an extension until early Wednesday. That means the court ruling will not affect enrollment for 2020.

The lawsuit followed congressional approval of a major tax cut in 2017, which included the reduction of the "Obamacare" tax on the uninsured to zero. The case came about because "Obamacare" opponents noted a splintered Supreme Court ruling of 2012 that upheld the law. In that decision, conservative justices had rejected the argument that Congress could require that everyone buy insurance. But Chief Justice John Roberts, joining four liberal justices, said Congress did have the power to tax those without insurance.

With no tax in effect, the Texas lawsuit argued, the so-called "individual mandate" was unconstitutional and the entire law must fall. Judge O'Connor agreed in his December 2018 ruling.

Supporters of the law said the reduction of the tax penalty to zero could be read as a suspension of the tax, which didn't render the mandate unconstitutional. They said the structure for collecting a penalty from the uninsured remained in place.

They added that, even if the individual mandate was rendered unconstitutional by the tax cut bill, the rest of the law could be salvaged.

Congress had already failed to repeal the Affordable Care Act in its entirety, the law's supporters noted. What happened in 2017, they contended in written arguments, is that Congress "chose to make the minimum coverage provision unenforceable — while leaving every other part of the ACA in place."

Sherman and Alonso-Zaldivar contributed from Washington. AP Writer Kevin McGill in New Orleans also contributed to this report.

1 dead, 3 hurt in stabbings at Oregon shopping center, town

BEAVERTON, Ore. (AP) — A 20-year-old attacker carried out a series of stabbings and carjackings at a suburban Portland shopping center and in a nearby town Wednesday, killing one person and wounding three others before being arrested, authorities said.

Police in the city of Beaverton said two people were stabbed inside a Wells Fargo bank and a man was stabbed at a gym next door.

After the stabbings, the assailant stole the man's car and drove into the suburb of Tigard, where he stole

another woman's car and stabbed her, Officer Matt Henderson said at a news conference. He eventually got out of the car and ran from officers before being caught, police said.

A woman who was killed was a bank customer, Wells Fargo spokesman David Kennedy said. Another woman was critically injured there, and the two people whose cars were stolen had serious injuries, authorities said.

"This was a horrific crime, and our hearts go out to those victims and their families," Beaverton Police Chief Ronda Groshong told reporters. "This is an ongoing investigation with several crime scenes. ... It's going to take a while to process."

Beaverton police identified the alleged attacker as Salvador Martinez-Romero, according to The Oregonian/OregonLive. He is in jail on suspicion of murder, attempted murder and robbery. It wasn't immediately known if he has a lawyer. Police didn't release any details about the motive for the attack.

Noushin Luluvachi from nearby Bella Salon told the newspaper that police cars flooded the plaza and authorities ordered businesses to keep their doors closed.

Dillon Prickett said he pulled up a coffee shop next to the bank and saw officers going inside. Prickett, a 35-year-old from the town of Aloha, later saw a badly injured woman being brought out on a stretcher.

"She had so much bandaging on her face," he told The Oregonian/OregonLive.

The bank and salon are part of a shopping center that also includes a credit union, Planet Fitness, Safeway and Starbucks, among other businesses.

Beaverton is known for being Nike's headquarters.

President Donald Trump impeached by US House, 3rd in history

By LISA MASCARO and MARY CLARE JALONICK Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump was impeached by the U.S. House of Representatives Wednesday night, becoming only the third American chief executive to be formally charged under the Constitution's ultimate remedy for high crimes and misdemeanors.

The historic vote split along party lines, much the way it has divided the nation, over a charge that the 45th president abused the power of his office by enlisting a foreign government to investigate a political rival ahead of the 2020 election. The House then approved a second charge, that he obstructed Congress in its investigation.

The articles of impeachment, the political equivalent of an indictment, now go to the Senate for trial. If Trump is acquitted by the Republican-led chamber, as expected, he still would have to run for reelection carrying the enduring stain of impeachment on his purposely disruptive presidency.

"The president is impeached," Pelosi declared after the vote. She called it "great day for the Constitution of the United States, a sad one for America that the president's reckless activities necessitated us having to introduce articles of impeachment."

Trump, who began Wednesday tweeting his anger at the proceedings, pumped his fist before an evening campaign rally in Battle Creek, Michigan, boasting of "tremendous support" in the Republican Party.

"By the way," he told the crowd, "it doesn't feel like I'm being impeached."

The mood in the House chamber shifted throughout the day as the lawmakers pushed toward the vote. Democrats spun lofty speeches, framing impeachment as what many said was their duty to protect the Constitution and uphold the nation's system of checks and balances. Republicans mocked and jeered the proceedings, as they stood by their party's leader, who has frequently tested the bounds of civic norms.

The start of Trump's Michigan rally was delayed as the voting was underway in Washington but once he took the stage he boasted of accomplishments and complained bitterly about his foes for two hours, defiant rather than contrite. He called Pelosi names and warned the impeachment would be politically disastrous for Democrats. He has called the whole affair a "witch hunt," a "hoax" and a "sham," and sometimes all three.

Pelosi, once reluctant to lead Democrats into a partisan impeachment, gaveled both votes closed, seeing the effort to its House conclusion, even at risk to her majority and her speakership.

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No Republicans voted for impeachment, and Democrats had only slight defections on their side. The votes for impeachment were 230-197-1 on the first charge, 229-198-1 on the second. To mark the moment, voting was conducted manually with ballots.

While Democrats had the majority in the House to impeach Trump, a vote of two-thirds is necessary for conviction in the Republican-controlled Senate. The trial is expected to begin in January, but Pelosi was noncommittal about sending the House articles over, leaving the start date uncertain. Senate leaders are expecting to negotiate details of the trial, but Democrats are criticizing Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell for saying he won't be an impartial juror and already knows the outcome.

What Pelosi called a sad and solemn moment for the country, coming in the first year after Democrats swept control of the House, unfolded in a caustic daylong session that showcased the nation's divisions.

The House impeachment resolution laid out in stark terms the articles of impeachment against Trump stemming from his July phone call when he asked the Ukrainian president for a "favor" — to announce he was investigating Democrats including potential 2020 rival Joe Biden.

At the time, Zelenskiy, new to politics and government, was seeking a coveted White House visit to show backing from the U.S. as he confronted a hostile Russia at his border. He was also counting on \$391 million in military aid already approved by Congress. The White House delayed the funds, but Trump eventually released the money once Congress intervened.

Narrow in scope but broad in its charges, the impeachment resolution said the president "betrayed the nation by abusing his high office to enlist a foreign power in corrupting democratic elections," and then obstructing Congress' oversight like "no president" in U.S. history.

"President Trump, by such conduct, has demonstrated that he will remain a threat to national security and the Constitution if allowed to remain in office," it said.

Republicans argued that Democrats were impeaching Trump because they can't beat him in 2020.

Said Rep. Chris Stewart of Utah: "They want to take away my vote and throw it in the trash."

But Democrats warned the country cannot wait for the next election to decide whether Trump should remain in office because he has shown a pattern of behavior, particularly toward Russia, and will try to corrupt U.S. elections again.

"The president and his men plot on," said Chairman Adam Schiff, D-Calif., of the Intelligence Committee that led the inquiry. "The danger persists. The risk is real."

The outcome brings the Trump presidency to a milestone moment that has been building almost from the time the New York businessman-turned-reality-TV host unexpectedly won the White House in 2016 amid questions about Russian interference in the U.S. election.

Democrats drew from history, the founders and their own experiences, including as minorities, women and some immigrants to the U.S., who spoke of seeking to honor their oath of office to uphold the Constitution. Rep. Lou Correa of California delivered his comments in English and Spanish asking God to unite the nation. "In America," said Hakeem Jeffries of New York, "no one is above the law."

Republicans aired Trump-style grievances about what Arizona Rep. Debbie Lesko called a "rigged" process.

"We face this horror because of this map," said Rep. Clay Higgins of Alabama before a poster of red and blue states. "They call this Republican map flyover country, they call us deplorables, they fear our faith, they fear our strength, they fear our unity, they fear our vote, and they fear our president."

The political fallout from the vote will reverberate across an already polarized country with divergent views of Trump's July phone call when he asked Zelenskiy to investigate Democrats in the 2016 election, Biden and Biden's son Hunter, who worked on the board of a gas company in Ukraine while his father was the vice president.

Trump has repeatedly implored Americans to read the transcript of the call he said was "perfect." But the facts it revealed, and those in an anonymous whistleblower's complaint that sparked the probe, are largely undisputed.

More than a dozen current and former White House officials and diplomats testified for hours in impeachment hearings. The open and closed sessions under oath revealed what one called the "irregular channel"

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of foreign policy run by Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani, which focused on investigating the Bidens and alternative theories of 2016 election interference.

The question for lawmakers was whether the revelations amounted to impeachable offenses.

Few lawmakers crossed party lines.

On the first article, abuse of power, two Democrats, Jeff Van Drew of New Jersey, who is considering switching parties to become a Republican, and Collin Peterson of Minnesota voted against impeaching Trump. On the second article, obstruction, those two and freshman Rep. Jared Golden of Maine voted against. Democratic Rep. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii, who is running for president, voted "present" on both.

Van Drew sat with Republicans. And Rep. Justin Amash, the Michigan conservative who left the Republican party and became an independent over impeachment, voted with Democrats. "I come to this floor, not as a Republican, not as a Democrat, but as an American," he said.

Beyond the impeachments of Andrew Johnson and Bill Clinton, this first impeachment of the 21st century is as much about what the president might do in the future as what he did in the past. The investigation of Richard Nixon ended when he resigned rather than face the House vote over Watergate.

Rank and file Democrats said they were willing to lose their jobs to protect the democracy from Trump. Some newly elected freshmen remained in the chamber for hours during the debate.

Top Republicans, including Rep. Devin Nunes on the Intelligence Committee, called the Ukraine probe little more than a poor sequel to special counsel Robert Mueller's investigation of Russian interference in the 2016 election.

Mueller spent two years investigating the potential links between Moscow and the Trump campaign but testified in July that his team could not establish that Trump conspired or coordinated with Russia to throw the election. Mueller did say he could not exonerate Trump of trying to obstruct the investigation, but he left that for Congress to decide.

The next day, Trump called Ukraine. Not quite four months later, a week before Christmas, Trump was impeached.

Associated Press writers Laurie Kellman, Matthew Daly, Alan Fram and Andrew Taylor in Washington and Darlene Superville in Battle Creek, Michigan, contributed to this report.

Chinese national arrested for illegally entering Mar-a-Lago

By TERRY SPENCER Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — A Chinese national trespassed at President Donald Trump's Mar-a-Lago club Wednesday and was arrested when she refused to leave, police said, the second time this year a woman from that country has been charged with illicitly entering the Florida resort.

Jing Lu, 56, was confronted by the private club's security officers and told to leave, but she returned to take photos, Palm Beach police spokesman Michael Ogrodnick said in an email. Palm Beach officers were called and arrested her. It was determined she had an expired visa, Ogrodnick said.

Lu was charged with loitering and prowling and was being held late Wednesday at the Palm Beach County jail.

The president and his family were not at the club — he held a rally in Michigan on Wednesday as the U.S. House voted to impeach him. The Trumps are expected to arrive at Mar-a-Lago by the weekend and spend the holidays there.

Lu's arrest is reminiscent of the March arrest of Yujing Zhang, a 33-year-old Shanghai businesswoman, who gained access to Mar-a-Lago while carrying a laptop, phones and other electronic gear. That led to initial speculation that she might be a spy, but she was never charged with espionage and text messages she exchanged with a trip organizer indicated she was a fan of the president and wanted to meet him or his family to discuss possible deals.

Zhang was found guilty in September of trespassing and lying to Secret Service agents and was sentenced last month to time served. She is being held for deportation.

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In another Mar-a-Lago trespassing case, a University of Wisconsin student was arrested in November 2018 after he mixed in with guests being admitted to the club. He pleaded guilty in May and received probation.

In both of those cases, Trump and his family were staying at the resort, but none were ever threatened.

With the Atlantic Ocean to the east and Florida's Intracoastal Waterway to the west, Mar-a-Lago sits on the Palm Beach barrier island, a 128-room, 62,500-square-foot (5,8000-square-meter) symbol of opulence and power. The Trump family business doubled the initiation fee to \$200,000 after the president was elected in 2016. He spends many weekends between November and April there, mingling with the club's 500 members, who pay \$14,000 in annual dues to belong.

Trump purchased Mar-a-Lago from the foundation of the late socialite and cereal heiress Marjorie Meriweather Post in 1985. He and first lady Melania Trump held their 2005 wedding reception inside the 20,000-square-foot (1,860-square-meter) ballroom shortly after its completion.

Federal agencies spent about \$3.4 million per Trump visit, much of it on security, according to an analysis of four 2017 trips by the U.S. Government Accountability Office. The Secret Service doesn't decide who is invited or welcome at the resort; that responsibility belongs to the club. Agents do screen guests outside the perimeter before they're screened again inside.

2020 Democrats prepare to debate in shadow of impeachment

By KATHLEEN RONAYNE AND MICHAEL R. BLOOD Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A winnowed field of Democratic presidential contenders takes the debate stage Thursday for a sixth and final time in 2019, as candidates seek to convince anxious voters that they are the party's best hope to deny President Donald Trump a second term next year.

The televised contest ahead of Christmas will bring seven rivals to heavily Democratic California, the biggest prize in the primary season and home to 1-in-8 Americans. And, coming a day after a politically divided U.S. House voted to impeach the Republican president, the debate will underscore the paramount concern for Democratic voters: Who can beat Trump in November?

With voters distracted by the holidays and the impeachment proceedings in Washington, the debate in Los Angeles could turn out to be the least watched so far. Viewership has declined in each round though five debates, and even campaigns have grumbled that candidates would rather be on the ground in early voting states than again taking the debate stage.

The lack of a clear front-runner reflects the uncertainty gripping many voters. Would Trump be more vulnerable to a challenge from the party's liberal wing or a candidate tethered to the centrist establishment? Should the pick be a man or a woman, or a person of color? The Democratic field is also marked by wide differences in age, geography and wealth, and the party remains divided over issues including health care and the influence of big-dollar fundraising.

There will be a notable lack of diversity onstage compared to earlier debates. For the first time this cycle, the debate won't feature a black or Latino candidate.

The race in California has largely mirrored national trends, with former Vice President Joe Biden, Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren clustered at the top of the field, followed by South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, businessman Andrew Yang and billionaire philanthropist Tom Steyer.

Conspicuously missing from the lineup at Loyola Marymount University on Thursday will be former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, a billionaire who is unable to qualify for the contests because he is not accepting campaign donations. But even if he's not on the podium, Bloomberg has been felt in the state: He's running a deluge of TV advertising in California to introduce himself to voters who probably know little, if anything, about him.

Bloomberg's late entry into the contest last month highlighted the overriding issue in the contest, electability, a sign of the unease within the Democratic Party about its crop of candidates and whether any is strong enough to unseat an incumbent president. The eventual nominee will be tasked with splicing together the party's disparate factions — a job Hillary Clinton struggled with after defeating Sanders in a

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long and bitter primary fight in 2016.

Biden adviser Symone Sanders said to expect another robust exchange on health care. "This is an issue that is not going away and for good reason, because it is an issue that in 2018 Democrats ran on and won," she said.

Jess O'Connell with Buttigieg's campaign said the candidate will "be fully prepared to have an open and honest conversation about where there are contrast between us and the other candidates. This is a really important time to start to do that. Voters need time to understand the distinctions between these candidates." The key issues: health care and higher education.

The unsettled race has seen surges at various points by Biden, Warren, Sanders and Buttigieg, though it's become defined by that cluster of shifting leaders, with others struggling for momentum. California Sen. Kamala Harris, once seen as among the top tier of candidates, shelved her campaign this month, citing a lack of money. And Warren has become more aggressive, especially toward Buttigieg, as she tries to recover from shifting explanations of how she'd pay for "Medicare for All" without raising taxes.

In a replay of 2016, the shifting race for the Democratic nomination has showcased the rift between the party's liberal wing, represented in Sanders and Warren, and candidates parked in or near the political center, including Biden, Buttigieg and Bloomberg.

Associated Press writer Michelle L. Price contributed to this report from Las Vegas.

Catch up on the 2020 election campaign with AP experts on our weekly politics podcast, "Ground Game."

Uber to pay \$4.4 million to end federal sex harassment probe

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Uber Technologies Inc. will establish a \$4.4 million fund to settle a federal investigation into allegations that the San Francisco company allowed a rampant culture of sexual harassment, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission announced Wednesday.

The agreement ends an investigation launched in 2017 in which the commission found reasonable cause to believe the ride-hailing tech company "permitted a culture of sexual harassment and retaliation against individuals who complained about such harassment."

A claims administrator will send notices to women who worked at Uber between Jan. 1, 2014, and June 30, 2019. The commission will determine which claimants may be eligible for money from the \$4.4 million fund.

The company has also agreed to create a system to identify serial offenders and managers who fail to respond to concerns about sexual harassment in a timely manner.

The commission initiated the investigation after a former Uber engineer wrote a widely circulated blog post exposing sexual harassment at the company, including propositions from her boss. Susan Fowler said her complaints to human resources were ignored.

The company fired 20 people, including some managers, after an investigation by former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder's law firm.

The commission's district director in San Francisco, William Tamayo, applauded Uber's commitment to accountability, and said the "tech industry, among others, has often ignored allegations of sexual harassment when an accused harasser is seen as more valuable to the company than the accuser."

Uber's Chief Legal Officer Tony West said he was pleased to work with the commission on the settlement.

As part of its bid to increase transparency, Uber revealed earlier this month that more than 3,000 sexual assaults were reported during its U.S. rides in 2018. Drivers and riders were both attacked in the reported assaults, and some of the assaults occurred between riders.

Manafort's NY fraud case tossed over double jeopardy concern

By MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A New York judge threw out state mortgage fraud charges against Paul Manafort,

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ruling Wednesday that the criminal case was too similar to one that has already landed President Donald Trump's former campaign chairman in federal prison.

The ruling was a blow to what had widely been seen as an attempt by Manhattan's district attorney, a Democrat, to hedge against the possibility that Trump would pardon Manafort for federal crimes. District Attorney Cyrus Vance Jr.'s office said it would appeal.

Manafort was convicted last year in two federal cases stemming from his business dealings and is serving a 7½-year prison sentence.

Judge Maxwell Wiley ruled that state law precludes prosecution, citing double jeopardy grounds. Manafort, 70, wasn't in court for the ruling because of a health problem.

Defense lawyer Todd Blanche raised the double jeopardy issue soon after Manafort was arrested, saying that the charges brought by Vance violated a state law that bars repeat prosecutions for the same general conduct. He wrote in court papers seeking a dismissal that the factual overlap between the federal and state cases "is extensive — if not total."

"This indictment should never have been brought, and today's decision is a stark reminder that the law and justice should always prevail over politically-motivated actions," Blanche said in a written statement.

Wiley announced his ruling to prosecutors and Manafort's lawyers at a hearing that lasted just a few minutes. Coincidentally, it was scheduled for the same day that the U.S. House of Representatives was poised to impeach Trump over allegations he pressured his Ukrainian counterpart to investigate the son of political rival Joe Biden.

"Basically, the law of double jeopardy in New York state provides a very narrow window for prosecution," Wiley said.

Manafort didn't attend because of a heart-related condition that caused him to be moved to a hospital from a federal prison in Pennsylvania for about a week, two people familiar with the matter told The Associated Press on Tuesday. They were not permitted to discuss the matter publicly and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity. Blanche said Manafort was released from the hospital Wednesday and returned to prison.

Manafort looked frail as he shuffled into a Manhattan courtroom in June for an arraignment on the state charges. He remained seated as he entered a not guilty plea and had to be helped out of his chair. In March, at his sentencing in the second of the two federal cases, he used a wheelchair because of gout.

Manafort was convicted in federal court on charges alleging he misled the U.S. government about lucrative foreign lobbying work, hid millions of dollars from tax authorities and encouraged witnesses to lie on his behalf.

Vance announced the state charges just minutes after the March sentencing, saying in a statement at the time: "No one is beyond the law in New York."

The 16-count New York indictment alleged Manafort gave false and misleading information in applying for residential mortgage loans, starting in 2015 and continuing until three days before Trump's inauguration in 2017. He was also charged with falsifying business records and conspiracy.

Manhattan prosecutors had argued that the state case was based on allegations that were never resolved in Manafort's 2018 federal trial in Virginia. Jurors found Manafort guilty of eight counts of tax and bank fraud but couldn't reach a verdict on 10 others, resulting in a mistrial on those counts.

They also argued that the case should proceed because mortgage fraud and falsifying business records are state crimes, but not federal crimes.

In paperwork filed in connection with Manafort's arraignment, though, Manhattan prosecutors made clear that their case involved some of the same issues as those heard in federal court. For instance, they cited admissions Manafort made during his trial in Washington regarding misrepresentations in mortgage applications for properties in Manhattan and Brooklyn and on Long Island.

In May, New York lawmakers passed a bill to ease the state's double jeopardy protections and ensure that state prosecutors could pursue charges against anyone granted a presidential pardon for similar federal crimes. Democratic Gov. Andrew Cuomo signed the legislation into law in October.

The president can pardon federal crimes, but not state offenses.

Michael Balsamo contributed to this report.

Follow Michael Sisak at twitter.com/mikesisak

Police, protesters clash outside Barcelona-Real Madrid game

By **JOSEPH WILSON and BARRY HATTON** Associated Press

BARCELONA, Spain (AP) — Riot police clashed with protesters in the streets Wednesday night outside a soccer match between Barcelona and Real Madrid, as authorities sought to keep Catalonia's separatist movement from disrupting the game viewed by 650 million people worldwide.

The match in Barcelona's Camp Nou stadium began without incident and was halted only briefly when some fans threw balls onto the field bearing a message for the Spanish government to open a dialogue with the separatists.

The game, which drew nearly 100,000 spectators, ended in a scoreless draw.

Thousands of police and private security guards were deployed in and around stadium.

In the street clashes, riot police used batons to force the crowd back, some threw objects at officers lined up behind shields and other protesters fought among themselves. Authorities said nine people had been arrested, and Spain's national news agency Efe reported that 12 were injured.

At least four plastic trash cans were set on fire, and a smell of smoke wafted into the Camp Nou.

When the game ended, fans were directed to leave on the stadium's south side to avoid the clashes outside.

The separatists sought to promote their independence bid by using the media coverage of the game between Barcelona, the Spanish league leader, and its fierce rival Real Madrid. Known as El Clásico, the game was postponed from Oct. 26 amid violent protests by the separatists.

As crowds entered Europe's largest soccer stadium Wednesday night, security guards confiscated masks of Barcelona's Argentine star Lionel Messi from supporters, apparently to ensure they could be identified on closed-circuit cameras if they broke the law.

As the game began, some fans held up blue signs saying "Spain, Sit and Talk" and "FREEDOM." Others chanted, in Catalan, "Freedom for the Political Prisoners." Those messages referred to the Spanish government's refusal to discuss the wealthy northeastern region's independence, as well as the recent imprisonment of nine of the movement's leaders convicted for their roles in a failed 2017 secession bid.

A shadowy online group called Tsunami Democratic, which was behind the protest, had posted a message on social media saying: "Hello, world! Tonight Tsunami has a message for you."

Protest organizers said over 25,000 people signed up to demonstrate near the stadium in Barcelona, Catalonia's capital, although it was hard to distinguish between protesters and fans.

There was a festive atmosphere before the game, though some protesters briefly blocked main roads to the stadium.

The Barcelona team asked its fans to behave with civility and not to affect the match.

Francisco Sánchez, a 60-year-old mechanic, was outside Camp Nou hours before the match. He did not have a ticket, but was one of several protesters who distributed small blue banners with the message urging Spain to begin a dialogue.

"I hope this movement will make our leaders realize that they have to lay off the law and start taking," he said. "This can't be solved with violence, but through words."

Miguel Ángel Giménez, a 42-year-old policeman in a Barcelona shirt and scarf, drove with a friend over 700 kilometers (430 miles) from the southern region of Murcia to attend the match.

"Our friends back home told us we were crazy to cross half of Spain to go to a game that might not be played," he said, adding that "everything is quite calm. There is lots of security."

The U.S. Consulate in Barcelona advised people to avoid the area or use caution if near it.

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Henrik Noerrelund, a 55-year-old electrician from Denmark, flew in with his wife to attend his first Barcelona match after a lifetime supporting the club.

"In my parts, they used to say politics and football don't mix, but today you have to accept it," Noerrelund said. "It's there, you cannot separate it, you have seen it for many years, and I don't think they can manage to separate it and just play football."

Separatist sentiment grew sharply in Catalonia during the global recession that hit Spain hard. The 7.5 million residents of Catalonia are about equally divided by the secession question, according to polls and election results.

Separatists have used the Camp Nou stadium as a protest platform for years. They shout "Independence!" at a set time during matches and sometimes unfurl banners.

The Barcelona team has walked a fine line between supporting its fans' right to free expression and aligning itself with the greater interests of Catalonia. Many feel it does not fully support secession so as not to anger its Catalan fans who are not separatists or its millions of supporters across Spain.

With its slogan "More than a club," it presents itself as a Catalan institution, aligned with the region's proud cultural traditions and language, which is spoken along with Spanish in the semi-autonomous region.

Its rivalry with Real Madrid has a decades-old political undercurrent, with many Catalans seeing the capital's team as a symbol of domineering, central power and a hallmark of Spanish unity and authority.

Madrid supporters, in turn, see Barcelona as representing a traitorous region that wants to break up Spain. For many years, some Barcelona fans held up a massive banner at games that read "Catalonia is not Spain."

Players from both teams usually get along. The Spanish national team that won the 2010 World Cup and two European Championships was packed with players from both sides.

Security is always high whenever they play — just like at many soccer matches between fierce rivals — but there is no history of violence at the games.

Tsunami Democratic carried out its first major action in October when it organized a large protest after several of the secession movement's leaders were sentenced to jail for their role in a failed secession bid in 2017.

A call by Tsunami Democratic led to thousands of angry protesters gathering at Barcelona's airport. A street battle broke out between the most radical protesters and police inside and outside the terminal, and about 150 flights were canceled as ground transport was halted for hours. Protests by separatists left more than 500 people injured, half of them police.

Hatton reported from Lisbon, Portugal. Associated Press writers Joseph Wilson in Barcelona and Ciaran Giles in Madrid contributed.

Review: 'Rise of Skywalker' is a sour end to a grand saga

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

Not much has caused a disturbance in the "Star Wars" galaxy quite like Rian Johnson's "The Last Jedi," an erratic but electric movie that, regardless of how you felt about it, was something worth arguing about. The same can't be said for J. J. Abrams' "Rise of Skywalker," a scattershot, impatiently paced, fan-servicing finale that repurposes so much of what came before that it feels as though someone searching for the hyperspace button accidentally pressed the spin cycle instead.

A laundry list of plot points cluster like an asteroid field in "Rise of Skywalker." It's a spirited, hectic and ultimately forgettable conclusion of the Skywalker saga begun 42 years ago by George Lucas.

It was also surely a lot to ask for. Abrams, having already ably and nimbly resuscitated Lucas' space opera with the far less cluttered "The Force Awakens," was brought back (like seemingly everyone is in "Star Wars," dead or alive) with the task of not only wrapping up a trilogy but repairing the divides stirred up by "The Last Jedi" and stabilizing the franchise's revolving door of directors. Abrams here took over for the jettisoned Colin Trevorrow, who retains a "story by" credit.

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More significantly, "The Last Jedi" had to solve the underlying existential crisis in "Star Wars," a franchise in search of a reason beyond nostalgia (and, cough, billions of dollars) for continuing. The film, for sure, tries its damndest to come up with something. It is one busy, hardworking movie. But if anything has been proven by the many attempts to rekindle the magic of the original trilogy, it's that Lucas' cosmic amalgamation of Flash Gordon and Akira Kurosawa isn't so easily refabricated.

As the trilogy's third act, "Rise of Skywalker" takes the general shape of "Return of the Jedi," even resuscitating its villain: Emperor Palpatine (the very spooky Ian McDiarmid, now mostly a shadowy heap of CGI). He was last seen exploding in a Death Star air shaft, thrown to his apparent death by Darth Vader. Yet as "Star Wars," the most forever war there is, marches into its fifth decade, the undying demands of a pop culture phenomenon and corporate revenue generator has led to some unsettling resurrections.

This third "Star Wars" trilogy began with a plan: the first movie would belong to Han (Harrison Ford), the second to Luke (Mark Hamill) and the third to Leia (Carrie Fisher). Life interfered. Fisher, who along with Ford did more to enliven the original trilogy than any special effect, died of a heart attack in 2016. But she, too, has been brought back for "Rise of the Jedi," via bits and pieces of old footage. For an actress of such live-wire verve, the composite result — a handful of brief lines and gazes — is a hollow non-performance.

Palpatine, residing in a dark Sith lair, essentially sets the table. He summons Kylo Ren (Adam Driver) with an order to "kill the girl" (Daisy Ridley's Rey) and thereby inherit the throne. With the wave of his hand, Palpatine unearths an entire fleet of Star Destroyers. They rise from the depths, a new armada of doom for the First Order.

But this is only a piece of the movie's manic start. Abrams, who penned the screenplay with Chris Terrio ("Argo," "Justice League"), races to catch up with the many characters of the Resistance, among them Leia, Finn (John Boyega), Poe (Oscar Isaac), Rose (Kelly Marie Tran), Chewbacca (Joonas Suotamo) and C-3PO (Anthony Daniels). From the start, there's a rush to speed through a complex plot that sends a crowded Millennium Falcon in search of the hidden Sith base, a quest that includes a series of MacGuffins including — like a relic from a more earthbound adventure — a secret-wielding dagger.

"Star Wars" has never lacked for velocity but the pace here is schizophrenic. The movie can't sit still. Everyone's yelling and most of the bits of humor along the way are too blandly inserted. (C-3PO, at least, is in fine form.) Part of the rush, it seems, is to dismantle some of Johnson's groundwork and refocus the spine of the story on Rey's destiny and her complicated relationship with Ren. Whether that's a gesture to the toxic fandom unleashed by "Last Jedi" or not, some characters suffer for it, most notably Rose. She was the highlight of "The Last Jedi," which stirringly realigned the traditional power dynamics of "Star Wars." But she's regrettably sidelined for much of the action this time.

Some of the tropes that Johnson deconstructed have been reassembled. Poe, the Han Solo heir apparent, is again central. New worlds bring new friends — a Stormtrooper-turned-rebel played by Naomi Ackie; an old rival of Poe's named Zorii Bliss (Keri Russell); a cute Muppet-like creature named Babu Frik — and old (Billy Dee Williams' Lando). Many of them make a good impression but the encounters proceed predictably.

To go too much into the narrative of "Rise of Skywalker" isn't necessary and, besides, I'm not totally sure I could explain it all, anyway. That, in itself, is one of the movie's most disappointing aspects: It's trying too hard. What the streaming spinoff "The Mandalorian" has proven (besides that people will go absolutely gaga over infant Jedi Masters) is that simplicity of story line pays in "Star Wars," just as it does in westerns. "Rise of Skywalker" aims for the brilliant parallel action of "Return of the Jedi" but ends up with mounted horse-like creatures charging on the wing of a Star Destroyer. Somewhere, Jar Jar Binks is celebrating. He might not be the most misplaced thing in the galaxy far, far away, after all.

But even if "Rise of Skywalker" has its fair share of missteps, it gets some things right. The grief of a Wookiee, for one. Kylo's new black helmet, laced with blood-red cracks, for another. A lightsaber fight amid the sea-strewn rubble of a Death Star swells with watery grandeur. And most of all, the anguished Rey-Ren duel finally takes on the mythical dimensions of earlier "Star Wars" tugs between good and evil.

Yet for a movie predicated on satisfying fans, "The Rise of Skywalker" is a distinctly unsatisfying conclusion to what had been an imperfect but mostly good few films. But hope springs eternal among "Star

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Wars" fans. Some will likely emerge from this latest installment paraphrasing Leia: "Help us, Baby Yoda. You're our only hope."

"Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker," a Walt Disney Co. release, is rated PG-13 by the Motion Picture Association of America for sci-fi violence and action. Running time: 142 minutes. Two stars out of four.

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

WHO sees tobacco drop among men, but vaping effects unclear

By MIKE STOBBE AP Medical Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Worldwide, the number of men using traditional tobacco products has finally started to decline, health officials said Thursday.

Four out of five tobacco users globally are men, so declines among males "mark a turning point in the fight against tobacco," Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, head of the World Health Organization, said in a statement.

The agency's new report covers an array of tobacco use, including cigarettes, cigars and chewing tobacco. But the WHO did not count electronic cigarettes as tobacco products, and officials could not say what impact the growing popularity of vaping devices has had in diverting people from traditional smoking.

WHO officials said they plan to release a report on e-cigarette use early next year.

Researchers previously reported declines in male and female smoking rates internationally, but the drop wasn't enough to offset the growth in world population. The number of female tobacco users did shrink since 2000, but the number of male tobacco users continued to edge up, bringing the total to more than 1.3 billion people.

That appears to have changed last year, the agency said. And the WHO now estimates the number of male tobacco users will decline by more than 1 million next year and by 5 million by 2025.

The agency said the decline is driven mainly by a decrease in the number of males who exclusively use smokeless tobacco.

The WHO report found that countries in southeast Asia had the world's highest rates of tobacco use — 45% among males and females age 15 and older. But that percentage also is projected to decline, officials said.

In a call with reporters, the WHO's Dr. Alison Commar noted that smokeless tobacco use was once common among all women in India and some other Asian countries, but lately it's mainly seen only in older women.

"It seems to be a dying tradition," she said.

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.

Fiat Chrysler-Peugeot merger could bring more clean vehicles

By TOM KRISHER, COLLEEN BARRY and ANGELA CHARLTON Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Fiat Chrysler and Peugeot agreed Wednesday to merge into a single company that will become the world's fourth-largest automaker, a giant that could bring consumers a wider variety of cleaner vehicles at a faster pace, including more powered by electricity.

The boards of the two companies signed the deal to achieve what neither was good at alone: conquering the challenges of stricter emission rules and navigating the transition to battery-powered and autonomous vehicles.

The new company, which doesn't yet have a name, will be led by Peugeot's cost-cutting CEO Carlos Tavares. Fiat Chrysler CEO Mike Manley will stay on, though it was unclear in what capacity and for how long.

For consumers, the agreement will give Fiat Chrysler access to "multi-energy platforms" already devel-

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oped by Peugeot, including electric vehicles, Manley said.

"That obviously increases choice and improves overall fleet performance from a CO2 perspective," he said. "In any competitive environment, you win because you offer your customers great value."

But don't expect to see Peugeot sedans in the U.S. anytime soon. Tavares said the combined company's brands would stay where they originated.

The deal, long sought by both corporations, is expected to close within 15 months, although it will have to clear anti-trust and other regulatory hurdles.

On a series of conference calls, Tavares and Manley talked about obtaining \$4.1 billion (3.7 billion euros) in annual savings, largely from combining research and platforms, the underpinnings on which vehicles are built. The companies said they do not expect any factory closures, but administrative cuts that could cost jobs will be considered. Added vehicles should be able to fill up underutilized plants, they said.

By themselves, the companies were relatively weak in new technology, such as electric vehicles, with Peugeot ahead of Fiat Chrysler. But together, they will be able to turn out more plug-in hybrids and electric vehicles.

"In going this route, they should be more affordable," said Stephanie Brinley, principal analyst for IHS Markit. "Consumers should be able to get it faster, and they should be able to get it at a lower cost."

Peugeot has strong small and midsize cars, markets that Fiat Chrysler has almost abandoned in the U.S. because of a huge consumer shift toward SUVs and trucks. But Brinley said Fiat Chrysler could use the Peugeot underpinnings to build more small and midsize SUVs at a faster pace for sale in the U.S.

Meanwhile, Peugeot would get Fiat Chrysler's expertise in pickup trucks and commercial vehicles and could perhaps sell some of the popular Jeep brand vehicles in Europe and elsewhere.

Tavares said both companies' brands have a strong following, especially in their home countries, that could be used as an advantage. "When there is passion and emotion, there is room to work on the marketing communications," he said.

The merger will not be the the last in a capital-intensive industry that faces challenges of new technologies, Brinley said. Although she expects more combinations, she said competitors such as Ford Motor Co. have been able to get economies of scale and share technology costs through partnerships that are short of a full-blown combination.

Ford, for instance, is partnering with Volkswagen, while the much smaller Mazda of Japan is joining with Toyota.

"I think that it's not unrealistic that we will see another merger or acquisition," Brinley said. "But strategic alliances can be just as effective or more. I think we'll see both happening."

The deal, which was first unveiled in October, will create a company with revenues of nearly 170 billion euros (nearly \$190 billion) that produces 8.7 million cars a year — just behind Volkswagen, the Renault-Nissan alliance and Toyota.

The new company will be legally based in the Netherlands and traded in Paris, Milan and New York. It will start with a strong base in Europe, where Peugeot is the second-largest car maker. Fiat makes most of its profits in North America and has a strong presence in Latin America. It will be looking to strengthen its position in China, where both companies lag.

"That is part of the opportunities," Tavares said. "We are not happy with our performance there. We think we should be doing better in China."

Fiat Chrysler has been looking for an industrial partner in recent years. A previous deal with French rival Renault last spring fell apart over French government concerns about the role of Renault's Japanese partner, Nissan.

Both the French government and unions backed the new deal from the beginning, Tavares said.

Barry reported from Milan, Italy. Charlton reported from Paris.

Feds: Man whose number found on NJ shooter was selling arms

By DAVID PORTER Associated Press

NEWARK, N.J. (AP) — A bail hearing for a man whose number was found in the pocket of one of the perpetrators of last week's fatal attack on a Jewish market was halted and abruptly postponed Wednesday after prosecutors said they had evidence he was selling firearms from his pawn shop.

No date was immediately set for a new hearing.

Investigators had previously disclosed that they found several weapons in a search last week of Ahmed A-Hady's home and a pawnshop owned by his family.

On Monday, U.S. Magistrate Joseph Dickson gave the parties two additional days to present arguments for whether A-Hady should be detained pending a trial or released on bail.

On Wednesday, prosecutors told the federal judge they have evidence that A-Hady was buying and selling firearms. A-Hady, 35, had been prohibited from possessing any firearms because of a previous felony conviction, prosecutors have said.

A-Hady's brother, Adhem, said outside the courtroom Wednesday that his brother asked his attorney to ask for the hearing to be adjourned because "he was unhappy with some of the things they were saying that were false," referring to the statements about alleged gun sales. The attorney, public defender K. Anthony Thomas, didn't confirm that account.

A-Hady, who claimed in court Monday that his name actually is spelled Hady, hasn't been charged with providing any of the weapons used in the Dec. 10 Jersey City shootings by two attackers authorities say were motivated by anti-Jewish and anti-law enforcement hatred. Four people were killed, including a Jersey City police detective who was shot before the attackers drove to the market.

A-Hady's number was found in the pants pocket of David Anderson, one of two people killed by police after the hours-long standoff at the JC Kosher Supermarket. Anderson and Francine Graham killed Jersey City Police Det. Joseph Seals before driving about a mile to the store, where they killed three people inside, according to authorities.

Anderson and Graham are also prime suspects in the slaying of a livery driver found dead in a car trunk in nearby Bayonne the previous weekend, authorities have said.

Law enforcement officials have said Anderson and Graham appear to have acted alone when they targeted the market, even though they had expressed interest in a fringe religious group that often disparages whites and Jews.

They were armed with multiple weapons including an AR-15-style rifle and a shotgun, and a pipe bomb was also found in the stolen U-Haul van they drove to the market. Two of the weapons used by Anderson and Graham were bought by Graham in Ohio last year, police have said. It's not known where they got the three other guns.

The FBI said a search of A-Hady's residence and a pawn shop where he works in Keyport, about 15 miles south of where the shootings occurred, yielded weapons including three AR-15-style assault rifles, three handguns and one shotgun as well as more than 400 rounds of ammunition. Authorities have charged A-Hady with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Prosecutors told the judge Wednesday that direct and circumstantial evidence shows A-Hady was buying and selling rifles including AR-15 assault weapons. Shortly after that, the hearing was adjourned.

A-Hady's attorney had sought to have his client released on \$100,000 bond secured by his family's residence and business.

Walk-in clinics for opioid addiction offer meds first, fast

By CARLA K. JOHNSON AP Medical Writer

OLYMPIA, Wash. (AP) — Every time she got out of jail, Jamie Cline started hustling again for heroin, driven by an addiction she didn't understand.

"You want to get clean so bad. You know something's killing you and you can't stop," said the 33-year-old

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who used heroin for 10 years.

This spring was different. While in a jail work-release program, she took a medication called buprenorphine. It quieted a voice in her brain that told her to keep using.

When she got out of jail, she headed for an Olympia clinic where a doctor is working to spread a philosophy called "medication first." The surprising approach scraps requirements for counseling, abstinence or even a commitment to recovery.

Instead, it starts with fast access to prescribed medicine that prevents withdrawal sickness. After patients start feeling better, they choose their next steps.

In St. Louis, Seattle and San Francisco, people with opioid addictions can start medication on their first day of treatment. Early research suggests the approach can change lives. But it will be a tough sell elsewhere: Nearly two-thirds of U.S. treatment centers don't offer anti-addiction drugs and there's resistance to easy access.

Within two weeks of walking into the Olympia clinic, Cline had a job at a millwork shop. Now, nine months later, she has received a promotion and a raise, rebuilt relationships, found a room in a sober house and is proud to display a chain of "Clean & Serene" key fobs she earned from Narcotics Anonymous. She takes buprenorphine twice daily.

"I've got my life back," she said.

The opioid crisis now kills more Americans than car crashes and is estimated to cost more than \$500 billion a year. The epidemic is driving new treatment strategies for the 2 million Americans addicted to opioids.

Bupe, as it's known, isn't new. Approved to treat opioid addiction in 2002, it blocks the effect of other opioids and eases withdrawal. It's an opioid, but an imperfect fit for the brain's receptors, so its effect is mild and it doesn't cause a high. It also lowers the danger of overdose and raises the likelihood a person will stay in treatment.

But finding a prescriber without a waiting list is difficult. Guidelines say bupe should be used alongside counseling, which some doctors don't feel equipped to provide.

Success stories have convinced some experts that buprenorphine should be available in homeless camps, syringe exchanges and anywhere people use drugs.

"This is an obvious thing to do," said University of Washington researcher Caleb Banta-Green.

STABILIZING INFLUENCE OR FALSE PROMISE?

Martyn is a 57-year-old former heroin user who goes by one name. He was living in a Seattle homeless camp known as the Jungle, running errands for drug dealers.

"Toward the end, you're not trying to get high anymore," he said. "You're just trying to not be sick."

He got his first bupe prescription at Neighborcare Health, a free downtown clinic. Once stabilized, he found a spot in a sober home with help from a caseworker.

"Now I've got a little room in a house I share with seven other guys." On bupe, Martyn said, "I don't get that high feeling. And that's OK."

Critics worry medication-first clinics will add to the flood of opioids on the street.

The tactic could also lead to a false understanding of addiction, said Atlanta-based counselor Samson Teklemariam, who directs training for NAADAC, the Association for Addiction Professionals.

"You're promising the public a cure," Teklemariam said. "There's not a pill that you can take to alleviate symptoms of true addiction."

In Missouri, some treatment programs had shunned buprenorphine, particularly long-term, in favor of abstinence-based counseling and support groups. Some didn't have doctors or nurses who could prescribe it. Some believed medications were a crutch that prevented true recovery.

In 2017, with overdose deaths rising, Missouri tied federal grant money to a medication-first philosophy. Programs would get money only if they started clients on meds rapidly and if they dropped rules about medication time limits and attending counseling.

The result? Medication treatment increased and more patients stayed in treatment longer, said Rachel Winograd of University of Missouri-St. Louis who studied the implementation.

There's pushback in Missouri from those who see the idea as at odds with "full and thriving recovery,"

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Winograd said. "The state is saying, we can do both."

MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

Research is beginning on the idea. In New York, 250 drug users will be enrolled at syringe exchanges. Some will be randomly assigned to get same-day buprenorphine prescriptions and others will get standard care.

"If the older treatment philosophies were working, we wouldn't have the problems we're having today," said Dr. Aaron Fox, who is leading the study.

In Washington state, health officials are encouraging jails and drug courts to embrace buprenorphine. Many are changing their policies.

Not everyone approves. In Skagit County, Prosecuting Attorney Rich Weyrich calls buprenorphine "low-grade heroin." He bristles at requirements tying drug court money to medication assisted treatment.

"There are lots of things happening in the big cities that I don't agree with," Weyrich said.

Sixty miles away in Seattle, King County Prosecutor Dan Satterberg has tried to convince other prosecutors of buprenorphine's value. His sister, Shelley, used heroin for years. In 2015, after starting treatment with buprenorphine, she got clean.

"I saw firsthand the difference it made in her life," Satterberg said. "We became a family." Years of drug use had worn down Shelley's health. She died in March 2018 of an infection at age 51.

Buprenorphine should be "as easy to get as heroin," Satterberg said. To those in law enforcement who worry about it trading on the street, he said: "At least they're not buying fentanyl and supporting the Mexican cartels. At least they're not going to overdose. And they might find out buprenorphine actually makes them feel better."

A pilot study in Seattle treated 147 patients in one year, most of them homeless. The program reached capacity within three months and kept people in treatment at rates similar to other programs. That drew financial support from a foundation, resulting in four new sites. They are expected to serve 1,250 patients over two years.

To treat one patient for one year at the Olympia Buprenorphine Clinic costs \$3,000 in public money, said its medical director, Dr. Lucinda Grande. She said the money will prevent steeper hospital costs down the road.

A 'GODSEND'

On a recent evening, Grande spent more than three hours helping people start or maintain treatment with buprenorphine.

She met with patients in a cluster of donated furniture, a floral-pattern sofa and chairs. Two new patients wanted to start buprenorphine for the first time.

Former patient Jamie Cline proudly told Grande of recent accomplishments at her workplace.

"You're getting used to being successful," Grande observed, smiling with encouragement.

Later, pharmacist Brad Livingstone arrived. At the front desk, he opened a clear plastic bin with 14 pill bottles inside.

He called out a name. Jon Combes, 36, of Lacey, Washington, stepped up to get his pills, a "godsend" that has helped him sleep.

"They don't care what your past is," Combes said of the clinic's staff. "They just want to get your future going."

Combes had been coming to the clinic for three weeks. He took home a 12-day supply of medication.

That evening, 31 people picked up medications. Young men with tattoos and ballcaps. A middle-aged woman with stylish hair and smart clothes. A man in a wheelchair. A woman with a school-age child. Some nights there are as many as 45 picking up meds.

Cline scrolled through her phone to find photos of herself when she was in the depths of heroin addiction. The pictures remind her of where she's been, a time she does not want to forget.

"I'm always going to be an addict," she said. "I've got to be very careful where I step."

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Macron, under strike pressure, mulls changes to pension plan

By SYLVIE CORBET undefined

PARIS (AP) — The French government launched negotiations with labor unions Wednesday on potential changes to a landmark pension reform bill that sparked crippling transportation strikes and protests across the country.

Prime Minister Edouard Philippe met with union leaders and employer group representatives after French President Emmanuel Macron asked his government to hold talks on possible amendments to the reform package.

The general strike that started Dec. 5 dramatically impacted train and subway service as drivers remained off the job. Teachers, doctors and other workers joined the walkouts, and hundreds of thousands of people participated in nationwide protests.

An agreement with hard-left unions appeared to be a way off. The leader of the CGT union, Philippe Martinez, acknowledged a "deep disagreement" with the prime minister after their meeting.

"We have two clashing perspectives," Martinez said. "We don't have the same values."

The government is seeking to reach a deal with more moderate unions, which Macron hopes may weaken the protest movement.

A close aide to Macron, who spoke anonymously in accordance with customary practices, said the president "won't abandon the project" but is "willing to improve it." Macron himself was not planning to get involved in the negotiations or to make an announcement in coming days.

Among the reforms is raising by two years the age at which individuals would be eligible to retire with a full pension, arguably the main target of worker opposition. The proposal to increase the state-sanctioned retirement age from 62 to 64 is currently scheduled for 2027.

Officially, the government has said very little about the areas on which it would be willing to compromise. The furthest government spokeswoman Sibeth NDiaye went was to call the higher retirement age a "proposal."

Macron's planned reforms are aimed at unifying France's 42 different pension regimes into one, which would abolish special provisions allowing certain workers to retire as early as their 50s. The changes also are intended to keep the pension system financially viable, according to the government.

"We must find a compromise," Macron's aide said.

With Christmas approaching, Macron and his government are seeking to pile the pressure on unions for a "pause" in the strikes during the holiday period so families can get around the country.

Some unions, though, want the strikes to continue over the holidays.

The government plans to formally present the pension bill in January. The text will then need to be approved by parliament, where Macron's party has a majority.

On Wednesday, Macron appointed a junior minister for pensions, Laurent Pietraszewski, a 53-year-old lawmaker with expertise on the issue.

The nomination comes two days after the minister who had developed the new pension system, Jean-Paul Delevoye, resigned over potential conflicts of interest in a major blow to the government.

The government had long hoped that France's largest union, the center-left, reformist CFDT, would back the pension reforms.

CFDT Secretary-General Laurent Berger has said he was in favor of a "universal and fair" new system but that delaying the introduction of the new age of retirement was a "red line."

His union joined the protest movement last week after the government detailed the planned measures.

Berger said following Wednesday's talks that he sensed the French government wanted to "discuss and open up" but he thinks "we are very, very far" from an agreement to end the impasse at this stage.

The head of the moderate UNSA union, Laurent Escure, noted Wednesday that the government moved its position somewhat, especially on measures to help those working in harsh conditions.

Another round of negotiations was scheduled for Thursday.

Recent polls show a majority of the French support the strikes and protests, as they fear the proposals will make them work longer in return for lower pensions.

Jean-Daniel Levy, a political analyst with the Harris Interactive market research firm, said a big majority of the French hope the strikes will be suspended during the holidays but want the protests to resume.

"There's a general feeling that protesting at Christmas time would be perceived as radical attitude, with which the French cannot agree," he said.

Sorting out the complex French pension system has been a challenge to all recent governments. Most notably in 1995, after three weeks of massive strikes, the government of President Jacques Chirac was forced to abandon its reform proposals.

But not all have met with failure. More recently, presidents Nicolas Sarkozy and Francois Hollande got changes through in the face of protests. Under Sarkozy in 2010, the retirement age was raised from 60 to 62. Four years later, Hollande passed a law that effectively meant the French needed to work for 43 years to get their full pension.

Calif consumer privacy law can affect businesses across U.S.

By JOYCE M. ROSENBERG AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — If the thousands of Californians who use Josh Simons' app for musicians demand next month that Vampr delete their personal information, Simons will be ready to comply.

The social network company expects to be one of many businesses nationwide subject to the California Consumer Privacy Act, a law that takes effect Jan. 1 and gives consumers control over the personal information companies collect, store and often share with other enterprises. Simons, who already had a user privacy policy in place before the act became law last year, has retooled the policy and the Vampr app.

"We have half a million users around the world," Simons says. "It's definitely something we have to keep in mind."

Companies across the country need to be aware of the law's complex requirements even if they don't deal directly with consumers. It covers companies that conduct business in California, including out-of-state companies that sell products or merchandise to California residents. The law can also cover companies that make money from providing services like payment processing or website hosting to businesses that are subject to the law.

The law does have provisions aimed at exempting small businesses — companies are subject to the law if they have worldwide revenue above \$25 million, collect or receive the personal information of 50,000 or more California consumers, households or electronic devices; or those who get at least half their revenue from selling personal information. But small companies can easily reach the 50,000 threshold for collecting or receiving information — an individual who has a phone, tablet, PC at home and one at work counts as four users, not one.

Vampr is currently about 1,000 users shy of the threshold, but Simons expects the app will reach that milestone sometime in January. The Santa Monica, California-based company's home state is its biggest market.

The law aims to protect consumers from having their information sold without their knowledge or consent. It was passed by the California Legislature in June 2018, and modeled on the European Union's General Data Protection Regulation, which took effect in May 2018. The California law was enacted amid increasing concern about companies sharing consumer data, especially after it was learned that the data firm Cambridge Analytica improperly accessed Facebook user information.

The California law gives consumers the right to know what personal information companies collect from them, and what businesses do with it — whether they share, transfer or sell it, and who is the recipient of the information. Under a key provision, companies must give consumers the option to have their information deleted from databases.

The law covers a wide range of data including names, addresses, Social Security and passport numbers, email addresses, internet browsing histories, purchasing histories, personal property and health informa-

tion, professional or employment information, educational records and information from GPS apps and programs.

Companies subject to the law must ensure their systems and websites are in compliance. Many without in-house technology staffs have hired companies to install software that among other things creates the website buttons and links that allow consumers to see their information and opt out of having it stored. Some companies may decide to get legal help to be sure they're on the right track. Simons, who himself installed the software to make Vampr compliant, estimates the process cost the business \$7,000, a large sum for a small company.

While the California statute takes effect Jan. 1, enforcement won't begin until July 1. And the law as it stands now may change — the Legislature has already passed a number of amendments to clarify and refine the law's requirements, and the state Attorney General's Office is still formulating regulations and guidance about the law.

Some of the law's complexities grow out of the relationships between companies that use one another's data, for example, in the case of a payment processor that must use credit card and other personal information provided by a retailer in order to complete transactions. In such cases, the service provider must sign a contract that prohibits them from using the data for any purpose other than what is stated in the contract, says Travis LeBlanc, an attorney specializing in cybersecurity law with the firm Cooley LLP in Washington, D.C.

Vendors that can connect with client companies' systems can unintentionally be an entry point for hackers trying to steal personal information. That was the case when hackers were able to steal personal information for more than 60 million Target customers in 2013.

"Vendors are often a source of weakness," LeBlanc says. "The CCPA helps encourage the company that has the primary relationship with consumers to take responsibility for that."

Attorneys find some of the law's provisions to be vague, making it unclear which companies need to comply. One provision says information is protected if it is sold or transferred "to another business or a third party for monetary or other valuable consideration." Attorneys are wondering what "valuable consideration" means, says David Stauss, an attorney with expertise in technology law with the firm Husch Blackwell in Denver.

"This can really become difficult to apply," Stauss says. "There are some things that are going to clearly be sales, but that's a gray area."

Some companies that won't be subject to the law nonetheless are setting themselves up to be compliant. Some expect that other states will enact similar laws, while others are aware that data privacy is a sensitive issue they need to address.

"We're in an evolving area where consumer sentiment runs very high," says Dawn Barry, president of Luna Public Benefit Corp., a San Diego-based company that collects data for medical research. Although the nature of the company's business makes it exempt from the California law, it nonetheless is compliant with the statute and Europe's GDPR, Barry says.

Follow Joyce Rosenberg at www.twitter.com/JoyceMRosenberg. Her work can be found here: <https://apnews.com>

Scientists narrow age estimate for fossils of human ancestor

By MALCOLM RITTER AP Science Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Scientists say they have finally calculated the age of the youngest known remains of *Homo erectus*, which is generally considered an ancestor of our species.

The fossilized skull fragments and other bones were uncovered on the Indonesian island of Java in the 1930s. Determining their age has been a scientific challenge, and a wide range has been proposed by numerous studies.

In a report released Wednesday by the journal *Nature*, scientists conclude the remains are between

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108,000 and 117,000 years old. Researchers used five dating techniques on sediments and fossil animal bones from the area, combining 52 age estimates for the analysis. The project took 13 years to complete.

"I don't see any way to date this site more thoroughly," said paleoanthropologist Russell Ciochon of the University of Iowa, an author of the study.

H. erectus arose in Africa about 2 million years ago and spread widely there and in Asia, and possibly into Europe. It reached Java more than 1.5 million years ago, and the new dates suggest it died out at least 35,000 years before the arrival there of our own species, *Homo sapiens*.

H. erectus may have been doomed on Java by climate change that turned its open woodland environment into rain forest, Ciochon said. Still, it evidently existed longer on Earth than any other species on our "Homo" branch of the evolutionary tree.

Susan Anton, a New York University anthropologist who did not participate in the work, called the dating effort "heroic." But she said she considered the reported age range to be too narrow. She said she preferred a span of less than 550,000 years old to more than 100,000 years old.

That's roughly what she and co-authors proposed in a paper published in 2011. The younger end of the range in that paper was as recent as 120,000 years, which she said is virtually the same as the new result.

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NFL at 100: Helmets go high tech in quest for player safety

By TIM BOOTH AP Sports Writer

Long gone are the days of the leather shell and single-bar face mask.

Today's football helmets are technological marvels, using cutting edge materials and design elements to make the headgear the safest it's been in the 100th season of the NFL.

No piece of protective equipment has undergone as much transformation over the past decade as the helmet. Through a combination of technological advancements, investment by the NFL and an open marketplace for development, helmets are rapidly evolving — with more innovation on the horizon.

The helmet will never be expected to fully prevent concussions or other head trauma. But the advancements in recent years are making a major difference, the league says.

"There is no question there has been significant success from the helmet manufacturer side in terms of building equipment that is more protective than it was four or five years ago," said NFL executive vice president Jeff Miller.

There are four primary helmet manufacturers currently — legacy brands Riddell and Schutt, along with relative newcomers VICIS and Xenith — with plenty more up-an-coming companies awaiting their opportunity to get into a rapidly growing market, with new materials, new ideas popping up on a regular basis.

It's an industry with countless areas for development. Some companies focus on the materials that provide padding and protection on the inside of the helmet. Some focus on the materials used for the outer shell. Others make the face mask a priority.

And some — the four major brands — put it all together, often using input from current players to create a design they want to wear and provide a combination of maximum usability and safety.

"Competition is good for everybody. Competition keeps everybody moving fast, keeps everybody on their toes and wanting to bring new, better things to the field," said Thad Ide, senior vice president of research and product development at Riddell.

Helmets have evolved from the original hard leather of the NFL's infancy to hard polycarbonate single-piece shells with various amounts of padding and air bladders that served as the primary form of head protection into the beginning of this century.

Starting in the early 2000s with Riddell's Revolution and Schutt's DNA, helmets began to morph, taking advantage of emerging technologies and an increased focus on concussions. And with those new models coming to market started an increased awareness by the players of what was going on their heads.

"A couple of decades ago I think you would have had a hard time finding guys in the NFL or NCAA locker

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rooms who knew what helmet they were wearing. They just didn't pay attention," said Glenn Beckmann of Schutt Sports. "Now with all the attention and all the conversation and everything we've all learned as a society, as a sport, as a manufacturer, as an athlete they realize it's to their benefit to know what is going on and to use all this information to their advantage."

Now new helmet designs are hitting the market yearly and being tested in a joint partnership between the NFL and NFL Players Association for certification. In 2019 alone, 11 new helmet models manufactured by the four major companies were tested by the NFL and NFLPA.

And there are other companies waiting for their opportunity to join the NFL marketplace.

"So much of that is yet to be determined in terms of where we're going to head. But I do think that we're going to continue to see innovation and the best way for that to occur is with more competitors as opposed to fewer," said Nick Esayan, CEO of LIGHT Helmet, which has yet to be tested and approved by the NFL for use.

The NFL deserves credit for stimulating some of the development. The league started its Head Health Challenge earlier this decade, awarding grants to promising technologies. VICIS — the top rated helmet the past three years by the NFL and NFLPA — started in part due to a grant from the league earned through one of the early years of the programs.

Four years ago the NFL created what it calls an engineering road map specifically for helmets. The goal was to collect and analyze as much data as possible to map and track where helmet impacts were occurring, what types of impacts were causing head injuries and have all that information shared with the helmet manufacturers.

The league also created digital finite element models which allowed helmet manufactures the ability to recreate an unlimited number of helmet impacts based on the data collected by the league. That helps to discover new ways to reinforce or alter areas of the helmet that showed to be having repeated impacts.

Think of it like the old crash test dummies from car manufactures. Except technology has allowed all that work to now be done on computers and tested countless times. The results have created opportunity for the helmet manufacturers to analyze where the majority of injury-causing impacts are taking place.

"This is the most focused set of research that we have done on the engineering front against protective equipment," Miller said. "The original budget for the five-year program was \$60 million, and as we make the way through the years we're staying on budget with that. When we're done we'll have spent \$60 million."

So what's the next big development in an industry where the technology is changing at seemingly a daily rate?

Riddell, for example, has already introduced 3D mapping capabilities which allow the interior fit of the helmet to be customized to the head of each individual player.

"It's a helmet created for them and only them," Ide said.

VICIS and Schutt also have customization options to try and improve fit. There is widespread agreement that at the professional level helmets' interior fits will eventually be customized for every player.

But the next big step, and one that could be coming sooner than later, is position-specific helmets that merge the increase in technology with the additional data available on where helmet hits are happening based on players' positions.

"If we know where he is getting hit, where he is suffering impacts to his helmet and they are in one or two focused areas on his helmet, then that helps manufacturers design helmets that have more protective attributes in that area," Miller said. "We know when quarterbacks suffer head injuries it's most often to the back of their head because they're getting sacked, frequently they're clutching the ball and they're not bracing themselves for impact, so the back of their head hits the turf. Why does their helmet look the same in the back as other players look in the back?"

While quarterbacks are an obvious example of how helmets can be designed specific to a position, there is wide opportunity for development. For example, a player on the line of scrimmage — offensive and defensive linemen — have more regular helmet impacts typically to the front area of the helmet because of the nature of the position. But those impacts are at lower speeds.

Whereas defensive backs and wide receivers have fewer helmet impacts, but when they happen they

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are at higher velocities.

Manufacturers have also started placing sensors in helmets that can provide real-time feedback about the impact forces absorbed by the helmet during a collision. Riddell has used a sensor system in some of its helmets for more than a decade.

Whatever the next big advancement, it will be a joint effort between the helmet manufacturers and the league and players' association in trying to target additional ways to protect players.

"Now that we have captured, collected, collated and analyzed it to share that information back to the helmet manufacturers it's easier for them to build models that better protect toward the sorts of injuries we see on field," Miller said.

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

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Thursday, Dec. 19, the 353rd day of 2019. There are 12 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Dec. 19, 1998, President Bill Clinton was impeached by the Republican-controlled House for perjury and obstruction of justice (he was subsequently acquitted by the Senate).

On this date:

In 1777, during the American Revolutionary War, Gen. George Washington led his army of about 11,000 men to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, to camp for the winter.

In 1946, war broke out in Indochina as troops under Ho Chi Minh launched widespread attacks against the French.

In 1950, Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower was named commander of the military forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

In 1960, fire broke out on the hangar deck of the nearly completed aircraft carrier USS Constellation at the New York Naval Shipyard; 50 civilian workers were killed.

In 1974, Nelson A. Rockefeller was sworn in as the 41st vice president of the United States in the U.S. Senate chamber by Chief Justice Warren Burger with President Gerald R. Ford looking on.

In 1975, John Paul Stevens was sworn in as an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

In 1986, the Soviet Union announced it had freed dissident Andrei Sakharov (SAH'-kah-rahv) from internal exile, and pardoned his wife, Yelena Bonner. Lawrence E. Walsh was appointed independent counsel to investigate the Iran-Contra affair.

In 1997, James Cameron's epic film "Titanic" opened in U.S. theaters.

In 2001, the fires that had burned beneath the ruins of the World Trade Center in New York City for the previous three months were declared extinguished except for a few scattered hot spots.

In 2002, Secretary of State Colin Powell declared Iraq in "material breach" of a U.N. disarmament resolution.

In 2003, design plans were unveiled for the signature skyscraper — a 1,776-foot glass tower — at the site of the World Trade Center in New York City.

In 2008, citing imminent danger to the national economy, President George W. Bush ordered an emergency bailout of the U.S. auto industry.

Ten years ago: A U.N. climate conference in Copenhagen ended with a nonbinding accord to show for two weeks of debate and frustration; the deal was brokered by President Barack Obama, who attended the conference on its final day. A snowstorm paralyzed much of the eastern U.S. on the last holiday shopping weekend.

Five years ago: President Barack Obama said Sony Pictures Entertainment "made a mistake" in shelving "The Interview," a satirical film about a plot to assassinate North Korea's leader; Sony defended its deci-

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sion, saying it had no choice but to cancel the film's Christmas Day theatrical release because the country's top theater chains had pulled out in the face of threats.

One year ago: President Donald Trump announced that all 2,000 U.S. troops in Syria would be leaving that country, a move that sparked alarm and outrage from Republican lawmakers and prompted the resignation of Defense Secretary Jim Mattis; Trump explained the decision by declaring victory against the Islamic State group. The Federal Reserve raised its key interest rate for the fourth time in 2018 to reflect the economy's continued strength, but signaled that it expected to slow its rate hikes in 2019.

Today's Birthdays: Former game show contestant Herb Stempel is 93. Actress Elaine Joyce is 76. Actor Tim Reid is 75. Paleontologist Richard E. Leakey is 75. Musician John McEuen is 74. Singer Janie Fricke is 72. Jazz musician Lenny White is 70. Actor Mike Lookinland is 59. Actor Scott Cohen is 58. Actress Jennifer Beals is 56. Actor Robert MacNaughton is 53. Magician Criss Angel is 52. Rock musician Klaus Eichstadt (Ugly Kid Joe) is 52. Actor Ken Marino is 51. Actor Elvis Nolasco is 51. Rock musician Kevin Shepard is 51. Actor Derek Webster is 51. Actress Kristy Swanson is 50. Model Tyson Beckford is 49. Actress Amy Locane is 48. Pro Football Hall of Famer Warren Sapp is 47. Actress Rosa Blasi is 47. Actress Alyssa Milano is 47. Actress Tara Summers is 40. Actor Jake Gyllenhaal (JIH'-lihn-hahl) is 39. Actress Marla Sokoloff is 39. Rapper Lady Sovereign is 34. Journalist Ronan Farrow is 32. Actor Nik Dodani is 26.

Thought for Today: "He that jokes confesses." — Italian proverb.

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