

Groton Daily Independent

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Happy New Year!

2020

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AGENCY**
for our way of life
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Trustworthy and reliable
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Competitive prices

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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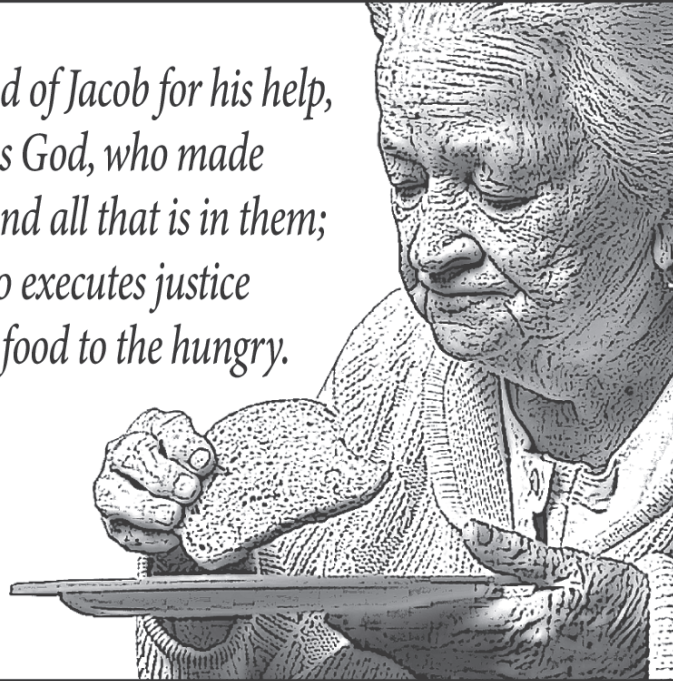
Sunday Extras



THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*Happy is he who has the God of Jacob for his help,
whose hope is in the Lord his God, who made
heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them;
who keeps truth forever, who executes justice
for the oppressed, who gives food to the hungry.
The Lord gives freedom
to the prisoners.*

PSALM 146: 5-7 



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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

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

2. In Acts 7, who recounts the story of Abraham along with the captivity and freedom of the children of Israel?
Paul, Peter, Stephen, Andrew

3. From II Corinthians 3:17, "Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is ...?"
Hope, Liberty, Love, Peace

4. Who went to sleep and fell out the window while Paul preached?
Esua, Enid, Eutyclus, Eucyrus

5. In what Macedonian city were Paul and Silas imprisoned?
Philipi, Neapolis, Jericho, Jerusalem

6. From Acts 13:6, Barjesus was a ...?
Cousin of Jesus, Early priest, Sorcerer, Friend of Mark

ANSWERS: 1) Old; 2) Stephen; 3) Liberty; 4) Eutyclus; 5) Philipi; 6) Sorcerer

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Homestyle Meatloaf

Meatloaf is as comforting as food gets. If you agree, then take comfort in this easy homestyle recipe.

- 16 ounces extra-lean ground sirloin or turkey breast
- 1/2 cup plus 1 tablespoon dried fine breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes
- 2 tablespoons reduced-sodium ketchup
- 1 (12-ounce) jar fat-free beef gravy

1. Heat oven to 350 F. Spray a 9-by-5-inch loaf pan with butter-flavored cooking spray. In a large bowl, combine meat, breadcrumbs, celery, onion, parsley flakes, ketchup and 1/4 cup beef gravy. Mix well to combine. Pat mixture into prepared loaf pan.

2. Bake for 45 minutes. Evenly spoon remaining gravy over meatloaf. Continue baking for 15 minutes. Place loaf pan on a wire rack and let set for 5 minutes. Divide into 6 servings.

• Each serving equals: About 167 calories, 7g fat, 15g protein, 11g carb., 531 mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 2 Meat, 1 Starch.

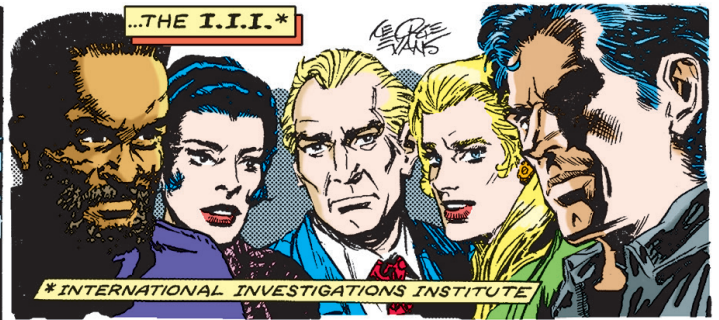
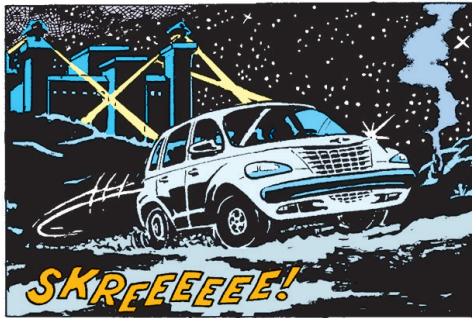
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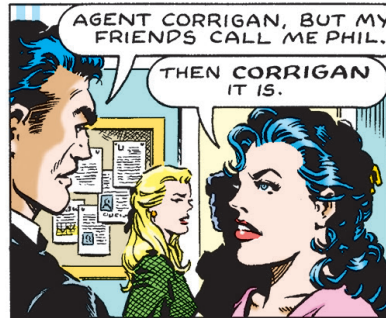
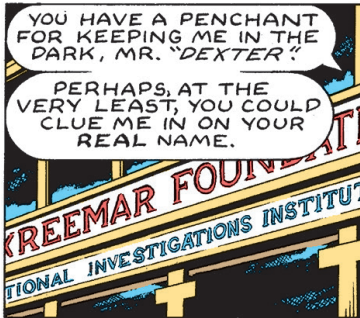
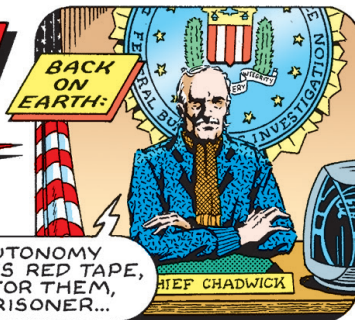
Our Story So Far...

HELD CAPTIVE IN A TOP-SECRET GOVERNMENT INSTALLATION, DALE ARDEN IS FREED BY MEMBERS OF AN ELITE ORGANIZATION...



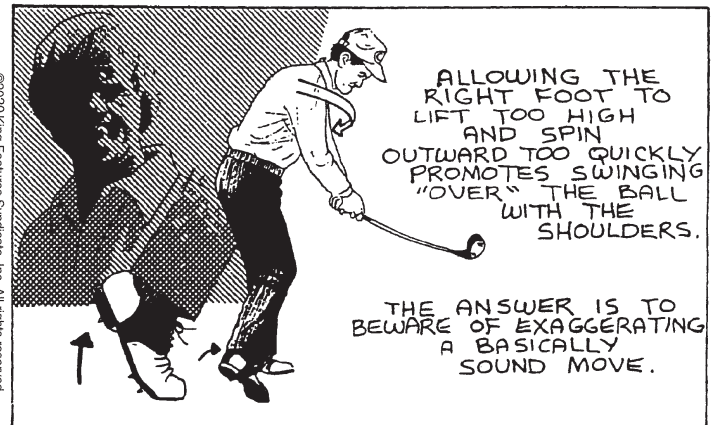
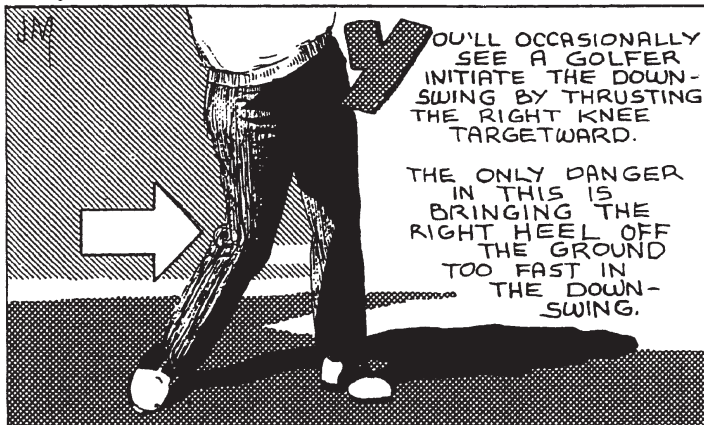
FLASH GORDON

12-29
BY JIM KEEFE



CATCH YOUR BREATH WHILE YOU CAN, READER---
NEXT WEEK: FLASH JOURNEYS TO THE CITY OF THE HAWKPEOPLE AS WE RETURN TO MONGO!
DON'T MISS IT!!

Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





Doctors Disagree on Blood Pressure Target

DEAR DR. ROACH: I am a 91-year-old male. When I switched primary care physicians, my new doctor shook his head because my previous doctor had never told me about my low GFR readings and being borderline diabetic. In the past I had assumed that if the doctor didn't mention any low or high blood test results, everything must be OK. I no longer assume: I ask for a copy of the results and question them.

The new doctor referred me to a nephrologist. My blood pressure at the time was usually in the 130-140/60-70 range. He told me that for a person of my age, that was too low. He gave me a target of 159/89. Then on my next visit to primary care, I was told that my blood pressure was too high; I was prescribed losartan. I am testing my blood pressure daily, and the past few days it has been in the 170s. So, what is a good target for my blood pressure? Which doctor is correct? — *A.L.*

ANSWER: There is no absolute right answer to your question. On the one hand, overaggressive treatment of blood pressure in a 91-year-old is unnecessary and may lead to symptoms of lightheadedness, especially upon standing. Other blood pressure drugs may have additional side effects.

On the other hand, a 91-year-old has a higher risk for heart disease and stroke, and in someone with a low GFR reading (a measurement of kid-

ney function) and borderline diabetes (which further increases the risk of heart attack and stroke), most experts would aim for a blood pressure goal that is closer to 120-130/80-85, as long as it isn't causing annoying symptoms. I'm not clear why the doctor wasn't happy with your usual blood pressure, since a level of 130-140/60s seems very reasonable for a man your age if you aren't having side effects. If 170 is the usual systolic pressure on your new regimen, I would ask about going back to the old one.

DEAR DR. ROACH: I always have had small breasts. Suddenly, in my mid-70s, my breasts grew, and now at 80 I have outgrown most of my clothes. My doctor said that it is fat, but I have gained only a few pounds. Could this be hormonal? Have you addressed this issue before? — *S.F.*

ANSWER: I haven't addressed this before. Breasts change size during a woman's life for many reasons. Breast tissue is a mixture of fat and glandular tissue. For young women, there's proportionally more glandular tissue, the amount of which tends to decrease over time. After menopause, the breasts become less glandular; what is lost is replaced by fat, as there is less estrogen.

About 20% of women will notice significantly larger breasts after menopause; however, this usually occurs along with overall weight gain. Significant breast enlargement without much weight gain is not common in my experience.

Hopefully, your doctor did a thorough examination. However, I think it is very unlikely that your breast size changes represent a tumor. Very rarely, there are estrogen-producing tumors, so if there were other reasons to be concerned, your doctor might check blood levels of hormones, including estrogen.

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

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1. Who composed and performed "Your Song" in 1970?
2. Which group wrote and released "Heartache Tonight"?
3. Who released "Pick Up the Pieces"?
4. What is "409" in the 1962 Beach Boys song?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "Waiting for the break of day, Searching for something to say, Flashing lights against the sky, Giving up I close my eyes."

Answers

1. Elton John. It was released as a b-side single to "Take Me to the Pilot," but DJs liked "Your Song" better and made that the a-side. It was his first big hit in the U.K.
2. The Eagles, in 1979. The song received a Grammy Award for Best Rock Performance by a Duo or Group with Vocal.
3. The Average White Band, in 1974. It didn't chart in the U.K. until American DJs started to play it and it soared to the top of the U.S. charts.
4. A 409 cubic-inch Chevrolet engine.
5. "25 or 6 to 4," by Chicago in 1970. It's about being up in the middle of the night trying to write a song. Said this way, "Twenty-five or (twenty-) six to four," the meaning becomes clearer. It's about the time the song jelled and came together.

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Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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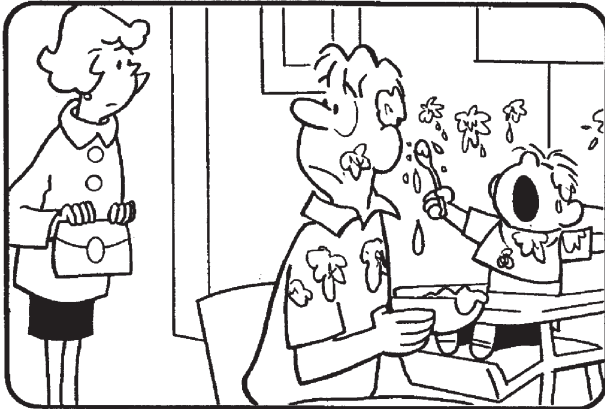
GRIN and BEAR IT



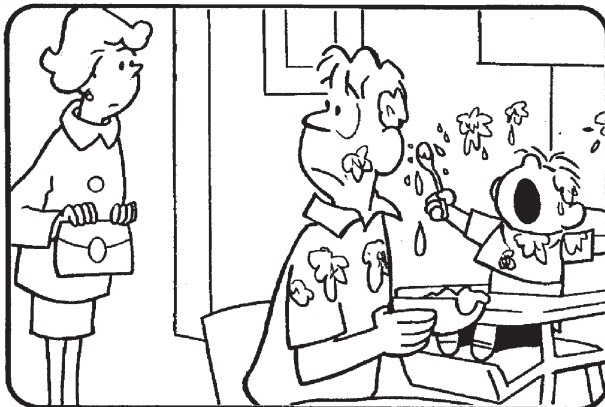
"AND you've been pre-approved for a platinum card!"

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



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Differences: 1. Button is missing. 2. Skirt is different. 3. Food splat is missing. 4. Chair back is lower. 5. Nose is smaller. 6. Hair is different.

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- Mayonnaise can stand in for cooking oil in a recipe. Use in an equal amount. It works especially well in brownies.

- “When flossing, cut a length of floss, then tie the loose ends together. Now you have a circle and can hold it open with your fingers rather than wrapping the loose ends around your fingers and cutting off the circulation. All it takes is a little tension on the circle to keep the line taut.” — *C.E. in Kentucky*

- “If you have to wash dishes by hand, here’s a tip for rinsing utensils: Clean silverware together and toss into a colander. Then you can rinse the whole thing together instead of each fork, knife or spoon. This will save time, and water.” — *M.V. in Ohio*

- Apply car wax to shower walls to keep soap scum from hanging around. Petroleum jelly can be used in shower-door tracks to lubricate them, since it won’t wash away easily.

- “I like to use metal cans for storage in my shop. To make them safer, I file the rims and dip them in a shallow disk of melted wax. When the wax hardens, it fills in all the potential jagged edges that might lead to a small cut.” — *F.J. in Florida*

- Here’s a fun plumbing trick: Use a wad of soft white bread (centers only) to plug up a pipe you are working on. The bread disintegrates quickly but will stop up any trickle of water long enough for you to seal two pipes together.

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

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DETRIMMING THE TREE! Christmas trees come down a lot faster than they go up. How many ornaments can you count in the above picture? It's up to you to decide.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

FEET
FEAT
FLAT
FLAY
CLAY



DOWN THE LADDER!

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

SUMMING SEVEN IS SIMPLE! See if you can arrange these seven numbers so that they add up to 100:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 = 100

Answer: 15 + 36 + 47 + 2 = 100

TRY CHEWING ON THIS ONE! It's blue ribbon time if you can find the following "cow" words. All of the words get progressively longer, and they all start with the word COW. Use the following definitions:

1. COW (in place).
2. Monk's hood.
3. Frightened off.
4. Cattle herder.
5. Tuft of hair.
6. Cowlick.
7. Cowlick.
8. Cowlick.
9. Cowlick.

1. COW _____

2. COW _____

3. COW _____

4. COW _____

5. COW _____

6. COW _____

7. COW _____

8. COW _____

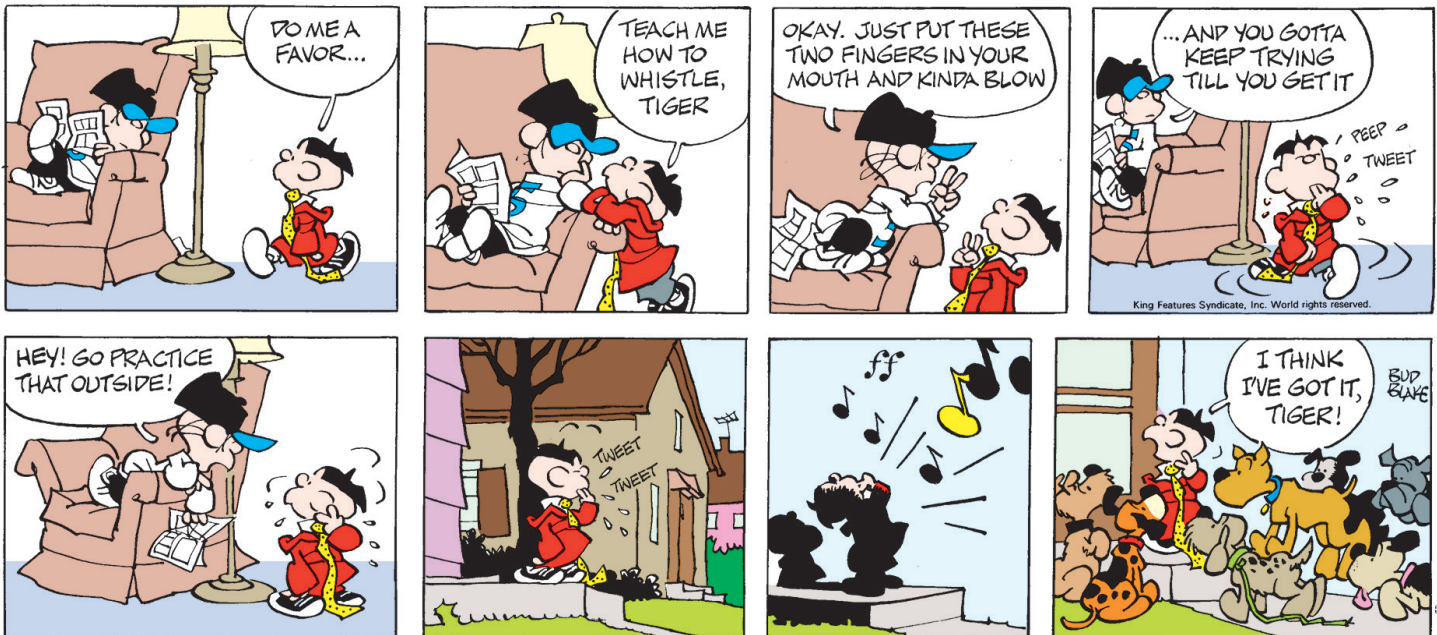
9. COW _____

Illustrated by David Coulson

1. CAMP to SITE
 2. WORK to FAME
 3. BELL to ROPE
 4. LIMP to CANE
 5. DADO to CUTS
1. CAMP, CAME, SAME, SATE, SITE.
2. WORK, FORK, FORE, FARE, FAME.
3. BELL, BOLL, ROLL, ROLE, ROPE.
4. LIMP, LIME, LINE, LANE, CANE.
5. DADO, DADS, DUDS, CUDS, CUTS.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



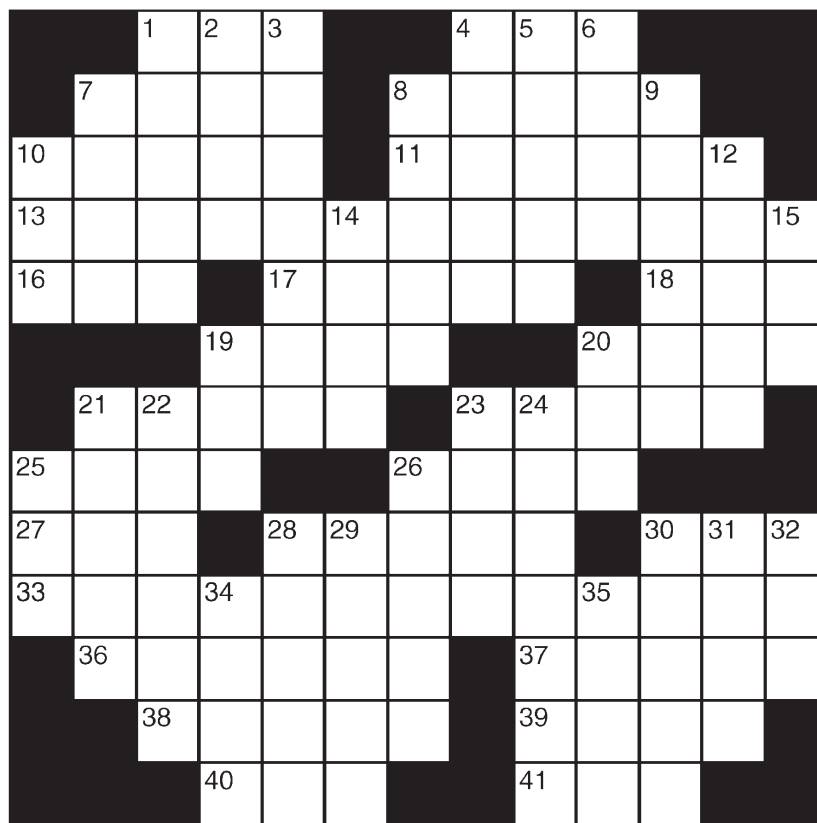
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King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Possesses
- 4 Cribbage scorer
- 7 Ringlet
- 8 Preclude
- 10 "M*A*S*H" setting
- 11 Scents
- 13 Kitchen pair
- 16 — and outs
- 17 "The — Show With Jon Stewart"
- 18 Whopper
- 19 Citi Field team
- 20 Marching musicmakers
- 21 Topper for Miss USA
- 23 Rushmore or Rainier



- 25 Responsibility
- 26 Cried
- 27 Lawyers' org.
- 28 Memorable mission
- 30 Shooter ammo
- 33 13-Across, e.g.
- 36 African desert wind
- 37 Ointment
- 38 Military subdivision
- 39 Unattractive
- 40 Mauna —

- 41 More, to sleeve
- Manuel
- 10 Japanese pond carp
- 24 One skilled in playing dead
- 25 "— Kapital"
- 26 Goes up a few degrees
- 28 Worship
- 29 Parkinson's treatment
- 30 Doctor's orders?
- 31 Jealousy
- 32 Iron or Bronze
- 34 Out of control
- 35 Long story

DOWN

- 1 Throws hard
- 2 Neighborhood
- 3 — : spoken :: libel : written
- 4 Danger
- 5 Black wood
- 6 Ready for action
- 7 Quarter, e.g.
- 8 CSA president
- 9 Overcoat
- 11 More, to sleeve
- 12 Epithet for Simon Templar (with "The")
- 14 Information
- 15 Scarlet
- 19 Spring month
- 20 On the other hand
- 21 Big brass
- 22 Slanted, as lettering
- 23 Viral Web

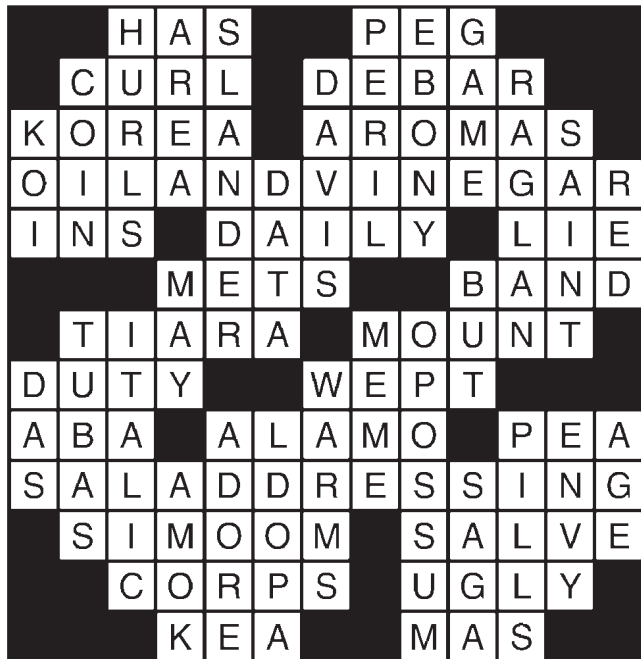
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— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 25 mins.



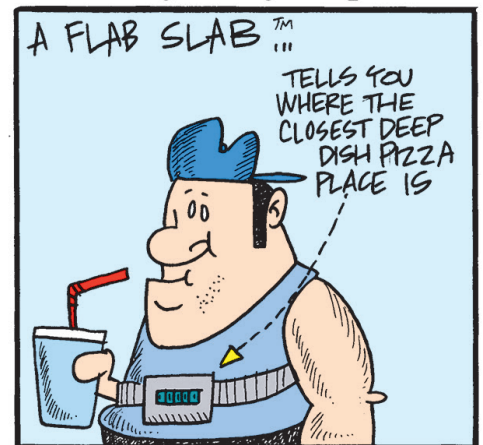
LAFF - A - DAY



"That's why mommy wants you to be a banker."

Out on a Limb

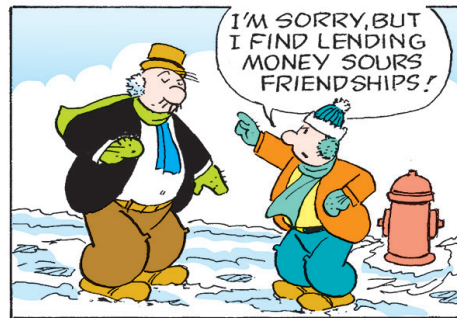
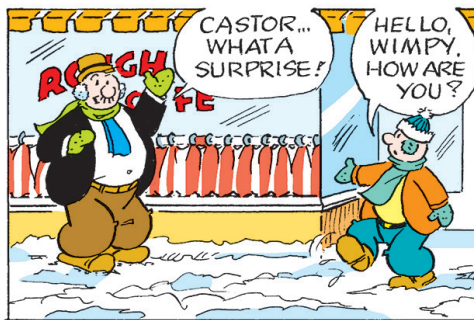
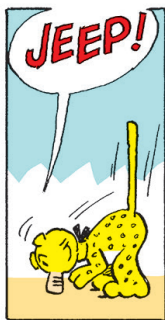
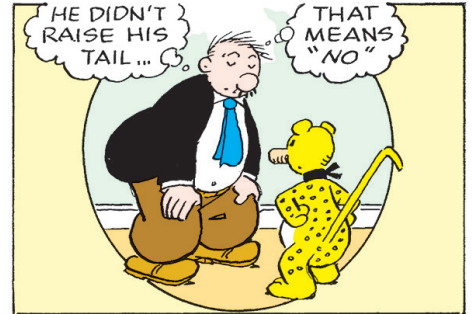
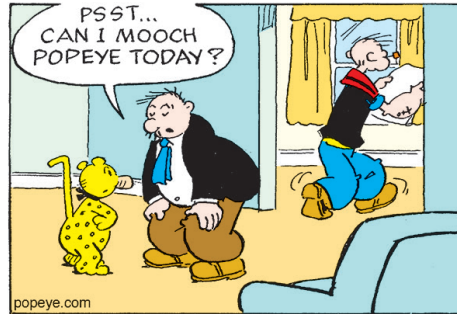
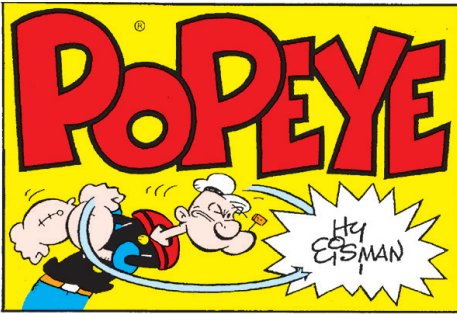
by Gary Kopervas



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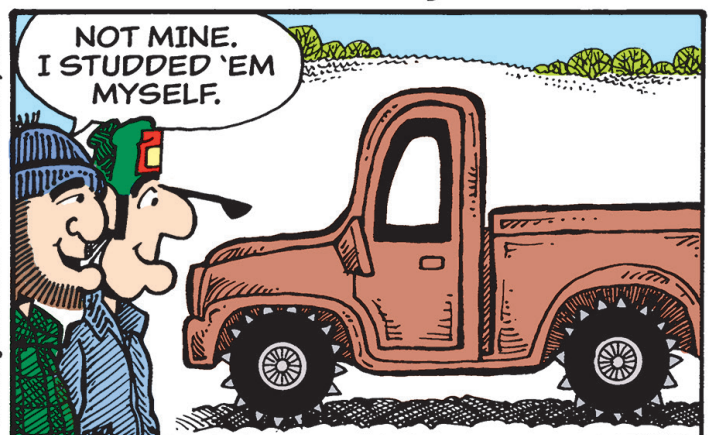
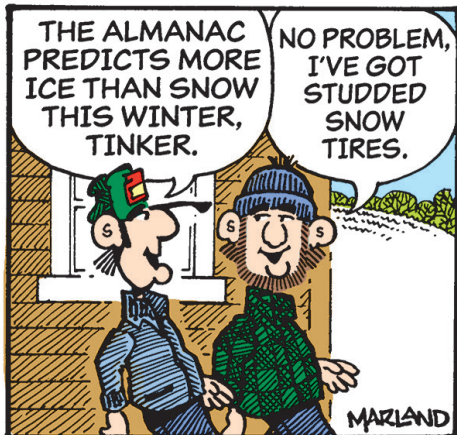
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R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



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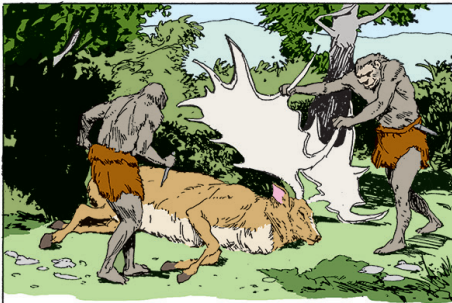
Our Story:
VAL COMES TO REALIZE THAT HIS CAPTORS' TONGUE IS AN ARCHAIC RELATIVE OF THE FAMILIAR PICTISH.

Hal Foster's
Prince Valiant
BY GIANNI AND SCHULTZ

HE BEGINS A RUDIMENTARY EXCHANGE: "WE CAME IN PEACE AND WISH TO DEPART IN PEACE. WHY TREAT US AS ENEMIES?"

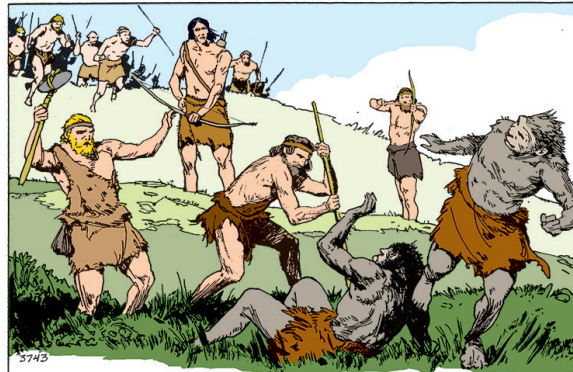


THE LARGEST BEAST MAN SPITS ANGRILY: "FEH! IT WAS YOUR KIND WHO DROVE MY PEOPLE TO THIS LONELY, MISERABLE PLACE!" VAL ATTEMPTS A QUESTION, BUT THE AGGRESSIVE BRUTE SHOUTS HIM DOWN.



"MANY, MANY GENERATIONS AGO OUR ANCESTORS WANDERED AND HUNTED A BOUNDLESS, PLENTIFUL LAND, FAR TO THE EAST! THEY THOUGHT THEY WERE STRONG, BUT ONE DAY, STRANGERS SHAPED LIKE YOU CAME!

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"THE STRANGERS WERE CLEVER WITH WEAPONS - THEY PURSUED OUR FATHERS RELENTLESSLY, SLAUGHTERING AND DRIVING THEM TO THE WESTERN SEA ...

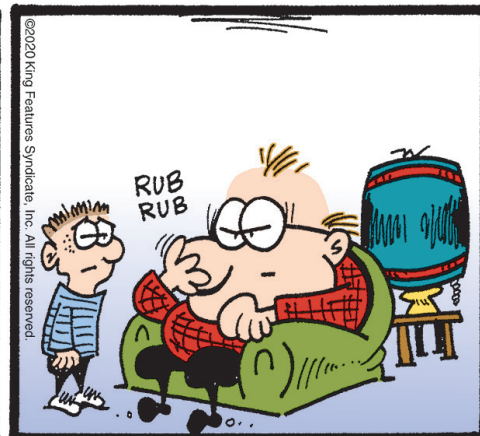
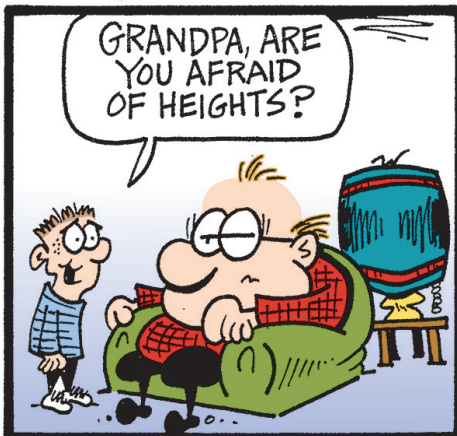


"... WHERE A LUCKY FEW ESCAPED DEATH BY TAKING TO THE WAVES!"

NEXT: Grim survival

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

Senior Flu Vaccine Leaves Us Vulnerable

You got your flu shot this year, right? Even though it's no longer the beginning of the flu season, it's never too late to get your shot. At this point we're only in the middle of an elevated-level flu season with months still to go.

Flu hits seniors harder than any other demographic. More of us end up hospitalized and with complications if we get the flu. At least 70% of deaths from flu are seniors.

There's a special shot for us with three types of vaccine at four times the strength. Our shot contains two A virus strains and one B. I asked my pharmacist, "Why don't they give us all four vaccine types?" His answer was that decision makers calculate each year which flu three strains will be strongest and go with those ... to save money.

This year, however, a B virus, which usually comes out in February, was the flu that launched the season.

How do we get the flu? From others, often by breathing air that has the virus in it from someone's sneeze or cough (from 6 feet away and airborne for several hours) or by touching a hard surface that has flu germs on it from someone else (for 24 hours).

Some of the ways of protecting ourselves are so simple we have no excuse for not following them. Take sanitizing wipes with you in a baggie when you go to the store and wipe down the cart handle. (Then throw the wipe away.) Wrap sanitizing wipes around the doorknobs in your home and let them dry overnight. Wash your hands often. And get your flu shot.

The next time you talk to your senators, tell them we need a four-way four-strength vaccine for seniors. Saving lives and hospitalizations makes it worth the extra cost.

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1. Kendrys Morales set a Toronto Blue Jays record in 2018 by homering in seven consecutive games. Who had held the franchise mark?

2. How many consecutive seasons did Boston's Wade Boggs have 200 or more hits?

3. Who was the first offensive lineman to twice finish in the top 10 of Heisman Trophy balloting?

4. Name the first woman to coach a championship-winning team in the WNBA.

5. Who was the oldest player to win the Conn Smythe Trophy as the NHL playoff MVP?

6. Jill Ellis set a record in 2019 for most games coached with the U.S. women's national soccer team (132). Who had held the mark?

7. From whom did boxer James J. Braddock win the heavyweight title from in 1935, and who beat him for it in 1937?

1. Jose Cruz Jr., with six consecutive games in 2001.

2. Seven consecutive years (1983-89).

3. Pittsburgh's Bill Fralic (1983 and '84).

4. Anne Donovan, with Seattle in 2004.

5. Boston goalie Tim Thomas was 37 when he won the award in 2011.

6. April Heinrichs, with 124 games coached.

7. He won the title from Max Baer and lost it to Joe Louis.

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Answers

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



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



A Year in Review

It's been nearly a year since I packed a suitcase and flew to our nation's capital to be sworn in as South Dakota's lone representative. It was a proud moment for my family and me. I stood on the U.S. House floor, raised my right hand, and swore my oath to the U.S. Constitution alongside my three boys and better half. A few weeks later, I was appointed to a leadership position as a Subcommittee Ranking Member on the Agriculture Committee – it's been an honor helping to lead a committee that does such important work for South Dakota.

Since January 3, 2019, Congress has been nothing short of eventful. When I was sworn into office, the government was in a partial shutdown. For weeks, Speaker Pelosi and President Trump went back and forth on funding for border security. I stood with the president and supported a bill that reopened the government and provided funding for a border wall.

Every day, my main priority is South Dakota. I've taken three-hundred and fifty-eight meetings with South Dakotans while in Washington. In the last year, I've toured two-hundred and ninety-seven local businesses, hosted twenty-one in person townhalls, and met with dozens of community leaders throughout our great state. I've always had more energy to burn than most. I promised I would work hard to fight for South Dakota's priorities, and I believe I've kept that promise. An average day in Washington begins at seven in the morning and lasts well into the ten o'clock evening hour. I'm also proud of our legislative successes – I introduced thirteen bills this year, two of which were signed into law by President Trump.

I did take the opportunity to venture out on a few fact-finding missions outside of Washington. I toured areas along the southern border and Mexico because border security continues to be a primary concern of mine. Our immigration courts are dealing with more than 436,000 open cases and this unprecedented caseload is why I supported legislation to send humanitarian aid to the border and increase the number of immigration case judges. The president signed this bill into law in June.

South Dakota has had a tough year weather-wise. Crops were wiped out and thousands of acres flooded – multiple times. I came to Washington to tackle the life-altering problems. I am proud of the work our team put in to get the prevent plant harvest date moved from November to September this year. The FEED Act would formalize that important decision, and I am grateful the U.S. Department of Agriculture moved the harvest date in part because of my bipartisan legislation.

Few issues have been more important to me than trade. I never imagined it would take more than a year to pass the United States-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA), but it did. I gave floor speech after floor speech, attended meeting after meeting, urging Speaker Pelosi to let the U.S. House vote on a deal that, according to the Office of the U. S. Trade Representative, will add 176,000 jobs and \$68 billion to our economy. I delivered my last USMCA floor speech on December 19, 2019, moments before casting my vote in favor of the USMCA.

I'm tremendously proud of the work South Dakota's congressional office has accomplished this year, and I hope you are too.

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SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



Keeping Resolutions for 2020

Sometimes it seems that breaking New Year's resolutions are as much of a tradition as making them. We commit ourselves to getting in shape or quitting bad habits, but by January 15, many have already strayed. It's easy to blame this on self-discipline or holiday leftovers, but research suggests it has more to do with how we set goals.

Studies show we're more likely to achieve our resolutions if we set specific goals. And once those goals are set, we ought to tell someone so we don't go it alone. With this approach in mind, I decided to put together a list of specific and public resolutions for 2020 that will move us toward a stronger South Dakota.

This year, I will work to update and enhance our state's policies surrounding critical areas like suicide prevention, mental health, education, habitat, and business growth. We will work to expand internet access so people can start businesses. We will work to strengthen our economy in order to increase opportunity. We will strengthen laws to crack down on sex trafficking and provide hope to victims. We must work to ensure our codes and laws strengthen families and drive innovation throughout the state.

As governor, I also recognize the importance of building strong relationships. Throughout 2019, I worked to develop connections with members of the legislature. This year I want to improve communication, foster stronger relationships, and work more effectively on behalf of all South Dakotans.

Additionally, I'm committed to strengthening alliances with tribal leaders. Before session even starts, I will be attending a tribal summit with several tribal chairmen and presidents in order to hear more about the issues impacting Native American communities. We have so much more in common than we have at odds, and this year, I will work to connect our communities in new and meaningful ways.

There's a lot I want to get done in 2020 – more of which I'll be talking about in my State of the State Address on January 14 – but these are resolutions I'm committed to keeping. Because my mission is the same as it's been since day one: to make South Dakota stronger for the next generation.

Bring on 2020. The best is yet to come.

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Two Years Later, Tax Reform Continues to Help South Dakota Families, Small Businesses

Historic tax reform legislation was signed into law by President Trump just over two years ago, and it has had a positive impact for South Dakota families and small businesses. Entrepreneurs are feeling optimistic about their businesses, and are reinvesting savings from tax cuts back into their businesses and their employees. Wages are rising and new jobs are being created. The average American household can expect a lifetime gain of around \$25,000 thanks to tax reform.

One of the many reasons I voted in favor of tax reform was because of the benefits it included for small businesses. In our state, 99 percent of all businesses are small businesses. We are the home base for 85,000 small businesses that employ more than 200,000 South Dakotans. Each of these small businesses plays a critical role in our state's economy. When they are doing well financially, they can hire more workers, pay employees higher wages, give out bonuses and increase charitable giving to benefit the community. Higher wages and better jobs can help families save for their children's education, buy a home and invest for retirement.

We just wrapped up the biggest shopping season of the year. The holidays are a busy time for small businesses, and shopping locally can help to make sure they continue to succeed year after year. In 2019, the national economy continued its growth streak, and consumers felt confident spending their hard-earned money. Recent numbers showed that 83 percent of consumers planned to shop at a small business over the holidays, and 91 percent of consumers regularly shop at a small business at least once per week throughout the entire year.

During a visit to Sioux Falls late last year, I spent some time driving around the city to meet with small business owners ahead of the busy holiday season. From bakeries to retail shops, the majority of the people I met with felt confident that they'd end the year on solid footing. I've had a number of business owners from across the state tell me that while they're doing well, they have trouble finding people to hire. We have so many jobs, but not a big enough workforce to fill all of them. I'll continue working in the Senate to advance workforce development policies so businesses can fill open jobs and our economy can reach its full potential.

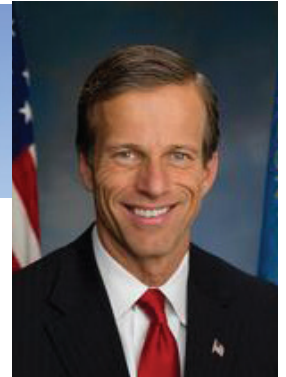
We also need to continue to finalize trade agreements to bring some stability back to the market for ag producers. As the administration continues to upgrade our trade policies with other countries, South Dakota's ag producers have been at the tip of the spear. This month, we expect to finalize the U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade deal, which will help South Dakota dairy producers and manufacturers. It will also give us some much-needed leverage to finalize trade deals in other parts of the world so all of our state's ag producers can feel some relief. I appreciate President Trump's commitment to corn farmers and ethanol producers that his administration will live up to the law and blend 15 billion gallons of ethanol into the nation's fuel supply annually. Making sure the EPA follows through on that promise is important for corn producers in our part of the country. Agriculture is our state's number one industry, and it's critical that our farmers and ranchers have markets to sell their products.

Tax reform was a win for South Dakota families and small businesses, but we still have work ahead of us to make sure our economy continues to grow in all sectors. I look forward to tackling these issues in the year ahead.

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John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



New Law Finally Puts Illegal Robocallers on Notice

If you're a Seinfeld fan like me, you probably remember the episode where Jerry receives a phone call from a telemarketer, interrupting his conversation with other characters on the show. Jerry tells the person on the other end of the line that he's busy, but says that if the telemarketer shares his home phone number, he would call him back later. The telemarketer says he won't do that, and Jerry asks, "I guess you don't want people calling you at home?" When he agrees, Jerry says, "Well, now you know how I feel."

Jerry's sentiment is something we all can relate to, and maybe you've even used his strategy a time or two when you've received an unwanted robocall or telemarketing call over the years.

As technology has evolved, traditional telemarketing calls have gone from a landline ringing during dinner to relentless, downright annoying – and sometimes illegal – phone calls that are barraging our home, work, and mobile phones at all hours of the day. I receive them. My friends receive them. Even my 100-year-old dad has received them.

For some people, the situation has gotten so bad that they've chosen to simply stop answering the phone all together. That's an unacceptable position for Americans to feel forced into, particularly if they're sacrificing answering legitimate calls in order to avoid the annoying nuisance ones.

While no one with a phone is immune to robocalls, some people are specifically targeted, often vulnerable populations like the elderly. If you don't know someone who's been tricked by one of these scammers, you've probably seen a story on the news or read about it online or in the newspaper. These guys will stop at nothing. Well, hopefully, until now.

As I travel around South Dakota, I get a good sense of what's on folks' minds. As the hot-button issues of the day change, the feedback I hear from people often changes, too. One issue that has never seemed to change, though, is the outrage people feel toward illegal robocallers.

Having been on the receiving end of these calls myself, I tried to harness this collective outrage when I drafted the Telephone Robocall Abuse Criminal Enforcement and Deterrence Act, or TRACED Act, to formally put these scammers on notice. As Frank Costanza said during the annual "airing of grievances" on Seinfeld, "I've got a lot of problems with you people, and now you're going to hear about it!"

This bipartisan bill is actually pretty straightforward. First, it gives federal agencies more authority to go after illegal robocallers, including by increasing the window in which they're able to levy fines, and it significantly increases the amount robocallers can be fined in that expanded window. Second, it requires federal regulators to finalize rules that will require most carriers to adopt technology that will prevent these calls from reaching consumers in the first place. Finally, among other common-sense fixes, my bill adds teeth to the law's enforcement mechanism by creating a credible threat of criminal prosecution – spending time behind bars.

It's worth noting that the TRACED Act only targets those unwanted and illegal robocalls, like being offered a free trip to the Bahamas in exchange for a Social Security number and credit card information. It protects legitimate entities that use technology to contact consumers, like a bank flagging a potentially fraudulent transaction or a health care provider reminding a patient about an upcoming medical appointment.

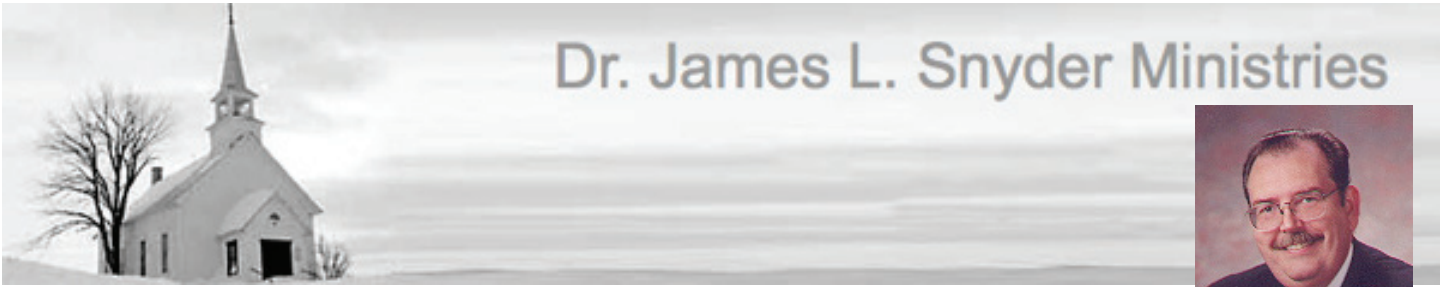
My bill was approved by the Senate earlier this year with overwhelming support. Just before Congress adjourned in 2019, the Senate approved a slightly modified version by a simple voice vote, sending it to the president for his signature. On December 30, 2019, after years of work, the TRACED Act became the law of the land.

This effort, which I led with Sen. Ed Markey (D-Mass.) was as unique as it was important. In today's political environment, it's not every day that you see a conservative Republican teaming up with a liberal Democrat on a bill that was nearly unanimously supported in a divided Congress. That's why the Washington Post said the TRACED Act is "what good, old-fashioned legislating looks like." That's a badge of honor, in my opinion.

While this new law won't immediately stop every single illegal robocall, it does mark the first major attempt to end this scourge in more than a decade, and it will lay important groundwork in the fight toward giving consumers greater peace of mind when their phone rings in 2020 and beyond.

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Oh, Those Alluring Lizardly Eyes



After months of planning and rearranging our schedule, the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage finally organized a little vacation time for Christmas.

It takes an awful lot of work for her and, I let her work as hard as she wants to work. That's the kinda husband I am.

She scheduled us to stay for several days in St. Augustine. We always enjoy our stay there and look forward to going there. The people who own the motel where we stay are good friends of ours. It is great to get together with friends that you only see once a year.

Being exhausted from a whole year's work, my wife and I looked forward to this time of doing nothing. I did not realize how much work was involved in doing nothing.

We signed in and I went to the room, sat down and just looked around to see where we would be staying for a few days. I looked over to the bed and on the pillow, there was something there. I did not quite know what it was and then I realized it was a lizard.

I love animals of all kinds. I have a hard time killing a fly, so when I saw this lizard, I was delighted. When my delight softened a little, I began to think that my wife does not appreciate the animal world as much as I do. This lizard would not do for her.

Looking at the lizard, I said, "Mr. Lizard, I don't think you should be here. It's not a good idea."

He turned his head, looked at me with his nose up in the air, his big lizardly eyes blinked several times, and then looked away with his nose still up in the air.

"You can ignore me if you want to, but I'm just warning you that the worst part of your day has not begun."

Again, he looked my way with his nose still up in the air, blinking his eyes most arrogantly and then looked away with another arrogant twist of his head. Then he took four steps away from me, his nose still up in the air.

"Don't forget," I explained to the lizard, "I warned you what was coming."

I laughed because I was seeing a stage set for some exciting moments. I could not wait for the door to open and the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage walk in and see my little friend the lizard. I only wish I had a bag of popcorn.

The wait was not long and I soon heard the doorknob twist, the door opened and in walked the lady of the hour. Oh, where is my popcorn?

I saw the lizard glance at her, then look back at me, again his nose was in the air and he was blinking arrogantly and then turned and looked the other way. He evidently did not know what he was in for.

Then it happened. My wife looked at the pillow on the bed and said, "What's that?"

Before she got it out, she realized it was a lizard. Few things in life that frighten my wife, but this lizard did, much to my enjoyment.

When she saw the lizard, she screamed and the lizard jumped straight up in the air. When it came down and landed on the pillow, it glanced at me with eyes that looked a little bit frightened. Then he jumped off the pillow and went underneath the bed.

That was not enough for my wife. She ran somewhere, got a broom, came back. I do not believe this

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lizard has ever seen any woman with a broom in her hand coming at him. At least, not someone like my wife.

She came in, moved the bed and there the lizard was. She started swinging and as soon as she started swinging, the lizard started jumping. Oh, where is that popcorn?

The last I saw the lizard, he jumped out the door and disappeared even though my wife followed him as far as she could go. Then she came back into the room.

She looked at me with one of "those looks" and said very sarcastically, "What are you laughing at?"

I promise you, I did my best not to laugh, but if you would've been in the room with me, you would've laughed too. Nothing is more exciting to me than seeing my wife jump in alarm at a little lizard more afraid of her than she was of him.

For the next few days, whenever my wife looked at me and saw me smiling, she would comment, "You're not thinking of that lizard, are you?"

For once in my life, I was honest. "No, my dear. I was thinking of you."

During the rest of our stay there, whenever we came into our room, my wife searched it from top to bottom to make sure my little friend was not there. You will never know how much I wished that he would have returned. But you didn't hear that from me.

Thinking of that little lizard, I remembered what David said. "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident" (Psalm 27:3).

The only thing we need to fear is God and that is a reverential fear. The fear of God dissolves every other fear.

Wind Advisory **URGENT - WEATHER MESSAGE** **National Weather Service Aberdeen SD**

Traverse-Big Stone-Brown-Marshall-Roberts-Day-Spink-Clark- Codington-Grant-Hamlin-Deuel- Including the cities of Wheaton, Browns Valley, Ortonville, Lagoona Beach, Graceville, Aberdeen, Richmond Lake Rec Area, Britton, Kidder, Sisseton, Webster, Waubay, Redfield, Clark, Hillcrest Colony, Rauville, Sandy Shore State Park, Watertown, Milbank, Estelline, Castlewood, Stone Bridge, Lake Norden, Bryant, Hayti, Thomas, and Clear Lake

...WIND ADVISORY REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL NOON CST TODAY...

* WHAT...Northwest winds 20 to 30 mph with gusts up to 50 mph.

* WHERE...Portions of northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota.

* WHEN...Until noon CST today.

* IMPACTS...Gusty winds could blow around unsecured objects. A few power outages are possible.

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**SOUTH DAKOTA
NEWS WATCH**

Inform. Enlighten. Illuminate.

Surprise inspections part of oversight reforms for S.D. youth homes

By: Bart Pfankuch

For the first time in South Dakota, unannounced surprise inspections would be conducted at private youth treatment centers as part of a sweeping oversight reform package being pushed by Gov. Kristi Noem.

Noem has proposed a major overhaul to how South Dakota oversees, inspects and updates the public about conditions in privately run youth homes across the state.

Under the proposal, youth treatment facilities in South Dakota would be subjected to far greater state scrutiny and oversight, and public access to inspection and complaint information would be heightened.

Among the proposals: more independent, non-agency inspectors would be hired; regular inspections would double in frequency and some additional inspections would be unannounced; and a full-time, independent monitor would be hired solely to hear and review complaints of abuse from facility residents.

At present, administrators of private youth homes are told in advance when inspections will be held and public access to records is limited.

"The health and safety of the next generation is our top priority. We cannot let kids fall through the cracks," Noem said in a December news release announcing the proposed reforms.

In June 2019, Noem ordered the state Department of Social Services to undergo a full review of licensing and inspection practices of all privately run youth facilities in the state.

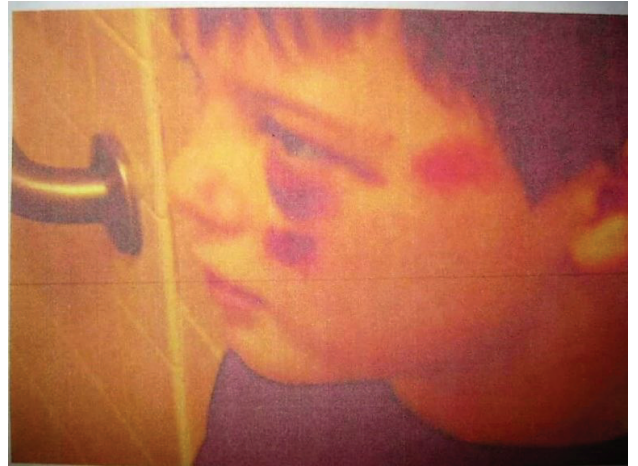
The review was ordered shortly after the publication in early June of an investigation by South Dakota News Watch that uncovered a pattern of abuse of children, questionable abuse reporting practices and lax state oversight at the private Aurora Plains Academy intensive residential treatment facility in Plankinton, S.D.

The resulting 48-page report, published in December by DSS Secretary Laurie Gill, included involvement of six state agencies and was ordered by Noem in response to "recent scrutiny" and "several media and public information requests."

The report makes 10 recommendations, some of which may require legislative approval but all of which are intended to improve the safety of children and youths in the state treatment system that is largely privatized.

"I've tasked my Department of Social Services with improving the well-being of kids and youth placed in treatment facilities across the state. In the 2020 [legislative] session, I will bring legislation that prioritizes the safety of at-risk kids," Noem said.

The News Watch investigation showed that over a period of years, numerous residents of Aurora Plains had been physically, mentally and sexually abused or tormented by employees of the academy, which operates mostly on federal Medicaid funding but is overseen by the state. The News Watch investigation also uncovered that all state inspections are pre-announced, that public access to information about the facilities and any problems is highly limited, and that employees at the academy sometimes pressured col-



This image taken by the Aurora County Sheriff's Office shows injuries sustained by 10-year-old Ender Murray at the hands of an employee of Aurora Plains Academy in 2013. Photo: News Watch file

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leagues to minimize or alter reports on incidents in which children were harmed.

Aurora Plains is one of eight residential youth treatment centers in South Dakota, but is the only intensive treatment facility.

The News Watch report was published four months after a tragedy at another private youth home, the Black Hills Children's Home in Rockerville, where a 9-year-old girl walked away in February and has never been found.

In the days after the News Watch articles were published, Noem said in a statement that, "As a mom, it deeply saddens me to read the stories of these kids. Regardless of whether a situation happened 10 years, 10 months or 10 days ago, abuse is never OK. I hope we can learn and take corrective action where it is needed to protect our most vulnerable population."

The DSS review focused on the licensing, accreditation and certification process of youth homes; the complaint and investigative processes; corrective action plans; and transparency and confidentiality of investigations.

Major recommendations from the report include:

— Increasing on-site licensing inspections from annually to twice per year. Beyond the scheduled bi-annual inspections, state regulators for the first time would make unannounced inspection visits throughout the year. Facilities under a corrective plan would be inspected quarterly.

— Hiring additional independent, contracted inspectors to increase and improve inspection of facilities, and to "provide an independent investigation which will allow for further objectivity."

— Hiring a "grievance monitor" to provide an entity outside state agency control to receive, review and monitor grievances directly from children and youths.

— Making available to the public a "central repository" of DSS inspection reports, and revising corrective action plans — documents that outline violations and require improvements — to heighten state monitoring of compliance and to make the reports easier for the public to access and understand.

— Producing an annual online report by the Child Protective Services division of DSS of allegations of child abuse or neglect and resolving any investigations into those claims.

"I have asked [DSS] Secretary Gill to develop a work plan to implement the comprehensive list of recommendations included in the report," Noem said in the December news release.

In the summary of her report, Gill wrote, "The state must clearly maintain its focus on ensuring children and youth placed in treatment facilities across the state are safe. There are areas needing attention and support to improve procedures and practices."



Residents of Aurora Plains Academy walk from one building to another on the locked campus in Plankinton, S.D. In December, 2019, Gov. Kristi Noem proposed reforms that would significantly increase state oversight of privately run youth treatment facilities in the state. Photo: News Watch file

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Upcoming Events

Sunday, January 5, 2020

2:00pm- 6:00pm: Open Gym at GHS Arena

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

Monday, January 6, 2020

School resumes

5:15 p.m.: Boys' Basketball hosts Webster Area. C game starts at 5:15 p.m. followed by JV and Varsity.

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

7 p.m.: City Council Meeting at the Groton Community Center

UDFL Student Congress at Groton Area High School

6 p.m.: Wrestling Tri-angular at Oakes, N.D.

6:30 p.m.: Girls' Basketball hosts Aberdeen Roncalli. JV starts at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

(This game has a date change - it was originally scheduled for January 24th.)

Thursday, January 9, 2020

6:00 p.m.: Wrestling at Redfield

Carnival of Silver Skates Costume Hand-outs, 4-8 p.m., St. John's Lutheran Church

Friday, January 10, 2020

Basketball double header hosting Hamlin (Girls junior varsity at 4 p.m., Boys junior varsity at 5 p.m., Girls varsity at 6:30 p.m., Boys varsity to follow)

Saturday, January 11, 2020

12:30 p.m.: Girls' Varsity Basketball Classic at Redfield. Groton Area vs. St. Francis Indian School

Boys at Varsity Classic at the Sanford Pentagon

10 a.m.: Wrestling at Miller Tournament

Sunday, January 12, 2020

2:00pm- 6:00pm: Open Gym at GHS Arena

Monday, January 13, 2020

6 p.m.: Junior high basketball games at Warner. 7th grade at 6 p.m., 8th grade at 7 p.m.

6 p.m.: Junior high wrestling tournament in Groton

7 p.m.: School Board Meeting

Tuesday, January 14, 2020

5:15 p.m.: Combined 7th/8th grade boys basketball game vs. Aberdeen Christian at the Aberdeen Civic Arena

6:30 p.m.: Boys' basketball game at Aberdeen Christian High School. Junior varsity at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Wednesday, January 15, 2020

8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.: MathCounts at Aberdeen Simmons Middle School

Thursday, January 16, 2020

6:30 p.m.: Girls' Basketball hosts Sisseton. JV game at 6:30 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Friday, January 17, 2020

Silver Bowl Debate at Sioux Falls

No School - Faculty Inservice

6 p.m.: Boys' basketball at Sisseton. JV game at 6 p.m. followed by varsity game.

Saturday, January 18, 2020

Silver Bowl Debate in Sioux Falls

10:00am: Basketball: Boys 7th/8th Jamboree @ Groton Area High School

10:00am: Wrestling: Varsity Tournament at Potter County (Gettysburg)

Sunday, January 19, 2020

2:00pm- 6:00pm: Open Gym at GHS Arena

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

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Monson takes first at Webster Tournament

Three Groton Area grapplers placed at the Webster Wrestling Tournament held Saturday. Dragr Monson placed first at 113 pounds, while taking third were Lane Krueger at 182 pounds and Adrian Knutson at 285 pounds.

Team Scores: Chamberlain 236, Clark/Willow Lake 102, Deslacs-Burlington 88, Sioux Valley 82.5, Miller/Highmore/Harold 77, Sisseton 75, Central Cass 73.5, Webster Area 71.0, Mobridge/Pollock 68.5, Groton Area 68, Hamlin/Castlewood 26, Britton-Hecla 22, Deuel 5.

106: Porter Johnson (3-2)

Champ. Round 1 - Teagan Herrick (Miller/Highmore/Harold) 18-8 won by fall over Porter Johnson (Groton Area) 3-2 (Fall 5:07)

Cons. Round 1 - Rylan Yonker (Hamlin/Castlewood) 1-2 won by decision over Porter Johnson (Groton Area) 3-2 (Dec 5-2)

106: Christian Ehresmann (4-3) scored 4.0 team points.

Champ. Round 1 - Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 4-3 won by fall over Riley Steen (Sisseton) 1-9 (Fall 2:21)

Quarterfinal - Cade Olson-Tingelstad (Central Cass) 4-1 won by fall over Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 4-3 (Fall 5:53)

Cons. Round 2 - Wyatt Wientjes (Mobridge/Pollock) 4-7 won by fall over Christian Ehresmann (Groton Area) 4-3 (Fall 2:59)

113: Dragr Monson (10-4) placed 1st and scored 24.0 team points.

Champ. Round 1 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 10-4 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 10-4 won by fall over Riley Jutting (Hamlin/Castlewood) 5-9 (Fall 1:28)

Semifinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 10-4 won by fall over Josiah Crandall (Central Cass) 3-2 (Fall 1:40)

1st Place Match - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 10-4 won by decision over Cael Larson (Webster Area) 3-1 (Dec 4-3)

120: Brevin Fliehs (0-2)

Champ. Round 1 - Brevin Fliehs (Groton Area) 0-2 received a bye () (Bye)

Quarterfinal - Remmington Ford (Mobridge/Pollock) 3-8 won by fall over Brevin Fliehs (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 0:44)

Cons. Round 2 - Brevin Fliehs (Groton Area) 0-2 received a bye () (Bye)

Cons. Round 3 - Colby Kolda (Miller/Highmore/Harold) 5-7 won by fall over Brevin Fliehs (Groton Area) 0-2 (Fall 4:14)

152: Cole Bisbee (0-5)

Quarterfinal - Walter Winkler (Deslacs-Burlington) 17-2 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 0-5 (Fall 0:42)

Cons. Round 1 - Swade Reis (Chamberlain) 2-11 won by fall over Cole Bisbee (Groton Area) 0-5 (Fall 1:57)

160: Thomas Cranford (8-6) scored 8.0 team points.

Champ. Round 1 - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 8-6 won by fall over Dawson Doyscher (Sioux Valley) 3-4 (Fall 5:22)

Quarterfinal - Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 8-6 won by fall over Weston Wahus (Deslacs-Burlington) 13-11 (Fall 5:05)

Semifinal - Gage Burke (Clark/Willow Lake) 13-0 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 8-6 (Fall 1:23)

Cons. Semi - Joe Hornick (Sioux Valley) 13-13 won by decision over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 8-6 (Dec 6-2)

182: Lane Krueger (9-5) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 9-5 won by fall over Anthony Houle (Central Cass) 1-2 (Fall 1:44)

Semifinal - Lev Nedelco (Sioux Valley) 7-10 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 9-5 (Fall 5:30)

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Cons. Semi - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 9-5 won by fall over Jesse Bears Heart (Mobridge/Pollock) 1-4 (Fall 3:59)

3rd Place Match - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 9-5 won by fall over Wyatt Powers (Chamberlain) 5-8 (Fall 2:41)

195: Grady O`Neill (5-7)

Quarterfinal - Grady O`Neill (Groton Area) 5-7 received a bye () (Bye)

Semifinal - Evan Schade (Sioux Valley) 8-10 won by disqualification over Grady O`Neill (Groton Area) 5-7 (DQ)

Cons. Semi - Joshua Norder (Mobridge/Pollock) 9-6 won by major decision over Grady O`Neill (Groton Area) 5-7 (MD 13-4)

285: Adrian Knutson (9-7) placed 3rd and scored 16.0 team points.

Quarterfinal - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-7 won by fall over Ethan Skarnagel (Sisseton) 2-8 (Fall 2:55)

Semifinal - Jordan Robbins (Deslacs-Burlington) 10-9 won by decision over Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-7 (Dec 9-5)

Cons. Semi - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-7 won by fall over James Mickey (Hamlin/Castlewood) 3-9 (Fall 0:30)

3rd Place Match - Adrian Knutson (Groton Area) 9-7 won by fall over Ethan Skarnagel (Sisseton) 2-8 (Fall 1:49)



Peterson, Hanten place at State Snow Queen

The State Snow Queen Contest was held Saturday in Aberdeen. The Junior Snow Queen division was held with Shaylee Peterson bringing home the third runner-up award for Miss Groton. She is the daughter of Ben and Kristi Peterson. In the senior talent show, Alexis Hanten took second place. She is the daughter of Sarah and Cody Hanten.

The Senior Snow Queen Contest will be held on Saturday where Ashley Fliehs will be competing for Miss Groton. (Photo from Kristi Peterson's Facebook Page)

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Northern State Fends Off Winona State in Last Second Thriller

The Northern State men's basketball team (10-4, 6-2 NSIC) defeated the Winona State Warriors (7-7, 4-4 NSIC) in thrilling fashion Saturday night for a 72-68 victory.

With under 21 seconds left in regulation the Wolves held a slim 1-point lead and Parker Fox found himself at the foul line. Fox had been just 7-of-15 from that line all night, but when his team needed him most he came up clutch, cashing in both shots and extending the lead.

However, Winona responded, and with just 12 seconds remaining the Wolves were in the same predicament. But as a Warriors player broke for the hoop, Fox leaped into the air and slammed the ball against the backboard, blocking the shot and effectively ending the game with 0.3 seconds remaining to secure the victory.

The Wolves got off to a great start in the game, scoring on each of their first four possessions for a 10-point run. However, Winona State's 3-point game kept them within reach as the Wolves took a 45-43 lead into halftime.

Northern kicked off the second with another good start as they opened up an 8-point lead in the opening minutes. However, the going remained tough as the Warriors would catch up and keep pace throughout the half.

The Wolves put an end to Winona State's relentless 3-point shooting from the first, holding them to just 2-of-16 in the second half. Without the the threat of the deep ball Northern's defense was able to take hold, helping them to a 72-68 victory.

The Wolves finished the night going 45.6% from the floor, 46.7% from beyond the arc, and 52.0% from the foul line. 34 of their points came from the paint, seven from turnovers and another seven off the bench.

Parker Fox lit up the scoreboard all night long, grabbing 12 rebounds and going 12-of-23 for a career high 35 points. The next best on the scoreboard were Mason Stark and Tommy Chatman with 11 and ten points respectively.

Andrew Kallman matched his career high in rebounds with eight and managed six points and four assists. Meanwhile, Jordan Belka led the team off the bench with four rebounds and five points.

Rounding out the scoreboard were Gabe King and Cole Dahl, combining for six rebounds and three and two points respectively.

Up next the Wolves travel to Crookston, Minnesota to play the University of Minnesota Crookston. Tip-off is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. at Lysaker Gymnasium on January 10

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Northern State Women's Basketball gets the Weekend Sweep

Aberdeen, S.D. – Northern State women's basketball gets off to another hot start on Saturday evening earning them a weekend sweep.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Scores: NSU 69, WSU 49

Record: NSU 9-5 (NSIC 5-2), WSU 9-3 (NSIC 5-3)

Attendance: 2409

HIGHLIGHTS

For the second night in a row, Northern State women's basketball gets off to a hot start scoring 20 points in the first quarter

In the first quarter, NSU shot 66.67% from the floor and 60.0% from distance

The bench for the Wolves chipped in with 16 points on the evening holding the bench of Winona to only 10 Northern State forced WSU to turn the ball over 14 times allowing them to score 12 points as a result of those turnovers

The Wolves grabbed 35 rebounds and dished out 15 assists on the evening

Northern State kept Winona to shooting 29.0% from the field, 8.3% from distance, and only gave them 13 free throw opportunities in the game

The Wolves shot 43.6% from the floor, 36.8% from distance, and had 23 free throw opportunities in the game

Northern States largest lead of the game came with five seconds left on the clock as Avery Terwilliger would make both free throws to go up by 20 points

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Lexi Wadsworth: 63.6 FG%, 3 assists, 20 points

Sara Tvedt: 83.3 FG%, 7 rebounds, 2 steals, 13 points

Brianna Kusler: 14 rebounds, 7 assists, 11 points

Kennedy Harris: 66.6 3-pt%, 8 points

UP NEXT

Northern State women's basketball is back in action next weekend as they travel to Minnesota. The Wolves will face Minnesota Crookston at 5:30 p.m. on Friday and Bemidji State at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday.

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Wind ...

Today



Sunny and
Windy

High: 36 °F ↓

Tonight



Partly Cloudy

Low: 11 °F

Monday



Partly Sunny

High: 31 °F

Monday
Night



Mostly Clear

Low: 12 °F

Tuesday



Sunny

High: 19 °F



Breezy Morning



Higs in the 30s
Mostly Clear



National Weather Service Aberdeen, SD



Breezy to windy conditions this morning with locally high gusts to 50 mph will diminish as high pressure builds over the area this afternoon.

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Today in Weather History

January 5, 1994: A low-pressure system traveled from the Dakotas, across southern Minnesota, and to the Great Lakes Region, from the late morning of the 5th, through the early evening of the 7th. By the early evening hours on the 7th, up to three and one-half feet of snow had fallen along the higher terrain of Lake Superior. The storm also produced heavy snow across parts of central Minnesota. Six inches or more occurred across much of central Minnesota. In west central Minnesota, Wheaton and Artichoke Lake received 5 inches, with 6 inches at Browns Valley.

January 5, 2012: Numerous record high temperatures were broken across central and northeast South Dakota along with west central Minnesota throughout the week. Some of the records were broken by as much as 12 to 17 degrees and had been held for 80 to 90 years. Aberdeen surpassed their all-time record high for January by 3 degrees with 63 degrees on Thursday, January 5th. Kennebec tied their all-time record high for January with 70 degrees on January 5th. Click [HERE](#) other records.

1884: One of only two days in history during which the temperature at Louisville, Kentucky, never rose above zero. The low was 20 degrees below with a high of 1 below zero.

1892: From the History of Fayetteville Georgia, "Another traumatic event occurred in Fayetteville on the evening of January 5, 1892, about six o'clock in the evening. A terrible tornado or cyclone struck the town of Fayetteville just as many had sat down for dinner. The storm killed three people and injured many more as its raging force destroyed numerous residences, outbuildings, and structures including the academy, as well as killing abundant livestock. The event was written about as far away as Savannah."

1962: Two tornadoes, about 100 yards apart and each making paths about 100 yards wide followed parallel paths from southeast to northwest through the edge of the Crestview, Florida's residential area. These tornadoes killed one and injured 30 others.

1835 - It was a record cold morning in the eastern U.S. The mercury at the Yale Campus in New Haven CT plunged to 23 degrees below zero, and reached 40 below in the Berkshire Hills of Connecticut. (David Ludlum)

1904 - Bitterly cold air gripped the northeastern U.S. Morning lows of -42 degrees at Smethport PA and -34 at River Vale NJ established state records. (The Weather Channel)

1913 - The temperature at the east portal to Strawberry Tunnel reached 50 degrees below zero to tie the record established at Woodruff on February 6, 1899. (David Ludlum)

1982 - A three day rainstorm in the San Francisco area finally came to an end. Marin County and Cruz County were drenched with up to 25 inches of rain, and the Sierra Nevada Range was buried under four to eight feet of snow. The storm claimed at least 36 lives, and caused more than 300 million dollars damage. (Storm Data)

1987 - A massive winter storm spread heavy snow from the southwestern U.S. into the Rockies. In Utah, the Alta ski resort reported a storm total of 42 inches of snow. Winds gusted to 64 mph at Albuquerque NM. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - Thunderstorms helped produce heavy snow in the Lower Great Lakes Region. Snow fell at the rate of four to five inches per hour, and snowfall totals ranged up to 69 inches at Highmarket NY. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - A strong Pacific cold front produced heavy snow and high winds in Nevada. Winds gusted to 80 mph north of Reno, while up to two feet of snow blanketed the Lake Tahoe ski area. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1990 - Thunderstorms produced heavy rain in the Central Gulf Coast Region. New Orleans, LA, was drenched with 4.05 inches of rain in 24 hours. An overnight storm blanketed the mountains of northern Utah with up to eleven inches of snow. (National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 30 °F at 9:02 PM

Low Temp: 1 °F at 2:55 AM

Wind: 24 mph at 5:12 PM

Day Precip:

Record High: 63° in 2012

Record Low: -32° in 1924

Average High: 22°F

Average Low: 2°F

Average Precip in Jan.: 0.07

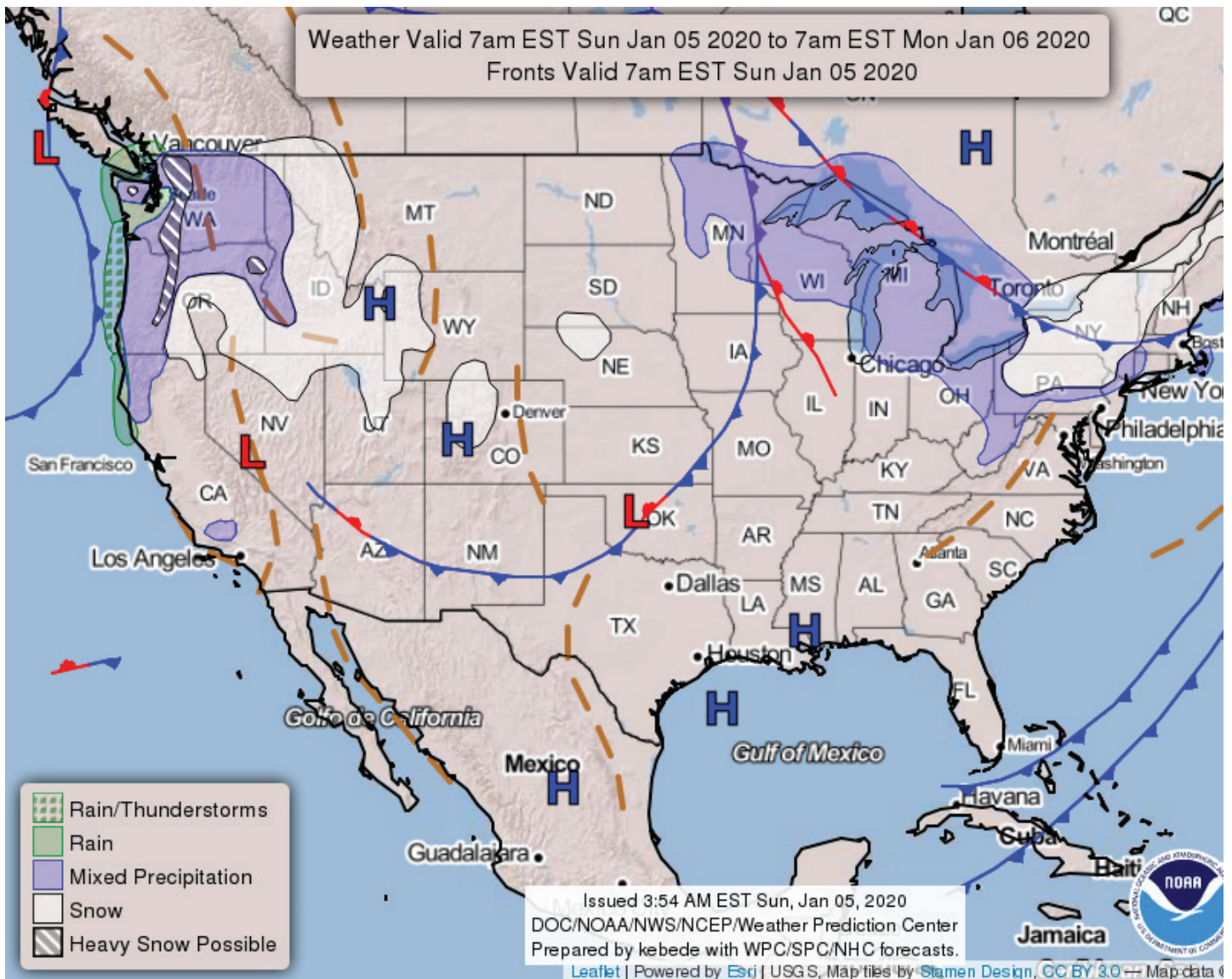
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.00

Average Precip to date: 0.07

Precip Year to Date: 0.00

Sunset Tonight: 5:05 p.m.

Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:13 a.m.



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DON'T STOP NOW!

Some time ago it was my privilege to be the commencement speaker at a high school graduation. At the end of the service, the students came forward and walked up to the headmaster to receive their diplomas. As he shook their hands, he looked into their eyes and said softly to each one of them, "Don't stop now, keep moving forward!"

Great advice – not only for the graduates but for everyone, every day. Whatever we do, wherever we go, we must keep on keeping on. We must keep forgiving! Keep growing! Keep helping! Keep loving! Keep witnessing! Keep serving! Keep worshipping! Keep working! Keep laughing! Keep moving forward! We must never stop doing good, but keep on keeping on!

If this is important for life in general, it is even more important in the life of a Christian. Paul said that "I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be." "Keep working" means "Keep on keeping on doing good!"

What great advice Paul offers us. Nothing must ever interfere with, nor cause us, to take our eyes off of knowing and serving Christ. We must focus on Him, and His will for our lives, as Paul did, to win the race and receive the prize He will award us by being faithful to Him.

Prayer: Help us, Heavenly Father, to focus on "the prize" You have for each of us, as we run life's race. Help us to keep focused on You as we grow into Your likeness. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us. Philip-
pians 3:8-14

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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 Saturday:

Dakota Cash

01-21-26-27-30

(one, twenty-one, twenty-six, twenty-seven, thirty)

Estimated jackpot: \$20,000

Lotto America

05-24-34-38-47, Star Ball: 6, ASB: 2

(five, twenty-four, thirty-four, thirty-eight, forty-seven; Star Ball: six; ASB: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$6.8 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$60 million

Powerball

01-11-21-25-54, Powerball: 7, Power Play: 2

(one, eleven, twenty-one, twenty-five, fifty-four; Powerball: seven; Power Play: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$237 million

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL

Belle Fourche 59, Lemmon 46

Brookings 52, Pierre 50

Canistota 62, Elkton-Lake Benton 54

Chester 48, McCook Central/Montrose 33

Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 85, Todd County 66

Dell Rapids St. Mary 65, Winner 59

Faith 59, Mott-Regent, N.D. 20

Flandreau 77, Castlewood 59

Freeman Academy/Marion 53, Tripp-Delmont/Armour 41

Grand Forks Red River, N.D. 81, Aberdeen Central 79, 2OT

Harding County 60, Edgemont 27

Harrisburg 63, Douglas 44

Herreid/Selby Area 61, Stanley County 55

Huron 57, Sioux Falls Roosevelt 51

Janesville Parker, Wis. 37, Beresford 33

Kadoka Area 47, Hill City 33

Lake Preston 66, Deubrook 49

Lower Brule 52, Kimball/White Lake 44

Lower Brule 52, White Lake 44

Madison 72, Red Cloud 62

Pine Ridge 78, Parkston 58

Potter County 65, Leola/Frederick 60

Rapid City Central 84, Dickinson, N.D. 54

Rapid City Stevens 69, Watertown 29

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Sturgis Brown 72, Lead-Deadwood 55
Waubay/Summit 59, Ipswich 50
Wessington Springs 63, Highmore-Harrod 51
Aberdeen Roncalli Classic=
Sisseton 66, Aberdeen Christian 65
St. Thomas More 65, Aberdeen Roncalli 28
GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL
Belle Fourche 49, Wall 37
Beresford 59, Parker 38
Crow Creek 56, West Central 54
Dakota Valley 58, Viborg-Hurley 56
Dickinson, N.D. 52, Rapid City Central 51
Estelline/Hendricks 34, James Valley Christian 33
Florence/Henry 48, Warner 31
Grand Forks Red River, N.D. 58, Aberdeen Central 45
Harding County 51, Edgemont 46
Harrisburg 69, Douglas 15
Herreid/Selby Area 76, Stanley County 20
Hill City 60, Kadoka Area 34
Ipswich 43, Waubay/Summit 41
Lyman 45, Philip 35
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 56, Platte-Geddes 41
Newell 65, McIntosh 33
Pierre 34, Brookings 23
Pine Ridge 71, Madison 50
Potter County 43, Leola/Frederick 13
Rapid City Stevens 68, Watertown 39
Red Cloud 57, Vermillion 43
Redfield 56, Hitchcock-Tulare 27
Sioux Falls Washington 46, Yankton 26
Sturgis Brown 34, Lead-Deadwood 29
Sully Buttes 55, Mobridge-Pollock 38
Wagner 44, Sioux Falls Christian 37
Waverly-South Shore 49, Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 13
White River 59, New Underwood 30
Winner 59, Parkston 35
Aberdeen Roncalli Classic=
Aberdeen Christian 64, McLaughlin 55
St. Thomas More 40, Aberdeen Roncalli 39

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

Wilson leads South Dakota State past W. Illinois 91-56

BROOKINGS, S.D. (AP) — Douglas Wilson scored 19 points, all five starters reached double figures and South Dakota State won its 18th straight home game, rolling past Western Illinois 91-56 on Saturday.

David Wingett added a career-high 15 points for the Jackrabbits (11-7, 2-1 Summit League). Matt Dentlinger chipped in 14, Alex Arians scored 12 with 11 rebounds for his first double-double of the season. Noah Freidel scored 10 and Wingett also had seven rebounds.

Kobe Webster scored 13 points for the Leathernecks (4-9, 1-2). Zion Young added 12 points. James Claar

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had 10 rebounds with six points.

South Dakota State shot 57% (35-for-61), dominated the boards 48-32, and broke 90 points for the second straight game.

South Dakota State plays Denver on the road on Wednesday. Western Illinois takes on Purdue Fort Wayne at home on Wednesday.

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

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

Wyoming media prevail in university president records case

CASPER, Wyo. (AP) — A group of Wyoming news organizations has largely prevailed in a lawsuit over records related to the dismissal of a university president.

The vast majority of the records sought by the Casper Star-Tribune, WyoFile and others will be released, albeit with some redactions to protect sensitive personal information, Albany County District Judge Tori Kricken wrote in a 55-page ruling Friday.

Kricken ordered 18 documents withheld in full because they met an attorney-client privilege exception.

"There is a well-known expression applied to those in public office, 'If you can't stand the heat, you'd better stay out of the kitchen,'" Kricken wrote, quoting another court case.

University of Wyoming trustees decided last year to not renew President Laurie Nichols' contract. They have not explained their decision, which took Nichols and many others at the school by surprise.

The university made sweeping use of attorney-client privilege to avoid disclosing communications among trustees, the Casper Star-Tribune reports.

But the inclusion of university general counsel Tara Evans on communications with board members does not "automatically make the communication privileged," Kricken wrote, ordering most of those records be released.

The judge also ruled in favor of the organizations' request for a log of withheld documents detailing why they couldn't be released. The university had refused to provide such a log.

Cheyenne-based attorney Bruce Moats, who represented the news organizations, called the ruling "a victory for the public."

"It's not a victory for these news organizations really because what makes what they do valuable is that they make this information available to the public so the public can evaluate by themselves," he said.

The judge ruled against the news organizations on the question of whether fees charged by the university to produce records were reasonable. The university charged more than \$700 for a Star-Tribune request made in the spring.

The Star-Tribune, WyoFile, the Wyoming Tribune Eagle and the Laramie Boomerang filed the lawsuit in June. Nichols intervened in the lawsuit, largely agreeing that the records should be withheld.

Messages sent to Nichols' attorney and the university's attorney were not immediately returned Friday. Nichols was recently announced as the new president of Black Hills State University in Spearfish, South Dakota.

While the exact content of the documents is unclear, previous court filings suggest they pertain to an investigation into Nichols.

Authorities seek help from public in Pine Ridge homicide

PINE RIDGE, S.D. (AP) — Tribal and federal authorities have asked for the public's help after a homicide in Pine Ridge.

The Oglala Sioux Department of Public Safety said in a Facebook post Friday night that someone was killed early Friday morning at a home south of the Pizza Hut in Pine Ridge.

"This is a isolated incident and there is no threat to the community," the department said.

The homicide is being investigated by tribal police, the FBI and the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The agencies asked the public to call 605-867-5111 if they have any information on four persons of interest, as well as a dark, late-model, double-cab pickup.

The post did not say if the people were considered suspects or witnesses.

Tribal Police Chief Robert Ecoffey said the identify of the victim was not being released, pending notification to the victim's family. He said more information about the investigation would come from the FBI.

Thousands mourn Soleimani in Iran as Trump threatens strikes

By **NASSER KARIMI** and **JON GAMBRELL** Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Tens of thousands of mourners accompanied a casket carrying the remains of the slain Gen. Qassem Soleimani through two major Iranian cities Sunday as part of a grand funeral procession across the Islamic Republic for the commander killed by an American drone strike amid soaring tensions between Iran and the U.S.

President Donald Trump has threatened to bomb 52 sites in Iran if it retaliates by attacking Americans. The U.S. Embassy in Saudi Arabia separately warned Americans "of the heightened risk of missile and drone attacks." Meanwhile, Iran vowed to take an even-greater step away from its unraveling nuclear deal with world powers as a response to Soleimani's slaying.

The U.S. drone strike killing Soleimani in Iraq Friday escalated the crisis between Tehran and Washington after months of trading attacks and threats that put the wider Middle East on edge. The conflict is rooted in Trump pulling out of Iran's atomic accord.

Iran has promised "harsh revenge" for the U.S. attack, which shocked Iranians across all political lines. Many saw Soleimani as a pillar of the Islamic Republic at a moment when it is beset by U.S. sanctions and recent anti-government protests.

Retaliation for Soleimani could potentially come through the proxy forces which he oversaw as the head of an elite unit within the paramilitary Revolutionary Guard. Soleimani's longtime deputy Esmail Ghaani already has taken over as the Quds Force's commander.

Late Saturday, a series of rockets launched in Baghdad fell inside or near the Green Zone, which houses government offices and foreign embassies, including the U.S. Embassy.

Trump wrote on Twitter afterward that the U.S. had already "targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture."

Trump did not identify the targets but added that they would be "HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

The 1954 Hague Convention, of which the U.S. is a party, bars any military from "direct hostilities against cultural property." However, such sites can be targeted if they have been re-purposed and turned into a legitimate "military objective," according to the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Iran, home to 24 UNESCO World Heritage sites, has in the past reportedly guarded the sprawling tomb complex of the Islamic Republic's founder, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, with surface-to-air missiles.

After thousands in Baghdad on Saturday mourned Soleimani and others killed in the strike, authorities flew the general's body to the southwestern Iranian city of Ahvaz. An honor guard stood by early Sunday as mourners carried the flag-draped coffins of Soleimani and other Guard members off the tarmac.

The caskets then moved slowly through streets choked with mourners wearing black, beating their chests and carrying posters with Soleimani's portrait. Demonstrators also carried red Shiite flags, which traditionally both symbolize the spilled blood of someone unjustly killed and call for their deaths to be avenged.

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Officials brought Soleimani's body to Ahvaz, a city that was a focus of fighting during the bloody, 1980-88 war between Iraq and Iran in which the general slowly grew to prominence. After that war, Soleimani joined the Guard's newly formed Quds, or Jerusalem, Force, an expeditionary force that works with Iranian proxy forces in countries like Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen.

Authorities then took Soleimani's body to Mashhad later Sunday. His remains will go to Tehran and Qom on Monday for public mourning processions, followed by his hometown of Kerman for burial Tuesday.

This marks the first time Iran honored a single man with a multi-city ceremony. Not even Khomeini received such a procession with his death in 1989. Soleimani on Monday will lie in state at Tehran's famed Musalla mosque as the revolutionary leader did before him.

Soleimani was the architect of Iran's regional policy of mobilizing militias across Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, including in the war against the Islamic State group. He was also blamed for attacks on U.S. troops and American allies going back decades.

Though it's unclear how or when Iran may respond, any retaliation was likely to come after three days of mourning declared in both Iran and Iraq.

Iranian officials planned to meet Sunday night to discuss taking a fifth step away from its 2015 nuclear deal with world powers, one that could be even greater than planned, Foreign Ministry spokesman Abbas Mousavi told journalists.

"In the world of politics, all developments are interconnected," Mousavi said.

Iran previously has broken limits of its enrichment, its stockpiles and its centrifuges, as well as restarted enrichment at an underground facility.

After the airstrike early Friday, the U.S.-led coalition has scaled back operations and boosted "security and defensive measures" at bases hosting coalition forces in Iraq, a coalition official said on condition of anonymity according to regulations.

Meanwhile, the U.S. has dispatched another 3,000 troops to neighboring Kuwait, the latest in a series of deployments in recent months as the standoff with Iran has worsened. Protesters held demonstrations in dozens of U.S. cities Saturday over Trump's decisions to kill Soleimani and deploy more troops to the Mideast.

In a thinly veiled threat, one of the Iran-backed militias, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, or League of the Righteous, called on Iraqi security forces to stay at least a kilometer (0.6 miles) away from U.S. bases starting Sunday night. However, U.S. troops are invariably based in Iraqi military posts alongside local forces.

The Iranian parliament on Sunday opened with lawmakers in unison chanting: "Death to America!" Parliament speaker Ali Larijani compared Soleimani's killing to the 1953 CIA-backed coup that cemented the shah's power and to the U.S. Navy's shutdown of an Iranian passenger plane in 1988 that killed 290 people. He also described American officials as following "the law of the jungle."

"Mr. Trump! This is the voice of Iranian nation. Listen!" Larijani said as lawmakers chanted.

A spokesman for Iran's armed forces, Gen. Abolfazl Shekarchi, likewise threatened the U.S. by saying Iran and the "resistance front will decide the time, place and way" revenge will be carried out.

Iraq's parliament is meeting for an emergency session Sunday. Its government has come under mounting pressure to expel the 5,200 American troops who are based in the country to help prevent a resurgence of the Islamic State group.

The U.S. has ordered all citizens to leave Iraq and temporarily closed its embassy in Baghdad, where Iran-backed militiamen and their supporters had recently staged two days of violent protests in which they breached the compound. Britain and France have warned their citizens to avoid or strictly limit travel in Iraq, as London said it would begin escorting ships through the Strait of Hormuz. Oman, long an interlocutor between Iran and the West, urged Tehran and Washington on Sunday to pursue dialogue.

No one was hurt in the embassy protests, which came in response to U.S. airstrikes that killed 25 Iran-backed militiamen in Iraq and Syria. The U.S. blamed the militia for a rocket attack that killed a U.S. contractor in northern Iraq.

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Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Associated Press writers Aya Batrawy in Dubai, Qassim Abdul-Zahra in Baghdad, Zeina Karam and Sarah El Deeb in Beirut and Kelvin Chan in London contributed to this report.

Al-Shabab attacks military base used by US forces in Kenya

By ABDI GULED, TOM ODULA and CARA ANNA Associated Press

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP) — The U.S. military said the security situation was “fluid” at a Kenyan airfield used by U.S. forces after a pre-dawn attack Sunday by the al-Shabab extremist group. The attack destroyed U.S. aircraft and vehicles, Kenyan authorities said, and at least four attackers were killed.

It was not yet clear whether any U.S. or Kenyan forces were killed. A U.S. Africa Command statement said “an accountability of personnel assessment is underway.” The midday statement said the Manda Bay airfield was “still in the process of being fully secured.”

The al-Qaida-linked al-Shabab, based in neighboring Somalia, claimed responsibility and asserted that “intense” combat with U.S. forces continued. The U.S. statement called the al-Shabab claims exaggerated and said U.S. and Kenyan forces repelled the attack.

It is the first known al-Shabab attack against U.S. forces inside Kenya, a key base for fighting one of the world’s most resilient extremist organizations.

A plume of black smoke rose above the base. Residents said a car bomb had exploded early in the morning. Lamu county commissioner Irungu Macharia told The Associated Press that five suspects were arrested and were being interrogated.

An internal Kenyan police report seen by the AP said two fixed-wing aircraft, a U.S. Cessna and a Kenyan one, were destroyed along with two U.S. helicopters and multiple U.S. vehicles at the Manda Bay military airstrip. The report said explosions were heard at around 5:30 a.m. from the direction of the airstrip. The scene, now secured, indicated that al-Shabab likely entered “to conduct targeted attacks,” the report said.

The U.S. military said only that “initial reports reflect damage to infrastructure and equipment.” The Kenya Civil Aviation Authority said the airstrip was closed for all operations.

Al-Shabab’s statement included photos of blazing aircraft it asserted were from the attack. A second al-Shabab claim issued hours later asserted that “intense close-quarters combat” against U.S. forces continued.

The military’s Camp Simba in Lamu county, established more than a decade ago, has under 100 U.S. personnel, according to Pentagon figures. U.S. forces at the Manda Bay airfield train and give counterterror support to East African partners, according to the military. A U.S. flag-raising at the camp in August signaled its change “from tactical to enduring operations,” the Air Force said at the time.

According to another internal Kenyan police report seen by the AP, dated Friday, a villager that day said he had spotted 11 suspected al-Shabab members entering Lamu’s Boni forest, which the extremists have used as a hideout. The report said Kenyan authorities did not find them.

Al-Shabab has launched a number of attacks inside Kenya, including against civilian targets such as buses, schools and shopping malls. The group has been the target of a growing number of U.S. airstrikes inside Somalia during President Donald Trump’s administration.

The latest attack comes just over a week after an al-Shabab truck bomb in Somalia’s capital killed at least 79 people and U.S. airstrikes killed seven al-Shabab fighters in response.

Last year al-Shabab attacked a U.S. military base inside Somalia, Baledogle, that is used to launch drone strikes but reportedly failed to make their way inside. The extremist group also has carried out multiple attacks against Kenyan troops in the past in retaliation for Kenya sending troops to Somalia to fight it.

This attack marks a significant escalation of al-Shabab’s campaign of attacks inside Kenya, said analyst Andrew Franklin, a former U.S. Marine and longtime Kenya resident.

“Launching a deliberate assault of this type against a well-defended permanent base occupied by (Kenya Defence Forces), contractors and U.S. military personnel required a great deal of planning, rehearsals, logistics and operational capability,” he said. Previous attacks against security forces have mainly been ambushes on Kenyan army or police patrols.

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The early Sunday attack comes days after a U.S. airstrike killed Iran's top military commander and Iran vowed retaliation, but al-Shabab is a Sunni Muslim group and there is no sign of links to Shiite Iran or proxies.

"No, this attack was no way related to that incident" in the Middle East, an al-Shabab spokesman told the AP. He spoke on condition of anonymity for security reasons.

One analyst, Rashid Abdi, in Twitter posts discussing the attack agreed but added that Kenyan security services have long been worried that Iran was trying to cultivate ties with al-Shabab.

"Avowedly Wahhabist Al-Shabaab not natural ally of Shia Iran, hostile, even. But if Kenyan claims true, AS attack may have been well-timed to signal to Iran it is open for tactical alliances," he wrote, adding that "an AS that forges relations with Iran is nightmare scenario."

But a former member of the U.N. committee monitoring sanctions on Somalia, Jay Bahadur, said in a tweet that "the attack is far more related to AS wanting a do over on their spectacular failure at Baledogle four months ago."

When asked whether the U.S. military was looking into any Iranian link to the attack, U.S. Africa Command spokesman Col. Christopher Karns said only that "al-Shabab, affiliated with al-Qaida, has their own agenda and have made clear their desire to attack U.S. interests."

The al-Shabab claim of responsibility said Sunday's attack was part of its "Jerusalem will never be Judaized" campaign, a rarely made reference that also was used after al-Shabab's deadly attack on a luxury mall complex in Kenya's capital, Nairobi, in January 2019.

Anna contributed from Johannesburg

Drunken driver in Italy plows into German tourists, kills 6

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — A drunken driver plowed into a group of young German tourists in northern Italy early Sunday, killing six people and injuring 11 others, Italian authorities said.

The deadly crash occurred in a village near Valle Aurina, near Bolzano in the Alto Adige region, shortly after 1 a.m. as the Germans — who were between the ages of 20-25 — gathered to board their bus.

The largely German-speaking autonomous region of northern Italy, with its ski resorts in the Dolomites and quaint villages around Bolzano, is popular with German tourists.

"The new year begins with a terrible tragedy," said the regional president of Alto Adige, Arno Kompatscher. "We are left stunned."

The driver of the car had a high blood alcohol content and was driving particularly fast, a Carabinieri police official in Brunico told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because he wasn't authorized to give his name. He said police had concluded that the car crash into pedestrians was not an act of terrorism.

The Lutago volunteer fire service said on Facebook that six people were killed at the scene. The 11 injured, four of whom were in critical condition, were taken to several regional hospitals, including two who were airlifted to a hospital in Innsbruck, Austria, said Bolzano Carabinieri Cmdr. Alessandro Coassin.

In all, 160 rescue workers and emergency medical personnel responded to the crash, the aftermath of which "looked like a battlefield," Helmut Abfalterer of the Lutago volunteer fire service told the Tageszeitung Online portal.

Coassin said the driver, identified by Italian media as a 28-year-old man from the nearby town of Chienes, was arrested on suspicion of highway manslaughter and injury and was being treated at the hospital in Brunico.

Kompatscher told a press conference the victims were part of a group of young Germans vacationing in the region. He expressed his condolences to their families and declined to provide further details pending notification of their deaths to their loved ones.

Later Sunday, mourners left candles and flowers at the crash scene, which was located along a two-lane

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road dotted by hotels and old piles of snow in the mountainous region.

The accident occurred on the final long weekend of the Christmas and New Year's holiday in Italy, which will be capped by Epiphany on Monday.

AP correspondent Frank Jordans contributed from Berlin.

Renovation chief: Notre Dame Cathedral is not saved yet

By SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — The French general who is overseeing the reconstruction of the fire-devastated Notre Dame Cathedral says the Paris landmark is not saved yet.

Gen. Jean-Louis Georgelin told French broadcaster CNews on Sunday that "the cathedral is still in a state of peril" after last year's fire, which destroyed its roof and collapsed its spire as the cathedral was undergoing renovations.

"Notre Dame is not saved because ... there is an extremely important step ahead, which is to remove the scaffolding that had been built around the spire" before the fire, he said.

The rector of Notre Dame, Monsignor Patrick Chauvet, told the AP last month that the cathedral is still so fragile there's a "50% chance" the structure might not be saved, because the scaffolding may fall onto its fragile vaults.

A former chief of staff of France's armed forces, Georgelin was named by French President Emmanuel Macron to lead the reconstruction effort for Notre Dame.

He said the actual condition of the cathedral's vaults is not fully known, which means he could not guarantee that "it won't fall apart."

Still, Georgelin says "reassuring" observations have been made on the 12th-century cathedral since the April 15 inferno, he said.

"So we feel quite confident," he added.

The scaffolding on Notre Dame should be removed by mid-2020 and the restoration work should start next year, he said.

Wildfires threaten unique critters on Australian 'Galapagos'

By NICK PERRY Associated Press

SYDNEY (AP) — It has been described as Australia's Galapagos Islands and has long been a refuge for some of the country's most endangered creatures. But devastating wildfires over recent days have undone decades of careful conservation work on Kangaroo Island and have threatened to wipe out some of the island's unique fauna altogether.

Experts working on the island say the fires have killed thousands of koalas and kangaroos, and also have raised questions about whether any members of a mouse-like marsupial species that carries its young in a pouch have survived. Similarly, it remains unclear how many from a unique flock of glossy black-cockatoos got away from the flames and whether they have a future on an island where much of their habitat has gone up in smoke.

Located off the coast of South Australia state, Kangaroo Island is about 50% larger than Rhode Island and home to 4,500 people and what was a thriving ecotourism industry. But the wildfires that have been ravaging swaths of Australia have burned through one-third of the island, killing a father and his son and leaving behind a scorched wasteland and a devastated community.

They also have left people scrambling to help the critters that have survived.

"Caring for all these animals is quite amazing," said Sam Mitchell, co-owner of the Kangaroo Island Wildlife Park. "However, we are seeing a lot that are too far gone. We are seeing kangaroos and koalas with their hands burned off — they stand no chance. It's been quite emotional."

Inspired in part by the late Australian wildlife expert Steve Irwin, Mitchell and his wife, Dana, bought the commercial park seven years ago in their early 20s, and have been renovating the place and taking

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in rescue animals since.

On Friday night with the fire approaching, Dana fled with their 18-month-old son, Connor, while Sam stayed behind to defend the park and their dream. A wind change spared the park from the wildfire's path.

Mitchell said the fires have killed thousands of koalas on the island, a particularly devastating loss because the creatures have remained largely disease-free there, while many koalas on mainland Australia suffer from chlamydia.

The couple are currently caring for about 18 burned koalas, and they've had to euthanize many more.

Meanwhile, Heidi Groffen could do nothing, as all eight monitoring stations she and her partner had set up to keep track of the mysterious Kangaroo Island dunnart, the mouse-like marsupial, melted in the flames.

An ecologist and coordinator for the nonprofit Kangaroo Island Land for Wildlife, Groffen said the population of 300 or so dunnarts may have been wiped out altogether because they are too small to outrun wildfires, although she remains hopeful that some may have sheltered in rock crevices.

"Even if there are survivors, there is no food for them now," she said. "We're hoping to bring some into captivity before they are completely gone."

She said the creatures have long fascinated her because so little is known about them.

Also uncertain is the future for the 400 or so Kangaroo Island glossy black-cockatoos. Once prevalent on the South Australia mainland, the birds retreated to the island after humans destroyed much of their traditional habitat.

"Unlike some of the other animals, the birds are in the best position to escape. They can get away from the fires a bit more," said Daniella Teixeira, who is working on a doctoral degree about the birds at The University of Queensland.

But much like the dunnarts, the cockatoos could find they don't have enough food left on the island, particularly because they eat only from a single type of tree known as a drooping she-oak. And many hot spots on the island continue to burn.

Teixeira said careful conservation work over the past 25 years has seen the glossy black-cockatoo population increase from 150, but those gains have been wiped out in the space of a week.

She said she is currently writing the final chapter of the thesis she began in 2016, but that suddenly everything has changed.

"It's pretty hard to sit here and write a paper on them when I don't know their status today," she said.

From Gervais to J.Lo, what to expect at the Golden Globes

By JAKE COYLE AP Film Writer

The Golden Globes are famously unpredictable, but a few sure things seem to be in store for Sunday's awards: Streaming services will play a starring role; five-time host Ricky Gervais will snicker at his own jokes; and Brad Pitt is all but assured of taking home an award.

Plenty of question marks remain for the 77th Golden Globe Awards, though. Will Jennifer Lopez score her first Globe? Who will win best song in the faceoff between Beyoncé, Taylor Swift and Elton John? Just how many "Cats" jokes are too many?

But whatever the cat drags in Sunday, the Golden Globes — Hollywood's most freewheeling televised award show — should be entertaining.

They also might be unusually influential. The 87 voting members of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association have traditionally had little in common with the nearly 9,000 industry professionals that make up the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The HFPA is known for calculatingly packing its show with as much star power as possible, occasionally rewarding even the likes of "The Tourist" and "Burlesque."

But the condensed time frame of this year's award season brings the Globes and the Academy Awards closer in proximity. Balloting for Oscar nominations began Thursday; voters will be watching.

The Golden Globes will begin at 8 p.m. EST and be broadcast live on NBC from the Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California.

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Netflix comes into the Globes with a commanding 34 nods — 17 in film categories and 17 in television categories. Noah Baumbach's "Marriage Story" leads all movies with six nods, including best film, drama. Martin Scorsese's "The Irishman," with five nominations, is up for the same category. The box-office smash "Joker" may be their stiffest competition.

The path is more certain for Quentin Tarantino's "Once Upon a Time ... in Hollywood," which is competing in the comedy or musical category. It could easily take home more trophies than any other movie, with possible wins for Pitt, Leonardo DiCaprio — a 12-time Globes nominee and three-time winner — and Tarantino's script. Tarantino is also up for best director, though he faces formidable competition in Scorsese and "Parasite" filmmaker Bong Joon Ho.

The dearth of nominations for female filmmakers has stoked more backlash than anything else at this year's Globes. Only men were nominated for best director (just five women have ever been nominated in the category), and none of the 10 films up for best picture was directed by a woman, either.

Time's Up, the activist group that debuted at the black-clad 2018 Globes, has been highly critical of the HFPA for the omission, calling it "unacceptable."

Last year, eventual Oscar best picture winner "Green Book" took best comedy, while "Bohemian Rhapsody" unexpectedly won best drama. This year, one of the likely best picture nominees at the Academy Awards wasn't eligible. Despite being an organization of foreign journalists, the HFPA doesn't include foreign films in its top categories, thus ruling out the South Korean sensation "Parasite."

On the TV side, series like "Fleabag," "The Crown," "Succession" and "Chernobyl" are among the favorites. The recently launched Apple TV Plus also joins its first major awards show with "The Morning Show," including nominations for both Jennifer Aniston and Reese Witherspoon.

The show will be watchable beyond the traditional NBC broadcast. With a cable or satellite TV login, the three-hour show can be streamed on NBC.com or on Hulu (with live TV), YouTube TV, Sling TV or PlayStation Vue. The official red carpet will be streamed on Facebook, beginning at 6 p.m. EST.

Last year's telecast, hosted by Andy Samberg and Sandra Oh, held steady in TV ratings, averaging 18.6 million viewers. Along with the returning Gervais, scheduled presenters include Tiffany Haddish, Will Ferrell and last year's best actress winner, Glenn Close.

Tom Hanks, also a nominee for his supporting turn as Fred Rogers in "A Beautiful Day in the Neighborhood," will receive the Cecil B. DeMille lifetime achievement award. The Carol Burnett Award, a similar honorary award given for television accomplishment, will go to Ellen DeGeneres.

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

Morrison defends response as weather brings respite in fires

By SHONAL GANGULY and STEVE McMORRAN Associated Press

SYDNEY (AP) — Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison defended his leadership and his government's record on climate change Sunday as milder temperatures brought hope of a respite from wildfires that have ravaged three states, claiming 24 lives and destroying almost 2,000 homes.

Morrison has faced widespread criticism for taking a family vacation in Hawaii at the start of the wildfire crisis, his sometimes distracted approach as it has escalated and his slowness in deploying resources.

He was heckled last week when he visited a township in New South Wales in which houses had been destroyed and which was home to one of three volunteer firefighters who have died in the crisis so far.

On Saturday Morrison announced that, for the first time in Australian history, 3,000 army, navy and air force reservists will be thrown into the battle against the fires. He also committed \$14 million to leasing fire-fighting aircraft from overseas.

But those decisions attracted complaints that he had taken too long to act as fires have burned through millions of hectares (acres) in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, an area twice the size of Maryland.

Morrison told a news conference Sunday it was not the time for blame.

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"There has been a lot of blame being thrown around," Morrison said. "And now is the time to focus on the response that is being made. ... Blame doesn't help anybody at this time and over-analysis of these things is not a productive exercise."

Morrison has been chided for past remarks that appear to minimize the link between climate change and Australia's escalating threats of drought and wildfires.

"There is no dispute in this country about the issue of climate change globally and its effect on global weather patterns and that includes how it impacts in Australia," he said.

"I have to correct the record here. I have seen a number of people suggest that somehow the government does not make this connection. The government has always made this connection and that has never been in dispute."

Cooler temperatures and lighter winds on Sunday brought some relief to threatened communities, a day after thousands were forced to flee as flames reached the suburban fringes of Sydney.

Thousands of firefighters fought to contain the blazes but many continued to burn out of control, threatening to wipe out rural townships and causing almost incalculable damage to property and wildlife.

As dawn broke over a blackened landscape Sunday, a picture emerged of disaster of unprecedented scale. The Rural Fire Service said 150 fires were active in the state, 64 of them uncontrolled.

"It's not something we have experienced before," New South Wales Premier Gladys Berejiklian said.

The latest fatality occurred at Batlow in New South Wales, where a 47-year-old man died Saturday night while defending the home of a friend from encroaching fires. New South Wales police said the man was found unconscious in a vehicle and could not be revived.

Earlier Saturday, a father and son who were battling flames for two days died on a highway on Kangaroo Island, off South Australia state. Authorities identified them as Dick Lang, a 78-year-old acclaimed bush pilot and outback safari operator, and his 43-year-old son, Clayton. Their family said their losses left them "heartbroken and reeling from this double tragedy."

Lang, known as "Desert Dick," led tours for travelers throughout Australia and other countries.

The deadly wildfires, which have been raging since September, have already burned about 5 million hectares (12.35 million acres) of land. That's more than any one year in the U.S. since Harry Truman was president.

The early and devastating start to Australia's summer wildfires has also been catastrophic for the country's wildlife, likely killing nearly 500 million birds, reptiles and mammals in New South Wales alone, Sydney University ecologist Chris Dickman told the Sydney Morning Herald. Frogs, bats and insects are excluded from his estimate, making the toll on animals much greater.

Morrison's handling of the deployment of reservists also came in for criticism Sunday. Rural Fire Service Commissioner Shane Fitzsimmons, who is leading the fight in New South Wales, said he learned of the deployment through media reports.

"It is fair to say it was disappointing and some surprise to hear about these things through public announcements in the middle of what was one of our worst days this season with the second-highest number of concurrent emergency warning fires ever in the history of New South Wales," he said.

Morrison was also forced to defend a video posted on social media Saturday, which promoted the deployment of reservists and the government's response to the wildfires.

The non-partisan Australia Defence Association said the video breached rules around political advertising.

"Party-political advertising milking ADF (Australian Defence Force) support to civil agencies fighting bushfires is a clear breach of the non-partisanship convention applying to both the ADF and ministers/MPs," the association said.

In a tweet, Morrison said "the video message simply communicates the government's policy decisions and the actions the government is undertaking to the public."

Meanwhile, Australia's capital Canberra was enveloped in a smoky haze Sunday and air quality at midday was measured at 10 times the usual hazardous limit.

In New Zealand the skies above Auckland were tinged orange by smoke from the bushfires and police

were inundated with calls from anxious residents.

McMorran reported from Wellington, New Zealand.

Palestinians face mounting barriers to peaceful protest

By JOSEPH KRAUSS and MOHAMMED DARAGHMEH Associated Press

RAMALLAH, West Bank (AP) — Abdullah Abu Rahma has been arrested by Israeli soldiers eight times in the last 15 years, spending weeks or months in prison and paying tens of thousands of dollars in fines for organizing protests.

He's among a growing number of Palestinians who have embraced non-violent means of protesting Israel's military rule and expanding settlements, and who are increasingly finding those avenues of dissent blocked.

Israel says the Palestinians should address their grievances in peace talks. But negotiations ground to a halt more than a decade ago, and the current government's position on core issues is rejected by the Palestinians and most of the international community.

More than 50 years after occupying the West Bank, Israel is still systematically denying Palestinians civil rights, including the right to gather, Human Rights Watch said in a report released last month. Israel has also stepped up its campaign against the Palestinian-led international boycott movement, and the United States and other countries have adopted legislation to suppress it.

Israel has also come down hard on Palestinian attempts to seek redress at the International Criminal Court. Last month, after a five-year preliminary investigation, the court said it was ready to open a full investigation pending a ruling on territorial jurisdiction. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called the court's decision "pure anti-Semitism."

Omar Shakir, the Israel and Palestine director for Human Rights Watch, said Israel has "all but declared Palestinian opposition to the systematic discrimination they face illegitimate." Shakir himself was deported from Israel in November over his alleged support for the boycott movement.

If it succeeds in banning forms of peaceful advocacy, he says, Israel will have "effectively left Palestinians no choice but submission to a regime of systematic repression, or violence."

For decades, the Palestinians were branded terrorists because of their armed struggle against Israel, which included suicide bombings and other attacks on civilians. At the height of the Second Intifada, the violent uprising in the early 2000s, and for years afterward, observers wondered why there was no "Palestinian Gandhi."

One candidate for such a title might be Abu Rahma, who for several years organized weekly protests outside his West Bank village of Bilin against Israel's controversial separation barrier. Israel says the barrier is needed for security, but would have cut off village residents from their land. The protesters eventually forced authorities to reroute the barrier following a court order.

The protests often saw Palestinian youths hurl rocks at Israeli security forces, who responded with tear gas and rubber-coated bullets. But Abu Rahma says he never threw stones and told others not to do so, partly out of concern they would hurt other protesters.

That didn't keep him from being arrested.

Over the years he was charged with entering a closed military zone — referring to land outside the village — and hindering the work of soldiers, who were overseeing the construction of the fence.

"I don't go to them, they come to us," he said.

In 2009 he was charged with stockpiling weapons after he collected spent tear gas canisters fired by Israeli soldiers and put them on display. He later served a 16-month prison term after a military court convicted him of incitement and participation in illegal protests.

"There have been various, multiple charges of this kind, but not once have they accused me of striking a soldier or throwing a stone," he told The Associated Press. In 2009, he was acquitted on the weapons possession charge and a charge of throwing stones.

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Issa Amro, another prominent activist who has organized protests against Israeli settlements in the West Bank city of Hebron, faces 16 charges, including calling for disobedience and disrupting Israeli life — the lives of settlers.

He says he has been detained on 10 occasions this year alone, usually after being beaten by settlers.

"The soldiers never did anything to stop the attackers, but they arrested me every time a settler said I attacked him," he said. As a Palestinian, he is governed by Israeli military law, while the Jewish settlers in Hebron enjoy full rights as Israeli citizens.

"Israeli authorities ban any political expression in the Palestinian territories," Amro said. "They want us basically to accept the occupation, the discrimination, the land grab, the restrictions, and not to speak up against it."

Human Rights Watch said Israel relies on sweeping military orders, many of which date back to the 1967 Mideast war, when it seized the West Bank, east Jerusalem and Gaza, territories the Palestinians want for their future state.

Civilians can be jailed for up to 10 years for attending political gatherings of more than 10 people or for displaying flags or political symbols without army approval, Human Rights Watch said. Military orders ban 411 organizations, including every major political movement, it added.

"After 52 years, Israel's sweeping restrictions of the basic rights of Palestinians can no longer be justified by the exigencies of military occupation," Shakir said. "Palestinians are entitled at minimum to the same rights Israel provides its own citizens."

In response to questions about the Human Rights Watch report and the restrictions on protests, Israel's Ministry of Foreign Affairs accused the Palestinian leadership of seeking to "attack Israel in the international arena" rather than trying to end the conflict through negotiations.

Peace talks broke down after Netanyahu was elected in 2009. In September, he vowed to annex large parts of the West Bank, a move that would almost certainly extinguish any remaining hope of creating a Palestinian state.

The Palestinian Authority in the West Bank and the Islamic militant group Hamas, which rules Gaza, have also cracked down on dissent in recent years. The PA has detained hundreds of people, including Amro, who was jailed for a week in 2017 over a Facebook post. Hamas violently dispersed protests last March, arresting dozens of people.

In addition to protesting, many Palestinians have also rallied behind the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, or BDS, a nonviolent campaign that claims to be modeled on the struggle against South African Apartheid.

The campaign has sparked a major backlash by Israeli authorities, who say its true aim is to delegitimize the state and eventually wipe it off the map.

BDS endorses the Palestinian claim of a right of return for the descendants of refugees who fled or were driven out of Israel in the 1948 war that attended its creation. If fully realized, that would spell the end of Israel as a Jewish-majority state. Critics have also seized on statements from prominent BDS supporters to brand it as anti-Semitic, something organizers vehemently deny.

A 2017 law bars entry to foreigners who have called for economic boycotts of Israel or its settlements. Israel invoked the law when it deported Shakir and when it refused entry to U.S. congresswomen Ilhan Omar and Rashida Tlaib earlier this year.

In May, German lawmakers passed a resolution that denounced the boycott movement and described its methods as anti-Semitic. The U.S. House of Representatives passed a resolution opposing the boycott movement in July.

At least 25 U.S. states have enacted laws aimed at suppressing the BDS movement, including Texas, which passed a law forcing state contractors to sign a pledge that they do not support the campaign. A federal judge blocked enforcement of the law in April, saying boycotts are a form of protected free speech.

Gerald Steinberg, who heads a pro-Israel group called NGO Monitor that campaigns against BDS, said its "demonization paints Israelis as blood-thirsty war criminals, land-thieves and child killers."

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"These accusations contribute to or are used to justify attacks against students and speakers on university campuses, harassment in other venues and in some cases, violent terror," he said.

Abu Rahma and other activists reject such characterizations, saying their struggle is not against Israelis but against the occupation.

"I see how the occupation is an obstacle to everything," he said. "The path that I am on, I have to continue. I have to struggle. It's not easy."

Derrick Henry, Titans stun Patriots 20-13 in wild-card upset

By BARRY WILNER AP Pro Football Writer

FOXBOROUGH, Mass. (AP) — When the eerie Foxborough fog lifted, it became clear that New England's reign atop the NFL was ending.

Derrick Henry ensured that with the kind of dominating playoff performance usually reserved for Tom Brady and the Patriots.

Henry rushed for 182 yards and a touchdown while Tennessee's defense stymied Brady and perhaps ended his championship-filled New England career with a 20-13 wild-card victory Saturday night.

Brady vows to be back on an NFL field next season, but his contract with the Patriots is done.

"I love the Patriots," the 42-year Brady said, adding about leaving the game after 20 seasons: "I would say it's pretty unlikely, hopefully unlikely. I love playing football. I don't know what it looks like moving forward."

Doing the most moving forward Saturday night was Henry, who had a total of 184 yards rushing in two playoff games two years ago. He nearly got that against the league's top-ranked defense in boosting the Titans (10-7) into the divisional round at No. 1 seed Baltimore.

"It's a great win against a great team in a hostile environment," Henry said on his 26th birthday. "Credit to my team. I'm just happy we were able to advance."

"We were just locked in. That was our mindset, just coming in here doing what we needed to do in all three phases, stay locked in no matter what happens in the game, and I feel like we did that."

For sure.

As that dense fog that shrouded Gillette Stadium for the first half dissipated, the Patriots, who made the last three Super Bowls and won two, stalled repeatedly with the ball. They no longer were the bullies on the block — Henry was.

As for this defeat, the Patriots' fourth as a wild card, Brady noted: "They kind of stopped us in the first half and the second half and we couldn't get the job done."

There had been no scoring in the second half when All-Pro Brett Kern's 58-yard punt that took up 10 of the final 25 seconds rolled down at the New England 1. Brady then was picked by former Patriot Logan Ryan for a 9-yard touchdown to finish off the Patriots (12-5), who at one point were 8-0.

The game's first three possessions wound up as three long scoring drives. A 29-yard screen pass to James White set up Nick Folk's 36-yard field goal, but Tennessee answered with a 75-yard march built around Henry. He had no role on the touchdown, Tannehill's pass to a Harvard man, tight end Anthony Firkser that made it 7-3.

Firkser is the first player from Harvard to score a playoff TD.

New England counterpunched with its own 75-yard drive, taking temporary control of the game by victimizing Tennessee's defense on the outside. The Titans looked slow trying to protect the flanks as Sony Michel broke off a 25-yard run and White had a 14-yarder.

Julian Edelman finished it with the first rushing touchdown of his 11 pro seasons, a 5-yard dash to the unprotected left side of the Tennessee D.

New England appeared primed for another touchdown after Mohamed Sanu's 14-yard punt return set up the Patriots at the Titans 47, and they steadily drove to first-and-goal at the 1.

All they got was Folk's 21-yard field goal as three runs failed. It was the 13th time the Patriots had first-and-goal at the 1 in a playoff game in the Brady era and the first time they failed to get a TD on the drive.

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Tannehill led the NFL with a career-best 117.5 passer rating and by averaging 9.6 yards per pass attempt. But he didn't do a whole lot Saturday night in his first postseason game: 8 of 15 for 72 yards. His awful decision to put the ball up for grabs on the first play of the fourth quarter resulted in Duron Harmon's interception.

But New England's spotty attack flopped and never revived. That has not been unusual during the second half of the schedule.

Tannehill's passing yards were the fewest for a starter since the Ravens' Joe Flacco had 34 in a wild-card win against the Patriots 10 years ago.

Tannehill now has five victories over Brady, second only to Peyton Manning's six for the most by an opposing QB since 2001, including playoffs.

BIRTHDAY BOY

Henry celebrated his birthday by getting the most rushing yards against a Bill Belichick-coached Patriots team in the playoffs. He set an early tone by rushing for 49 of the Titans' 75 yards on their opening touchdown drive. On the Titans' second 75-yard TD march, all Henry did was gain every yard: 22 on a screen pass and 53 rushing, including a 1-yard dive into the end zone for a 14-13 halftime lead. Those were Tennessee's first points in the final two minutes of the opening half since Week 8.

"When you can run it when the other team knows you're gonna run it, that says a lot about your running game," Titans coach Mike Vrabel said.

Henry led the NFL in rushing this season with 1,540 yards in 15 games, the fourth-most rushing yards in franchise history. He also ran for 16 TDs, second most in team history.

BELICHICK DISCIPLE

Vrabel, a star linebacker for New England who won three Super Bowl rings, is a rare member of the Belichick coaching tree to defeat the Patriots' long-time coach head to head in the playoffs. Another of those, Houston's Bill O'Brien, also did it this season — and the Texans advanced to the divisional round earlier Saturday by beating Buffalo in overtime.

"I told 'em that to win the game, you're going to have to be mentally and physically exhausted," Vrabel said. "You're going to get rubbed defensively. There's gonna be gadgets. They going to force you to think. ...

"We didn't hand them anything. They feast on bad football.

"I don't think our guys spend a lot of time looking at those banners."

New England's loss in the season finale at home to Miami, which cost the Patriots a wild-card round bye, was engineered by another former Belichick assistant, Brian Flores.

NEW ENGLAND SLUMP

After winning their first eight games, the Patriots struggled mightily in the second half of the schedule. They lost four games, and with the defeat by the Titans, they fell three times at home.

INJURIES

Titans: Linebacker Jayon Brown hurt his shoulder in the first half.

Patriots: Safety Patrick Chung left in the first quarter with an ankle issue.

NEXT UP

Titans: Head to Baltimore in the divisional round.

Patriots: Head home early, failing to become the second team to make four straight Super Bowls. And wondering where Brady is headed.

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

Trump says 52 targets already lined up if Iran retaliates

By DOUGLASS K. DANIEL and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — President Donald Trump issued a stark warning to Iran on Saturday, threatening to hit dozens of targets in the Islamic Republic "very fast and very hard" if it retaliates for the targeted killing of the head of Iran's elite Quds Force.

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The series of tweets came as the White House sent to Congress a formal notification under the War Powers Act of the drone strike on Gen. Qassem Soleimani, a senior administration official said. U.S. law required notification within 48 hours of the introduction of American forces into an armed conflict or a situation that could lead to war.

The notification was classified and it was not known if a public version would be released. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi said the classified document "suggests Congress and the American people are being left in the dark about our national security."

In unusually specific language, Trump tweeted that his administration had already targeted 52 Iranian sites, "some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture." He linked the number of sites to the number of hostages, also 52, held by Iran for nearly 15 months after protesters overran the U.S. Embassy in Tehran in 1979.

Thousands of Iranians lined Baghdad streets Saturday for the funeral procession for Soleimani. The Islamic Republic has vowed revenge for the Trump-ordered airstrike that killed him and several senior Iraqi militants early Friday Baghdad time.

Trump appeared to respond to such threats with tweets justifying Soleimani's killing and matching the bellicose language from Iran.

"Iran is talking very boldly about targeting certain USA assets as revenge for our ridding the world of their terrorist leader who had just killed an American, & badly wounded many others, not to mention all of the people he had killed over his lifetime, including recently hundreds of Iranian protesters," the president tweeted. "He was already attacking our Embassy, and preparing for additional hits in other locations. Iran has been nothing but problems for many years."

Trump also warned: "The USA wants no more threats!"

Trump's reference to targeting sites "important to Iran & the Iranian culture" could raise questions about whether striking such targets would violate international agreements. The American Red Cross notes on its website that the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and their additional protocols, ratified by scores of nations in recent years, states that "cultural objects and places of worship" may not be attacked and outlaws "indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations."

Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden, campaigning in Iowa, questioned whether Trump was acting alone or with support of allies. "We have no idea – I have no idea – whether he has any plan at all," the former vice president told reporters Saturday night. "But when he makes statements like that, it just seems to me to be he's going off on a tweet storm on his own, and it's incredibly dangerous and irresponsible."

The notification document sent Saturday to congressional leadership, the House speaker and the Senate president pro tempore was entirely classified, according to a senior Democratic aide and a congressional aide. The aides and the senior administration official were not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and requested anonymity.

In a statement, Pelosi said the "highly unusual" decision to classify the document compounds concerns from Congress.

"This document prompts serious and urgent questions about the timing, manner and justification of the Administration's decision to engage in hostilities against Iran," Pelosi said and reiterated her call for a full briefing for lawmakers.

Pelosi said the Trump administration's "provocative, escalatory and disproportionate military engagement continues to put servicemembers, diplomats and citizens of America and our allies in danger." She called on the administration "for an immediate, comprehensive briefing of the full Congress on military engagement related to Iran and next steps under consideration."

Daniel reported from Washington. AP Congressional Correspondent Lisa Mascaro contributed to this report.

Texans roar past Bills for 22-19 win in OT

By KRISTIE RIEKEN AP Sports Writer

HOUSTON (AP) — Deshaun Watson's teammates talked all week about how they never feel as if they're out of any game when No. 4 is on the field.

On Saturday Watson showed why the Houston Texans have so much trust in him, when the quarterback's dazzling performance late after a tough start led them to a playoff victory.

Watson spun out of a would-be sack and coolly completed a pass that set up the winning field goal in overtime as the Texans rallied from a double-digit second-half deficit for a 22-19 victory over the Buffalo Bills in the first round of the playoffs.

DeAndre Hopkins was asked to describe Watson's play on Saturday to somebody who might have missed the game.

"I hope everyone watched this today, but he's amazing," Hopkins said. "You can't put too many words on it."

Both teams punted on their first possessions of overtime — the first extra period in an AFC wild-card game since January 2012. On Houston's next drive, Watson evaded a sack by wriggling away from one defender and bouncing off another before rolling out to find Taiwan Jones for a 34-yard reception to set up first-and-goal.

Watson flexed both arms as the crowd at NRG Stadium went wild — knowing their team was in position to pull off another comeback win to Houston's playoff history.

"I told myself to stay up. I mean, it's do-or-die now. I just had to make the play," Watson said.

Ka'imi Fairbairn then kicked a 28-yard field goal to lift Houston to the victory.

The Texans (11-6) advanced to the divisional round of the playoffs next weekend where they'll face the Kansas City Chiefs on Sunday.

The Texans got a boost from the return of J.J. Watt, who had a sack that helped spark his team. Houston scored 19 straight points to take the lead before Stephen Hauschka's 47-yard field goal tied it with 5 seconds left to force overtime.

"We never quit, regardless," Watson said. "Whatever it takes to get the win. I mean, we're going to keep fighting."

Watt was wowed by the play of Watson.

"The play he made at the end of the game — nobody makes that play," he said. "The guy's unbelievable. I'm very thankful and lucky to have him as my quarterback. That's why you play the whole game."

It was Watt's first game after sitting out since October with a torn pectoral muscle.

"This is why you come back," Watt said. "I don't know if I meant to come back for these many plays or this much extra time, but these feelings, these emotions, these fans, these players, Deshaun Watson and all the guys on this team, this is why you come back."

The win gives the Texans their first playoff victory since the 2016 season and extends Buffalo's postseason losing streak to six games, with their most recent playoff win coming in 1995. It's the first wild-card overtime game since the Broncos beat the Steelers 29-23 in the 2011 season.

The game conjured memories of another huge comeback in a wild-card game. The last time teams from Houston and Buffalo met in the playoffs it was in a game that is known as "The Comeback." The Bills set an NFL record for the largest comeback in NFL history by rallying from a 32-point deficit for a 41-38 overtime win against the Houston Oilers in a wild-card game in 1993.

This time Josh Allen and the Bills (10-7) used a dominant first half to build a 13-point lead and were up 16-0 in the third quarter, before Allen began to struggle.

"He was just trying to do too much and getting a little bit extreme with what he felt like we needed at the time," coach Sean McDermott said. "But overall, we just didn't make enough plays."

Watson had 247 yards passing and ran for 55 yards and Hopkins had 90 yards receiving. Watson led the Texans to the victory despite being sacked seven times, led by three from Jerry Hughes, and hit 12 other times.

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Allen threw for 264 yards, ran for 92 and caught a touchdown pass on a trick play in the first quarter, but often looked rattled late in his playoff debut.

Houston couldn't get anything going on offense before halftime and had 81 yards in a first half where Hopkins didn't catch a pass for the first time since Week 16 of the 2017 season.

They were finally able to sustain a drive on their second possession of the third quarter when Hopkins had receptions of 14 and 10 yards to help move the ball. The Texans cut the lead to 10 when Watson dragged two defenders into the end zone on a 20-yard touchdown run.

Watson then dived into the end zone for a 2-point conversion that got Houston within 16-8 with about two minutes left in the third.

The Bills were driving early in the fourth quarter when Allen was sacked by Whitney Mercilus and fumbled, and it was recovered by Jacob Martin at the Buffalo 47. Houston cashed in on the miscue with a 41-yard field goal that cut the lead to 16-11 with about 11 minutes to go.

Watson connected with Carlos Hyde on a 5-yard touchdown pass and Hopkins on a 2-point conversion with about five minutes left to put the Texans on top 19-16. Hopkins had a 41-yard reception earlier in that drive.

The Bills were in field-goal range on their next drive when Allen got a 14-yard penalty for intentional grounding and Buffalo lost a down to bring up fourth down. They went for it and Allen was sacked by Jacob Martin for a 19-yard loss to give Houston the ball back with 1:41 left.

"We didn't execute how we should have, and we didn't make as many plays as we should have," Allen said. "That's what it really comes down to. They made one more play than us."

The Texans trailed 13-0 at halftime and Hopkins fumbled on their opening drive of the third quarter to give Buffalo the ball at the Houston 32. Watt sacked Allen for a loss of 8 yards on third down and the Bills settled for a 38-yard field goal to extend the lead to 16-0.

Allen scrambled 42 yards for a first down on Buffalo's first possession for its longest rush of the season. Two plays later, the Bills used some trickery to take the lead when John Brown threw a 16-yard touchdown pass to Allen to make it 7-0. Brown's pass was wobbly, but Allen was wide open despite having to slow down to grab it.

It was early in the second quarter when Allen appeared to fumble, and it was recovered by Houston. But the play was reviewed and overturned, giving Buffalo the ball at the Houston 32. The Bills were unable to move the ball after that and made a 40-yard field goal to make it 10-0.

The Bills added another 40-yard field goal at the end of the second quarter to push the lead to 13-0 at halftime.

NOT SO FAST

Houston's DeAndre Carter looked to have made a major mistake when caught the opening kickoff of the second half in the end zone and tossed the ball toward a referee without taking a knee. The Bills scooped it up and thought they had scored a touchdown on the play. But the play was reviewed, and it was determined that Carter "gave himself up" so it was called a touchback and Houston kept the ball.

WATT'S HEALTH

Watt was pleasantly surprised with how good he felt on Saturday in his return from injury. But there was one moment where he was a bit worried that his surgically repaired pectoral muscle wouldn't hold up.

As he was about to dive to try and grab Allen, he wondered if that could be the moment where he was re-injured.

"But I dove and landed right on it, popped up, checked it out and looked over at the doctor who was standing like 10 feet away," he said. "And I was like: 'It's all right.'"

UP NEXT:

Bills: Season over.

Texans: Advance to divisional round.

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

On foreign policy, Trump flouts risks that gave others pause

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump is not the first American leader to have Iranian Gen. Qassem Soleimani in his sights, but he was the first to pull the trigger.

It's a pattern that has emerged throughout Trump's presidency. On a range of national security matters, he has cast aside the same warnings that gave his predecessors in both parties pause.

At times, he has simply been willing to embrace more risk. In other moments, he has questioned the validity of the warnings altogether, even from experts within his own administration. And he has publicly taken pride in doing so.

When Trump moved the U.S. Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a pledge others had made but ultimately backed away from, it was against the advice of aides who argued it would inflame tensions in the Middle East. When he became the first American leader to step foot in North Korea, he disregarded those who said he was giving Pyongyang a symbolic victory without getting anything in return.

Trump's supporters have embraced his willingness to act where others would not, saying he has brought a businessman's fresh eye to intractable problems. But his high-risk approach has sparked fear in Democrats, as well as some Republicans, who worry that the president is overly focused on short-term wins and blind to the long-term impact of his actions.

"Trump thinks foreign policy is a reality show, and if there aren't devastating consequences the next day, then they won't come," said Ben Rhodes, who served as President Barack Obama's deputy national security adviser. "They are coming — in some cases, they already have, in others, the situation is getting progressively worse."

Trump's willingness to buck conventional thinking has been a defining feature of his political life. As he enters the final year of his first term, aides and allies describe him as increasingly emboldened to act on his instincts. He's banished the coterie of advisers who viewed themselves as "guardrails" against his impulse. Others, like former Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, have left because they disagreed with Trump's decision-making.

Trump's approach to national security has been shaped in part by the response to one of his first major actions: airstrikes against Syria in retaliation for the use of chemical weapons in 2017, a few months after he took office. He relished the fact that both Republicans and Democrats cheered the decision, one that Obama had backed away from.

Obama halted plans for a strike in 2013 in part because he feared it would drag the U.S. into a wider conflict. That didn't happen after Trump's targeted strike — though quagmire in Syria remains and the U.S. still has a small troop presence in the country.

The consequences of Trump's brash foreign policy decisions have indeed been mixed.

His decision to move the embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem did not, in fact, prompt an uptick in violence in the Middle East. But it also did nothing to help the Trump White House ease mounting tensions with the Palestinians, cratering prospects for progress on a peace deal with the Israelis.

Trump's decision to embrace direct diplomacy with North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, including a meeting at the dividing line between North and South Korea, has resulted in little progress toward dismantling Pyongyang's nuclear program. Negotiations have largely broken down, and Kim said this week that his country would soon unveil a new strategic weapon.

The president also faced fierce backlash from his own party last year when he abruptly announced that he was withdrawing U.S. forces from Syria, clearing the way for Turkey to launch an offensive against Kurdish forces allied with the U.S. Trump initially dug in on his decision, but ultimately reversed course.

To the president's critics, his decision to order a targeted strike against Soleimani may be his riskiest decision yet.

Both the Obama and George W. Bush administrations passed on the prospect of taking out Soleimani, the leader of Iran's elite Quds Force who is accused of helping orchestrate attacks on American troops in Iraq. Even Trump advisers acknowledged the risk of Iranian retaliation, which could pull the U.S. and

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Tehran into a direct military conflict.

"One of these days, he's going to blunder himself into a real, full-blown crisis," Marie Harf, a senior adviser to former Secretary of State John Kerry, said of Trump. "The Soleimani assassination may be the reckless move by Trump that sends us into full-scale conflict."

But to Trump backers, it's just another hyperbolic response to a warranted action by the president.

Nebraska Republican Sen. Ben Sasse criticized those who he said were treating Soleimani's killing like it "was the end of the world." Sasse said that while he and Trump don't always see eye-to-eye on policy issues, the president was right to take this step.

"The fact of the matter is, Iran in general and Soleimani in particular had been ramping up attacks," Sasse said. "There had to be a red line around the loss of American life."

Iran general steps out of Soleimani's shadow to lead proxies

By AMIR VAHDAT and JON GAMBRELL Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — A new Iranian general has stepped out of the shadows to lead the country's expeditionary Quds Force, becoming responsible for Tehran's proxies across the Mideast as the Islamic Republic threatens the U.S. with "harsh revenge" for killing its previous head, Qassem Soleimani.

The Quds Force is part of the 125,000-strong Revolutionary Guard, a paramilitary organization that answers only to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei. The Guard oversees Iran's ballistic missile program, has its naval forces shadow the U.S. Navy in the Persian Gulf and includes an all-volunteer Basij force.

Like his predecessor, a young Esmail Ghaani faced the carnage of Iran's eight-year war with Iraq in the 1980s and later joined the newly founded Quds, or Jerusalem, Force.

While much still remains unknown about Ghaani, 62, Western sanctions suggest he's long been in a position of power in the organization. And likely one of his first duties will be to oversee whatever revenge Iran intends to seek for the U.S. airstrike early Friday that killed his longtime friend Soleimani.

"We are children of war," Ghaani once said of his relationship with Soleimani, according to Iran's state-run IRNA news agency. "We are comrades on the battlefield and we have become friends in battle."

The Guard has seen its influence grow ever-stronger both militarily and politically in recent decades. Iran's conventional military was decimated by the execution of its old officer class during the 1979 Islamic Revolution and later by sanctions.

A key driver of that influence comes from the elite Quds Force, which works across the region with allied groups to offer an asymmetrical threat to counter the advanced weaponry wielded by the U.S. and its regional allies. Those partners include Iraqi militiamen, Lebanon's Hezbollah and Yemen's Houthi rebels.

In announcing Ghaani as Soleimani's replacement, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called the new leader "one of the most prominent commanders" in service to Iran.

The Quds Force "will be unchanged from the time of his predecessor," Khamenei said, according to IRNA.

Soleimani long has been the face of the Quds Force. His fame surged after American officials began blaming him for deadly roadside bombs targeting U.S. troops in Iraq. Images of him, long a feature of hard-line Instagram accounts and mobile phone lockscreens, now plaster billboards calling for Iran to avenge his death.

But while Soleimani's exploits in Iraq and Syria launched a thousand analyses, Ghaani has remained much more in the shadows of the organization. He has only occasionally come up in the Western or even Iranian media. But his personal story broadly mirrors that of Soleimani.

Born on Aug. 8, 1957 in the northeastern Iranian city of Mashhad, Ghaani grew up during the last decade of monarchy. He joined the Guard a year after the 1979 revolution. Like Soleimani, he first deployed to put down the Kurdish uprising in Iran that followed the shah's downfall.

Iraq then invaded Iran, launching an eight-year war that would see 1 million people killed. Many of the dead were lightly armed members of the Guard, some of whom were young boys killed in human-wave

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assaults on Iraqi positions.

Volunteers "were seeing that all of them are being killed, but when we ordered them to go, would not hesitate," Ghaani later recounted. "The commander is looking to his soldiers as his children, and in the soldier's point of view, it seems that he received an order from God and he must do that."

He survived the war to join the Quds Force shortly after its creation. He worked with Soleimani, as well as led counterintelligence efforts at the Guard. Western analysts believe while Soleimani focused on nations to Iran's west, Ghaani's remit was those to the east like Afghanistan and Pakistan. However, Iranian state media has not elaborated on his time in the Guard.

In 2012, the U.S. Treasury sanctioned Ghaani, describing him as having authority over "financial disbursements" to proxies affiliated with the Quds Force. The sanctions particularly tied Ghaani to an intercepted shipment of weapons seized at a port in 2010 in Nigeria's most-populous city, Lagos.

Authorities broke into 13 shipping containers labeled as carrying "packages of glass wool and pallets of stone." They instead found 107 mm Katyusha rockets, rifle rounds and other weapons. The Katyusha remains a favored weapon of Iranian proxy forces, including Iraqi militias and the Lebanese militant group Hezbollah.

An Iranian and his Nigerian partner later received five-year prison sentences over the shipment, which appeared bound for Gambia, then under the rule of dictator Yahya Jammeh. Israeli officials had claimed the rockets would be shipped to militants in the Gaza Strip, while Nigerian authorities alleged that local politicians could use the arms in upcoming elections.

Also in 2012, Ghaani drew criticism from the U.S. State Department after reportedly saying that "if the Islamic Republic was not present in Syria, the massacre of people would have happened on a much larger scale." That comment came just after gunmen backing Syrian President Bashar Assad killed over 100 people in Houla in the country's Homs province.

"Over the weekend we had the deputy head of the Quds Force saying publicly that they were proud of the role that they had played in training and assisting the Syrian forces — and look what this has wrought," then-State Department spokeswoman Victoria Nuland said at the time.

In January 2015, Ghaani indirectly said that Iran sends missiles and weapons to Palestinians to fight Israel. "The U.S. and Israel are too small to consider themselves in line with Iran's military power," Ghaani said at the time. "This power has now appeared alongside the oppressed people of Palestine and Gaza in the form of missiles and weapons."

Now, Ghaani is firmly in control of the Quds Force. While Iran's leaders say they have a plan to avenge Soleimani's death, no plan has been announced as the country prepares for funerals for the general starting Sunday.

Whatever that plan for revenge is, Ghaani likely will be involved.

"That Qaani survived at such high ranks in the (Guard), and remained Soleimani's deputy for so long, says a lot about the trust both Khamenei and Soleimani had in him," said Afshon Ostovar, the author of a book on the Guard. "I suspect he'll have little difficulty filling Soleimani's shoes when it comes to operations and strategy."

Gambrell reported from Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Funerals held for reporter, pilot from Louisiana plane crash

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) — Funeral services were held Saturday for a Louisiana sports reporter and a pilot who died last week in a plane crash in Lafayette.

Five people were killed in the crash as they headed to the Peach Bowl to see Louisiana State University play Oklahoma in Atlanta.

Carley McCord, 30, was a local reporter and the daughter-in-law of the LSU offensive coordinator, Steve Ensminger. McCord's funeral was held at St. Jean Vianney Church in Baton Rouge. Memorial services were held in the church parish hall after the funeral. The local television station where she worked, WDSU,

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showed a long line of people waiting to get into the church.

Family asked that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to a memorial scholarship fund set up in McCord's honor. The fund will benefit women pursuing a degree in sports journalism at Northwestern State University in Natchitoches, where McCord was a student.

The plane's pilot, Ian E. Biggs, 51, was laid to rest Saturday in Lafayette. The Advertiser newspaper reported that hundreds of people packed the chapel where his service was held, with crowds overflowing into the lobby and hallway.

Biggs worked for a Lafayette-based technology firm, Global Data Systems, for the past 20 years. Most of the five people killed on the plane had a connection with the firm. The company's founder, Chuck Vincent, spoke during Biggs' service of his love of family and his hobbies of hunting, camping, fishing and flying.

"He was truly a part of our family," said Vincent. Vincent's daughter-in-law, Gretchen D. Vincent, 51, and her son Michael Walker Vincent, 15, were killed in the crash. Their services were held Thursday. A Catholic funeral Mass was held for Robert Vaughn Crisp II, 59, on Friday in Mamou.

The sole surviving passenger, Stephen Wade Berzas, 37, remained hospitalized in critical condition at Our Lady of Lourdes Regional Medical Center in Lafayette. Another person, Danielle Britt, is hospitalized at University Medical Center in New Orleans after suffering serious burns when her vehicle flipped and caught on fire as the plane crashed to the ground.

McGowan and Arquette reflect as Weinstein trial approaches

By JOHN CARUCCI Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Rose McGowan doesn't plan to be in the courtroom when Harvey Weinstein's criminal trial starts next week: One of Weinstein's most prominent accusers, McGowan says the trauma the fallen Hollywood mogul caused her is so great she couldn't bear the pain of it.

But Rosanna Arquette, another accuser, has already made plans to be there when it starts, to lend support to the women who have accused Weinstein of sexual assault and plan to testify against him.

"I feel very protective. I want this to be OK," Arquette said in an interview. "I think either way, whatever happens, it's still going to be hard for the people that came forward, in terms of retaliation. He's all about that."

Both McGowan and Arquette spoke to The Associated Press in separate interviews on Friday about the upcoming trial of Weinstein, the once all-powerful Hollywood producer whose world came crashing down in 2017 when parallel investigations by The New York Times and The New Yorker documented alleged sexual misconduct by Weinstein against dozens of women. From Oscar-winning stars to aspiring actresses to associates, claims of sexual harassment, assault and even rape were leveled against Weinstein.

Prosecutors in New York have filed five criminal charges against Weinstein, including two counts of predatory sexual assault that carry a mandatory life sentence.

Weinstein, 67, has denied allegations of non-consensual sex and his lawyer has promised a vigorous defense. Jury selection is expected to begin on Monday.

McGowan has accused Weinstein of raping her over 20 years ago and destroying her career; Weinstein has denied her claims. A representative for Weinstein sent a link to McGowan's remarks on Iran and said his team was declining comment.

Since the allegations against Weinstein sparked the #MeToo movement, McGowan has emerged as a vigorous advocate for sexual assault victims. Though she told the AP in 2018 she would be at any trial, McGowan now says while she might be outside the courtroom when it starts, she couldn't imagine being on the inside.

"I also have to focus on what's healthy mentally for me and seeing him is extremely difficult," she said. "You know, I had body flashbacks for years when I would see and receive photos of him or if I saw him in person, I would lean over and throw up in a trash can and my body remembered, you know, things that my brain wanted to silence."

McGowan said seeing Weinstein face criminal charges "will speak volumes to people in the world that

have been hurt. And I hope it gets justice for the women involved. Personally, I have justice. My justice might just look different than that."

She added that if Weinstein is found guilty of even one charge, "it's a victory, but it's also a victory to still be standing after all this damn time. It's also a victory to spread the news to other survivors, that is not our shame. It's also a victory to basically have him as the face of rape for all time."

Arquette has accused Weinstein of derailing her career after she resisted her advances, and was one of first women to come forward and tell her story in 2017 (Weinstein has also denied retaliating against women who refused to have sex with him). She told the AP she never thought she would see the day that he would face a trial for his alleged crimes.

Arquette was emotional as she talked about his upcoming trial and what it represented.

"This is a man that is a real predator," she said. "He's destroyed many women's lives. ... We need to keep the focus on this crime, and this case with Harvey Weinstein is huge because so many people are looking at it."

Arquette is close friends with one of the women expected to testify against Weinstein: actress Annabella Sciorra, who has accused Weinstein of raping her more than two decades ago. Although Weinstein is not charged with a crime connected with that allegation, prosecutors are hoping to establish a pattern of behavior with her testimony.

Arquette is hoping the testimony of Sciorra and others will lead to an eventual conviction against Weinstein. She said Sciorra's life was "shattered by this experience for many years."

Said Arquette: "The justice system works in a way ... people can get out of criminal behavior, and we're praying that that doesn't happen and that there's justice is served."

Church offers little outreach to minority victims of priests

By GARY FIELDS, JULIET LINDERMAN and WONG MAYE-E Associated Press

The Samples were a black Chicago family, with six children and few resources. The priest helped them with tuition, clothes, bills. He offered the promise of opportunities — a better life.

He also abused all the children.

They told no one. They were afraid of not being believed and of losing what little they had, said one son, Terrence Sample. And nobody asked, until a lawyer investigating alleged abuses by the same priest prompted him to break his then 33-year silence.

"Somebody had to make the effort," Sample said. "Why wasn't it the church?"

Even as it has pledged to go after predators in its ranks and provide support to those harmed by clergy, the church has done little to identify and reach sexual abuse victims. For survivors of color, who often face additional social and cultural barriers to coming forward on their own, the lack of concerted outreach on behalf of the church means less public exposure — and potentially, more opportunities for abuse to go on, undetected.

Of 88 dioceses that responded to an Associated Press inquiry, seven knew the ethnicities of victims. While it was clear at least three had records of some sort, only one stated it purposely collected such data as part of the reporting process. Native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, Asians, Pacific Islanders and Hawaiians make up nearly 46% of the faithful in the U.S., according to the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, an authoritative source of Catholic-related data. But the Catholic Church has made almost no effort to track the victims among them.

"The church has to come into the shadows, into the trenches to find the people who were victimized, especially the people of color," Sample said. "There are other people like me and my family, who won't come forward unless someone comes to them."

Brian Clites, a leading scholar on clergy sexual abuse and professor at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, said the church has demonstrated a pattern of funneling predator priests to economically disadvantaged communities of color, where victims have much more to lose if they report their abuse.

"They are less likely to know where to get help, less likely to have money for a lawyer to pursue that

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help and they are more vulnerable to counterattacks" from the church, which will hire investigators against the survivors, said Clites.

Alaska leads the nation in rates of sexual violence, and Florence Kenney said the Catholic church has played a role in perpetuating the abuse of natives there.

Kenney, now 85, said she was abused at the Holy Cross Mission in Holy Cross, Alaska. Kenney is indignant, and she described the relationship between the Catholic Church and Native Alaskan families as both predatory and symbiotic: The church provided food, money and resources to the village, Kenney said, in exchange for labor and silence.

"The church needed those people, and the people needed the church," Kenney said. "A family might sacrifice one or two children, look the other way, to preserve their relationship with the church for the others."

There is no accurate count of clergy abuse survivors. A special report commissioned by the Colorado attorney general's office examining abuse within state dioceses and released in October determined "victims of child sex abuse and particularly those abused by clergy are less likely to report their abuse than other crime victims."

As for minority survivors, dioceses rarely collect demographic data.

The AP contacted 178 dioceses to ask if they collect such data. Few who responded knew the race or ethnicity of claimants. Some said demographics aren't relevant, while others cited privacy concerns.

One diocese — Alexandria, Louisiana — shared a spreadsheet of survivors, including demographics, and without names.

The diocese began keeping such data in 2015, when Lee Kneipp, the victim assistance coordinator, took the job. Kneipp said knowing the race and ethnicity of victims helps investigative efforts and enables a deeper examination of records and the potential ability to find others who have not been acknowledged.

In looking into one African American survivor's abuse claim, Kneipp was able to locate two more survivors of color from the same parish; the priest, he said, abused only boys in low-income black communities.

Levi Monagle, an Albuquerque lawyer whose firm has close to 200 clients, including Native Americans and Hispanics, said there can be cultural and logistical impediments to contacting survivors who have not come forward.

"We don't go cold-calling people, knocking on doors, even if you have a serial perpetrator and a survivor who says we know there were other altar boys who traveled with this guy," he said.

The firm puts out press releases but some of the Native American population and communities are in "extreme geographic isolation" compared with other places and often don't have access to media.

Richard King, 70, was sexually abused on the Assiniboine reservation in Fort Belknap, Montana, where he grew up. He said taboos and shame kept him silent. Instead he abused alcohol and drugs. That, he believes, is how tribal members dealt with the abuses they face, rather than speaking out.

His mother's tribe was devoutly Catholic, and he doubted he would be believed.

"If children tell their parents that the clerics abused you, I would probably have gotten a whipping. I would have gotten one at church and one at home," King said. "They'd say, 'Shut up, that doesn't happen.'"

He began speaking to small groups he counseled, sharing some of his story. But it was nearly 50 years before he met with an attorney, Andrew Chasan; he was ready to share what happened to him, and sit down with Montana media.

When the Society of Jesus, Oregon Province, faced scores of suits accusing its priests of abuse, it filed for bankruptcy. King filed a claim and received a settlement, though in a statement to the AP the province said King's abuser was not a Jesuit priest.

Phillip Aaron, a Seattle-based attorney who represented the Sample family, said his client base, which includes hundreds of African American survivors of clergy abuse, stayed silent because they feared ridicule, or worse.

"It was such a stigma," Aaron said. "That is still present now. We haven't touched the top of the barrel of black victims. There are so many black victims who have not come forward who are suffering in silence because of the stigma."

Some survivors, like Sample, kept quiet because they did not want the resources their abusers provided

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to dry up, Aaron said.

Sample, now 58, was a middle school student at St. Procopius Catholic school, when his abuser, a priest there, took an interest in him. He was groomed, isolated and assaulted for several years, he said.

"I was thinking I have to keep this secret," Sample said. "One, we have to eat and two, we have to stay in school, and this would kill my mom if she knew."

Jacob Olivas' secrecy emanated from another source. He was raised in California, the son of two Mexican immigrants. His father, he said, was the embodiment of machismo: strong, silent, stoic. Olivas was abused by a priest at age 6, and when his father found out he instructed Jacob to stay quiet. It was never discussed, he said. He had no therapy, no opportunity to process what had happened.

"I was supposed to keep quiet, to forget about it," Olivas said.

"That's just the way the Hispanic community is. They have a reverence for the church, there's no ands, there's no buts, there's no questions: You respect the church, you respect the father," he said. "I think it was something that made my father feel more proud: This priest is taking an interest in my son."

Such reluctance to come forward, whether fueled by social or cultural barriers, shame or fear, means some victims will stay silent unless they are drawn out.

"How big is the iceberg that's under the water still, when you're talking about survivors?" Monagle asked. "Every culture carries the weight of its own taboos."

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

From resort amid palm trees, Trump settled on Iran strike

By JONATHAN LEMIRE and MATTHEW LEE Associated Press

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. (AP) — At the midway point of his annual Christmas vacation, President Donald Trump huddled at his Florida club with his top national security advisers. Days earlier, a rocket attack by an Iranian-funded group struck a U.S.-Iraqi base, killing an American contractor and wounding several others.

Trump's advisers presented him with an array of options for responding, including the most dramatic possible response: taking out Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force and the man responsible for hundreds of Americans deaths.

Trump immediately wanted to target Soleimani. It was a decision his predecessors had avoided and one that risked inflaming tensions with Tehran. Some advisers voiced concern about the legal justification for a strike without evidence of an imminent attack in the works against Americans. So other options were discussed in the coming days with Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, Defense Secretary Mark Esper and national security adviser Robert O'Brien, including bombing the base of the group blamed for killing the U.S. contractor.

But Trump remained focused on the option to target Soleimani, a preference that surprised the small circle of aides because the president had long been reluctant to deepen U.S. military engagement around the world. By Thursday, officials believed they had intelligence indicating Soleimani was plotting against Americans, though it's unclear when that intelligence became known to U.S. officials.

Trump slipped out of a meeting with political advisers that day to give the final go-ahead. His decision to authorize the drone strike has sent shockwaves throughout the Middle East and dramatically escalated tensions between the U.S. and Iran.

It wasn't the first time that Trump's lush Mar-a-Lago resort, with its \$200,000 annual membership and Atlantic Ocean vistas, had been the backdrop for a momentous national security decision.

In February 2017, Trump huddled on the patio with Japan's Shinzo Abe, in full view of club members eating dinner, to weigh a response to a North Korean missile test. Two months later, Trump authorized a U.S. missile strike on Syria, then shared chocolate cake with China's President Xi Jinping, who was visiting Mar-a-Lago for meetings.

Trump spent much of this vacation angry about the attack on the American contractor. He stayed largely

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out of sight in Florida, emerging only for rounds of golf at his other nearby club and mingling with guests at a New Year's Eve party.

Wearing a tux, Trump was asked by a reporter if he foresaw a chance of war with Iran. Raising his voice to be heard over the holiday revelers, Trump said he wanted "to have peace."

"And Iran should want peace more than anybody," he said. "So I don't see that happening. No, I don't think Iran would want that to happen. It would go very quickly."

He betrayed no indication of the momentous decision he was already weighing. More than a half-dozen administration officials, congressional staffers and advisers close to the White House described Trump's decision-making. Most spoke on the condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss private deliberations.

After Trump leaped at the option to take out Soleimani, national security officials debated about where the targeted strike should happen if they proceeded. Most did not want to attack Soleimani in Iraq, given the presence of U.S. troops there and the already tenuous situation on the ground. Some argued for the operation to occur when Soleimani was traveling in Lebanon or Syria. But when they learned Soleimani would be traveling to Baghdad on Jan. 2, they decided targeting him at the airport was their best opportunity.

Earlier that day, Trump was meeting with his political advisers about his reelection campaign when he was summoned to give the final go-ahead. Officials believed they had a legal justification and would cite intelligence suggesting that Soleimani was traveling in the Middle East to put final touches on plans for attacks that would have hit U.S. diplomats, soldiers and American facilities in Iraq, Lebanon and Syria.

U.S. officials have not been more specific about the intelligence. A congressional aide briefed by the administration on Friday said officials offered compelling details about Iran's intentions and capabilities, but not about the timing of the supposed attacks on Americans.

The deliberations and Trump's final decision came quickly enough that in the hours before the attack Thursday night, contingency plans for a potential Iranian response were still being finalized. The White House communications team was not given a heads-up about the strike, leaving the staff scrambling as news of the explosion spread.

The president told one confidant after the attack that he wanted to deliver a warning to Iran not to mess with American assets. Trump said he was also eager to project global strength and replicate the message he believed he sent last year after approving the raid to kill Islamic State leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi: the U.S. would find its enemies anywhere in the world.

Still, administration officials acknowledged that Soleimani's killing carried a high risk of Iranian retaliation. The Pentagon is sending nearly 3,000 more Army troops to the Mideast and some troops are on standby to travel to Beirut if more security is needed at the American Embassy there.

Hundreds of soldiers deployed Saturday from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Kuwait. A loading ramp was filled with combat gear and restless soldiers. Some tried to grab a last-minute nap on wooden benches. The wife of a member of the 82nd Airborne who deployed earlier this past week said his departure was so abrupt she didn't have the chance to say goodbye in person or by phone. "The kids kept going, 'When's dad going to be home?'" said April Shumard, 42. "It's literally thrown me for a loop. And him as well. He's still in disbelief of where he's gone. Our heads are spun."

As Trump addressed the nation Friday for the first time after Soleimani's killing, he declared that the Iranian general's "reign of terror was over."

"We took action last night to stop a war. We did not take action to start a war," he said.

Lee reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Robert Burns, Lolita C. Baldor, Zeke Miller and Lisa Mascaro in Washington; Sarah Blake Morgan Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and Jonathan Drew in Durham, North Carolina, contributed to this report.

Protests across US condemn action in Iran and Iraq

WASHINGTON (AP) — Demonstrators in dozens of cities around the U.S. gathered Saturday to protest the Trump administration's killing of an Iranian general and decision to send thousands of additional soldiers to the Middle East.

More than 70 planned protests were organized by CODEPINK and Act Now to Stop War and End Racism, a U.S.-based anti-war coalition, along with other groups.

From Tampa to Philadelphia and San Francisco to New York, protesters carried signs and chanted anti-war slogans.

President Donald Trump ordered Friday's airstrike near Baghdad's international airport that killed Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force who has been blamed for attacks on U.S. troops and American allies going back decades. Iran has vowed retribution, raising fears of an all-out war, but it's unclear how or when a response might come.

Protest organizers said the Trump administration has essentially started a war with Iran by assassinating Soleimani.

In Miami, nearly 50 protesters gathered. Drivers heard people shouting, "No more drone murders," "We want peace now" and "What do we want? Peace in Iran."

A few hundred demonstrators gathered in Times Square on Saturday chanting "No justice, no peace, U.S. out of the Middle East!"

"The United States is trying to use Iraq as a proxy war," said Russell Branca, 72, of Queens. "If the United States and Iran are going to fight it's not going to be in the United States and it's not going to be in Iran, it'll be in other places. And it's just crazy because none of this is necessary."

In Minneapolis, protesters gathered near the University of Minnesota holding signs and chanting. Among them was Meredith Aby, a longtime leader of the local Anti-War Committee.

"We need to be pulling out of Iraq, not sending thousands more troops. We need to be trying to cool things down with Iran, not pouring gasoline on a fire," Aby, 47, said.

Rockets fired after day of mourning for slain Iranian leader

By QASSIM ABDUL-ZAHRA and SARAH EL DEEB Associated Press

BAGHDAD (AP) — Thousands took to the streets of Baghdad for the funeral procession of Iran's top general Saturday after he was killed in a U.S. airstrike, as the region braced for the Islamic Republic to fulfill its vows of revenge.

The day of mourning in the Iraqi capital ended Saturday evening with a series of rockets that were launched and fell inside or near the Green Zone, which houses government offices and foreign embassies, including the U.S. Embassy.

Iran has vowed harsh retaliation for the U.S. airstrike ordered early Friday by President Donald Trump that killed Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force and mastermind of its regional security strategy, and several senior Iraqi militants. The attack has caused regional tensions to soar, raising fears of an all-out war, and tested the U.S. alliance with Iraq.

Trump, meanwhile, warned that the U.S. too was ready to respond if Tehran strikes back. He said Saturday that the U.S. had already "targeted 52 Iranian sites (representing the 52 American hostages taken by Iran many years ago), some at a very high level & important to Iran & the Iranian culture."

Trump did not identify the targets but added that they would be "HIT VERY FAST AND VERY HARD."

Trump says he ordered the strike, a high-risk decision that was made without consulting Congress or U.S. allies, to prevent a conflict. U.S. officials say Soleimani was plotting a series of attacks that endangered American troops and officials, without providing evidence.

Soleimani was the architect of Iran's regional policy of mobilizing militias across Iraq, Syria and Lebanon, including in the war against the Islamic State group. He was also blamed for attacks on U.S. troops and American allies going back decades.

Though it's unclear how or when Iran may respond, any retaliation was likely to come after three days of

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mourning declared in both Iran and Iraq. All eyes were on Iraq, where America and Iran have competed for influence since the 2003 U.S.-led invasion.

After the airstrike early Friday, the U.S.-led coalition has scaled back operations and boosted "security and defensive measures" at bases hosting coalition forces in Iraq, a coalition official said on the condition of anonymity according to regulations. Meanwhile, the U.S. has dispatched another 3,000 troops to neighboring Kuwait, the latest in a series of deployments in recent months as the standoff with Iran has worsened.

In a thinly veiled threat, one of the Iran-backed militia, Asaib Ahl al-Haq, or League of the Righteous, called on Iraqi security forces to stay at least 1,000 meters (0.6 miles) away from U.S. bases starting Sunday night. However, US troops are invariably based in Iraqi military posts alongside local forces.

"The leaders of the security forces should protect their fighters and not allow them to become human shields to the occupying Crusaders," the warning statement said.

By Saturday evening, as the funeral processions were still taking place, a series of rocket attacks on bases that house U.S. forces were launched. A Katyusha rocket that fell inside a square less than a kilometer from the U.S. Embassy, according an Iraqi security official who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak to reporters. The U.S.-led coalition confirmed the attack, saying indirect fire landed outside of its facilities. No troops were hurt.

Rockets also landed in the vicinity of Balad air base, about 40 miles north of Baghdad, the coalition said, adding that no troops were hurt. Earlier an Iraqi official said three rockets fell in a farm area outside the base.

"We have increased security and defensive measures at the Iraqi bases that host (anti-Islamic State) Coalition troops," said spokesman Col. Myles B. Caggins, who said the troops have come under 13 different attacks throughout Iraq in the past two months.

Another rocket in Baghdad landed about 500 meters from As-Salam palace where the Iraqi President Barham Salih normally stays in Jadriya, a neighborhood adjacent to the Green Zone, the Iraqi official said.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for the Iraqi armed forces said Saturday the movement of coalition forces, including U.S. troops, in the air and on the ground will be restricted, conditioned on receiving approval from Prime Minister Adel Abdul-Mahdi, the commander in chief of the armed forces.

It was not immediately clear what the new restrictions would mean, given that coalition troops were already subject to limitations and had to coordinate with the Joint Operation Command of top Iraqi military commanders.

Iraq's government, which is closely allied with Iran, condemned the airstrike that killed Soleimani, calling it an attack on its national sovereignty. Parliament is meeting for an emergency session Sunday, and the government has come under mounting pressure to expel the 5,200 American troops who are based in the country to help prevent a resurgence of the Islamic State group.

Also Saturday, NATO temporarily suspended all training activities in Iraq due to safety concerns, Canadian Defense Minister Harjit Sajjan said.

Amid the rising tension, the funeral procession for Soleimani and his aides lasted all of Saturday, moving from Baghdad to two of Shiite Islam's holiest cities, Najaf and Karbala.

In Baghdad, thousands of mourners, mostly men in black military fatigues, carried Iraqi flags and the flags of Iran-backed militias that are fiercely loyal to Soleimani at Saturday's ceremony. They were also grieving for Abu Mahdi al-Muhandis, a senior Iraqi militia commander who was killed in the same strike.

The mourners, many of them in tears, chanted "No, No, America," and "Death to America, death to Israel." Mohammed Fadl, a mourner dressed in black, said the funeral is an expression of loyalty to the slain leaders. "It is a painful strike, but it will not shake us," he said.

Helicopters hovered over the procession, which was attended by Abdul-Mahdi and leaders of Iran-backed militias. As the procession later made its way to the holy city of Karbala, the mourners raised red flags associated with unjust bloodshed and revenge.

The slain Iraqi militants will be buried in Najaf, while Soleimani's remains will be taken to Iran. More

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funeral services will be held for Soleimani in Iran on Sunday and Monday, before his body is laid to rest in his hometown of Kerman.

The U.S. has ordered all citizens to leave Iraq and temporarily closed its embassy in Baghdad, where Iran-backed militiamen and their supporters staged two days of violent protests in which they breached the compound. Britain and France have warned their citizens to avoid or strictly limit travel in Iraq.

No one was hurt in the embassy protests, which came in response to U.S. airstrikes that killed 25 Iran-backed militiamen in Iraq and Syria. The U.S. blamed the militia for a rocket attack that killed a U.S. contractor in northern Iraq.

Tensions between the U.S. and Iran have steadily intensified since Trump's decision to withdraw from the 2015 nuclear deal and restore crippling sanctions that have devastated Iran's economy and contributed to recent protests there in which hundreds were reportedly killed.

In an apparent effort to defuse tensions, Qatar's foreign minister, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, made an unplanned trip to Iran where he met with Rouhani and other senior officials.

Qatar hosts American forces at the Al-Udeid Air Base and shares a massive offshore oil and gas field with Iran.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo spoke with various world leaders including Iraqi President Barham Salih, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu and Abu Dhabi Crown Prince Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, of the United Arab Emirates. "I reaffirmed that the U.S. remains committed to de-escalation," Pompeo tweeted.

In Tehran, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani visited Soleimani's home to express his condolences. "The Americans did not realize what a great mistake they made," Rouhani said.

As threats of revenge against the U.S. loomed, major streets in Iran were filled with billboards and images of Soleimani, who was widely seen as a national icon and a hero of the so-called Axis of Resistance against Western hegemony.

"I don't think there will be a war, but we must get his revenge," said Hojjat Sanieefar. America "can't hit and run anymore."

Another man, who only identified himself as Amir, was worried.

"If there is a war, I am 100% sure it will not be to our betterment. The situation will certainly get worse," he said.

In a sign of his regional reach, supporters in Lebanon hung billboards commemorating Soleimani in Beirut's southern suburbs and in southern Lebanon along the disputed border with Israel, according to the state-run National News Agency.

Both are strongholds of the Iran-backed Hezbollah militant group, whose leader, Hassan Nasrallah, had close ties to Soleimani. A picture of Nasrallah hangs in Soleimani's home.

Palestinian factions in the Gaza Strip, including the territory's Hamas rulers, opened a mourning site for the slain general and dozens gathered to burn American and Israeli flags.

The killing of Soleimani was "a loss for Palestine and the resistance," said senior Hamas official Ismail Radwan.

El Deeb reported from Beirut. Associated Press writers Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem, Jon Gambrell and Aya Batrawy in Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Amir Vahdat in Tehran, Iran; Zeina Karam in Beirut and Fares Akram in Gaza City, Gaza Strip contributed.

With hours' notice, US fast-response force flies to Mideast

By SARAH BLAKE MORGAN and JONATHAN DREW Associated Press

FORT BRAGG, N.C. (AP) — Hundreds of U.S. soldiers deployed Saturday from Fort Bragg, North Carolina, to Kuwait to serve as reinforcements in the Middle East amid rising tensions following the U.S. killing of a top Iranian general.

Lt. Col. Mike Burns, a spokesman for the 82nd Airborne Division, told The Associated Press 3,500 mem-

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bers of the division's quick-deployment brigade, known officially as its Immediate Response Force, will have deployed within a few days. The most recent group of service members to deploy will join about 700 who left earlier in the week, Burns said.

A loading ramp at Fort Bragg was filled Saturday morning with combat gear and restless soldiers. Some tried to grab a last-minute nap on wooden benches. Reporters saw others filing onto buses.

The additional troop deployments reflect concerns about potential Iranian retaliatory action in the volatile aftermath of Friday's drone strike that killed Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's elite Quds Force who has been blamed for attacks on U.S. troops and American allies going back decades.

President Donald Trump ordered the airstrike near Baghdad's international airport. Iran has vowed retribution, raising fears of an all-out war, but it's unclear how or when a response might come.

Reporters weren't able to interview the soldiers leaving Fort Bragg on Saturday, but an airman loading one of the cargo planes told an Army cameraman he was making New Year's plans when he got a call to help load up the soldiers, according to video footage released by the military.

"We're responsible for loading the cargo. Almost our whole squadron got alerted. Like a bunch of planes are coming over here," the unnamed airman said. "I was getting ready to go out for New Year's when they called me."

In the gray early morning light Saturday, Army video showed soldiers dressed in camouflage fatigues filing into planes, carrying rucksacks and rifles. Humvees were rolled onto another cargo plane and chained in place for the flight to the Middle East.

Burns said the soldiers within the Immediate Response Force train constantly to be ready to respond quickly to crises abroad. When called by their superiors, they have two hours to get to base with their gear and must maintain a state of readiness so that they can be in the air headed to their next location within 18 hours.

"So whether they were on leave, whether they were home drinking a beer, whether they were, you know, hanging out, throwing the kids up in the yard, you get the call and it's time to go," he said.

He said that soldiers typically keep individual "go-bags" of their personal gear with them at their living quarters.

The wife of a member of the 82nd Airborne who deployed earlier this week said his departure was so abrupt she didn't have the chance to say goodbye in person or by phone.

April Shumard said she was at work on New Year's Eve and he was watching their five children when he texted her that he had to rush to base. He wasn't sure if it was a drill or a deployment. She said her husband has been in the military since 2010 and has already deployed twice to Afghanistan. But with those prior deployments, the family had much more time to prepare and say goodbye. This time, she got a second message confirming he was leaving, and he departed in a plane on the afternoon of New Year's Day.

"The kids kept going, 'When's Dad going to be home?'" said Shumard, 42. "It's literally thrown me for a loop. And him as well. He's still in disbelief of where he's gone. Our heads are spun."

She said that Fayetteville is a tight-knit community, and she expects people to work together to support families who are suddenly missing a parent.

"This was so last-minute," she said, urging people to reach out to 82nd Airborne families. "Just try to help out whoever you know who might need some babysitting or help or just get some groceries and bring it to their house."

Similarly, Bri'anna Ferry's husband got the call on New Year's Eve, and she said he was on a plane to the Middle East within hours. She fears he could miss milestones with their young daughter but also wants him to focus on his mission.

"I told him, don't worry about us. We'll be fine," she said. "Focus on your mission."

Drew reported from Durham, North Carolina.

____ Follow Morgan at www.twitter.com/StorytellerSBM and Drew at www.twitter.com/JonathanLDrew

Mississippi says two inmates escaped from troubled prison

By The Associated Press undefined

Mississippi authorities were searching for two prisoners believed to have escaped Saturday from one of several prisons rocked by violence that has left at least five inmates dead in the past week.

Gov. Phil Bryant on Saturday said via Twitter that he has directed "the use of all necessary assets and personnel" to find the two inmates who escaped from the Mississippi State Penitentiary at Parchman.

The state Department of Public Safety has deployed state troopers and the highway patrol's special operations group to help the Department of Corrections find the two inmates and to help restore order at the troubled facility that they escaped from, Bryant said.

The Corrections Department said in a Facebook posting that David May, 42, and Dillion Williams, 27, were discovered missing from Parchman during an "emergency count" about 1:45 a.m. May is serving a life sentence for two aggravated assault convictions in Harrison County, and Williams is serving a 40-year sentence for residential burglary and aggravated assault in Marshall County.

The department said via Twitter Saturday afternoon that there were no major disturbances occurring at Parchman.

"There was a minor fire at Unit 30 earlier this week. That fire, set by an inmate, was immediately extinguished. Like other facilities in the prison system, the prison has limited movement," the department tweeted.

Five inmates have died in prison violence since Sunday; three of those deaths have occurred at Parchman. The prison is a series of cell blocks scattered across thousands of acres of farmland in Mississippi's Delta region. Inmates who escape their cells sometimes don't make it off the property.

Mississippi's outgoing prisons chief said Friday that four of the five killings of inmates since Sunday stem from gang violence, as guards struggle to maintain control of restive inmates.

Corrections Commissioner Pelicia Hall said the department won't confirm the names of the gangs "for security purposes," but relatives of inmates who spoke to The Associated Press and other news outlets said there's an ongoing confrontation between the Vice Lords and Black Gangster Disciples.

It wouldn't be the first time the two gangs have warred behind bars in Mississippi, with previous confrontations at Parchman and other prisons over the past 15 years. A 2015 survey found nearly 3,000 Black Gangster Disciple members and nearly 2,000 Vice Lords in prisons statewide.

"These are trying times for the Mississippi Department of Corrections," Hall said Friday.

All state prisons statewide remained locked down Saturday, Bryant said, with inmates confined to cells, and no visitors allowed.

The first of five inmates identified as dying was Terrandance Dobbins, 40, who died Sunday at the South Mississippi Correctional Institute in Leakesville. Two days later, Walter Gates, 25, was stabbed and several other inmates were injured at Parchman during a fight that spread to multiple units of the sprawling prison. Then on Thursday, Gregory Emary, 26, was killed at the Chickasaw County Regional Correctional Facility, a county-run jail that holds state inmates. Also Thursday, 32-year-old Roosevelt Holliman was fatally stabbed at Parchman in a fracas that led to multiple injuries. Before dawn Friday, Denorris Howell, 36, was found dead in his cell at Parchman.

Corrections officials have repeatedly not answered questions about how many people overall have been injured, or whether there have been other violent incidents in prisons.

Mississippi's prison system has struggled to fill guard vacancies, with Hall saying it's difficult to attract people with salaries that start below \$25,000 a year. Some guards end up bringing illegal drugs and cell-phones into prisons. Criminal charges were filed in 2014 against 26 state correctional officers.

Some prisons, including South Mississippi, have areas where many prisoners are housed in bunks in one large room, instead of individual cells. This can lead to worsened security problems. South Mississippi, in Greene County, was locked down for almost all of 2019, in part because of guard shortages.

The violence came even as U.S. District Judge William Barbour ruled Tuesday that while conditions may have previously been poor at East Mississippi Correctional Facility near Meridian, there's no longer any

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evidence that the privately run prison is violating inmates' rights.

Hall announced Tuesday that she will resign in mid-January to take a private sector job, signaling incoming Gov. Tate Reeves won't retain her upon taking office Jan. 14.

This story has been corrected to show that inmate Denorris Howell was found dead on Friday.

Knife attack near Paris treated as terror-related

By SYLVIE CORBET Associated Press

PARIS (AP) — French prosecutors said a knife attack on Friday that left one man dead and two women injured in a park in the Paris area is being treated as terror-related.

In a statement Saturday, they said investigations over the past few hours revealed that the assailant, who was shot dead by police, had been radicalized and had prepared the attack in Villejuif, in the southern suburbs of Paris.

They said their investigations now justify a probe into "murder and attempted murder in relation to a terrorist undertaking."

Earlier Saturday, Creteil prosecutor Laure Beccau described the assailant as a 22-year-old man with a long and serious psychiatric history.

Speaking at a news conference, she said he had converted to Islam between May and July 2019 and that he shouted "Allahu akbar" — "God is great" in Arabic — several times during the attack.

She added that investigators are also looking into the assailant's phone calls and computer equipment. No accomplice has been identified.

Philippe Bugeaud, deputy director of the judicial police, said a letter — details of which were not revealed — and several books about Islam were found in the assailant's bag, including some about Salafism, widely considered to be a strict interpretation of Sunni Islam.

Two women injured in the attack have left the hospital.

Rod Stewart, son, accused of battery in New Year's Eve fight

By FREIDA FRISARO Associated Press

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) — Rock icon Rod Stewart and his son are facing simple battery charges after an altercation with a security guard during a private event in a children's area at The Breakers hotel in Palm Beach on New Year's Eve, according to court records.

Security guard Jessie Dixon told Palm Beach police officers that Stewart's group was at the check-in table for a private party that they weren't authorized to attend, a police report said.

Dixon said the group became loud and began causing a scene. Dixon, 33, told investigators he put his hand on the younger Stewart's chest and told him to back up and make space, the report said.

That's when Sean Stewart, the rock star's 39-year-old son, got "nose to nose" with Dixon.

Sean Stewart then shoved Dixon backwards. Rod Stewart, 74, punched Dixon in his "left rib cage area" with a closed fist, the report said.

The police report said Sean Stewart told investigators he became agitated when they were not able to attend the event "due to Dixon's interaction with him and his family."

Two Breakers employees who were working the private event told police they saw Sean Stewart push Dixon and Rod Stewart punch the guard.

The officer said he viewed security footage at the hotel and determined that the Stewarts were the "primary aggressors."

Dixon signed an affidavit saying that he wanted to press charges against the Stewarts.

An email seeking comment has not been answered by Stewart's representative.

Rod and Sean Stewart were issued notices to appear in court on Feb. 5.

Both Sean and Rod Stewart are facing simple battery charges and were issued notices to appear in

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court on Feb. 5.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, Jan. 5, the fifth day of 2020. There are 361 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 5, 1781, a British naval expedition led by Benedict Arnold burned Richmond, Virginia.

On this date:

In 1589, Catherine de Medici (MEHD'-uh-chee) of France died at age 69.

In 1895, French Capt. Alfred Dreyfus, convicted of treason, was publicly stripped of his rank. (He was ultimately vindicated.)

In 1896, an Austrian newspaper, Wiener Presse, reported the discovery by German physicist Wilhelm Roentgen (RENT'-gun) of a type of radiation that came to be known as X-rays.

In 1914, auto industrialist Henry Ford announced he was going to pay workers \$5 for an 8-hour day, as opposed to \$2.34 for a 9-hour day. (Employees still worked six days a week; the 5-day work week was instituted in 1926.)

In 1925, Democrat Nellie Tayloe Ross of Wyoming took office as America's first female governor, succeeding her late husband, William, following a special election.

In 1933, the 30th president of the United States, Calvin Coolidge, died in Northampton, Massachusetts, at age 60. Construction began on the Golden Gate Bridge. (Work was completed four years later.)

In 1943, educator and scientist George Washington Carver, who was born into slavery, died in Tuskegee, Alabama, at about age 80.

In 1957, President Dwight D. Eisenhower proposed assistance to countries to help them resist Communist aggression in what became known as the Eisenhower Doctrine.

In 1983, President Ronald Reagan announced he was nominating Elizabeth Dole to succeed Drew Lewis as secretary of transportation; Dole became the first woman to head a Cabinet department in Reagan's administration, and the first to head the DOT.

In 1994, Thomas P. "Tip" O'Neill, former speaker of the House of Representatives, died in Boston at age 81.

In 1998, Sonny Bono, the 1960s pop star-turned-politician, was killed when he struck a tree while skiing at the Heavenly Ski Resort on the Nevada-California state line; he was 62.

In 2004, foreigners arriving at U.S. airports were photographed and had their fingerprints scanned in the start of a government effort to keep terrorists out of the country.

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama scolded 20 of his highest-level officials over the thwarted Christmas Day terror attack on an airliner bound for Detroit, taking them jointly to task for "a screw-up that could have been disastrous" and should have been avoided. The U.S. and British embassies in Yemen reopened their doors after a two-day closure prompted by security concerns.

Five years ago: The price of oil plunged again, falling below \$50 a barrel for the first time since April 2009. Jury selection began in the trial of accused Boston Marathon bomber Dzhokhar Tsarnaev. (Tsarnaev would be convicted of all 30 charges against him and sentenced to death.) Miami-Dade Circuit Judge Sarah Zabel presided over Florida's first legally recognized same-sex marriages hours before the ban on such unions formally expired.

One year ago: Talks between White House officials and congressional aides failed to bring a breakthrough to end a two-week government shutdown. Mourners gathered in California for the funeral of police officer Ronil Singh, an immigrant from Fiji who had been shot to death on the morning after Christmas after pulling over a suspected drunk driver. (A two-day manhunt led to the arrest of a man who authorities said was in the country illegally and was preparing to flee to Mexico.)

Today's Birthdays: Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale is 92. Actor Robert Duvall is 89. Juan Carlos, former King of Spain, is 82. Singer-musician Athol Guy (The Seekers) is 80. Former talk show host Charlie

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Rose is 78. Actress-director Diane Keaton is 74. Actor Ted Lange (lanj) is 72. Rhythm-and-blues musician George "Funky" Brown (Kool and the Gang) is 71. Rock musician Chris Stein (Blondie) is 70. Former CIA Director George Tenet is 67. Actress Pamela Sue Martin is 67. Actor Clancy Brown is 61. Singer Iris Dement is 59. Actress Suzy Amis is 58. Actor Ricky Paull (correct) Goldin is 55. Actor Vinnie Jones is 55. Rock musician Kate Schellenbach (Luscious Jackson) is 54. Actor Joe Flanigan is 53. Talk show host/dancer-choreographer Carrie Ann Inaba is 52. Rock musician Troy Van Leeuwen (Queens of the Stone Age) is 52. Actress Heather Paige Kent is 51. Rock singer Marilyn Manson is 51. Actor Shea Whigham is 51. Actor Derek Cecil is 47. Actress-comedian Jessica Chaffin is 46. Actor Bradley Cooper is 45. Actress January Jones is 42. Actress Brooklyn Sudano is 39. Actor Franz Drameh is 27.

Thought for Today: "It is easy to be tolerant of the principles of other people if you have none of your own." — Herbert Samuel, English political leader (1870-1963).

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