

Groton Daily Independent

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“UNEXPECTED KINDNESS IS THE MOST POWERFUL, LEAST COSTLY, AND MOST UNDERRATED AGENT OF HUMAN CHANGE.”

-BOB KERREY

Chicken Soup
for the Soul

Weather Related Announcements

- No Aberdeen newspaper this morning
- NO Travel is Advised
- I-29 is closed from Sioux Falls to Fargo
- I-90 is closed from Mitchell to Sioux Falls
- The Junior High boys' basketball jamboree scheduled for today in Groton has been postponed to Sat., Jan. 25
- Groton Area Wrestling team will not be going to Potter County Today
- The Groton Area girls' basketball game scheduled with Langford on Monday in Groton has been postponed to Tuesday, Feb. 4. It will be a double header. Girls JV at 4 p.m., Boys JV at 5 p.m., Girls Varsity at 6:15 p.m. with Boys Varsity to follow. (This is due to the Hanson Classic being postponed from today to Monday and Langford Area is playing in that on Monday)
- Lori's Pharmacy will open at 10 a.m. today
- The Carnival of Silver Skates pictures scheduled for today has been postponed to Sat., Jan. 25.

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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Northern State Women's Basketball Unable to Gain Traction in Sioux Falls

Sioux Falls, S.D. – Northern State women's basketball drops a tough one in Sioux Falls Friday evening to Augustana.

THE QUICK DETAILS

Scores: NSU 44, Augie 73

Record: NSU 11-6 (NSIC 7-3), Augie 8-6 (NSIC 5-6)

Attendance: 1629

HIGHLIGHTS

Northern State in the first quarter was able to find some traction as they were able to score 15 points and shot 46.15% from the floor

NSU was unable to gain any momentum in the second and third quarters as they were held to single-digit points while shooting a season-low 18.1% from the floor in those two quarters

The Wolves found a small burst of traction in the fourth quarter as they were able to score 14 points shooting 33.3% from the floor, 33.3% from distance and 66.6% at the foul line

Northern State scored 16 points in the paint and the bench chipping in for 17 points

NSU recorded three blocks and three steals on the evening

The Wolves grabbed 35 rebounds led by Brianna Kusler who snatched seven of her own

Lexi Wadsworth led the team in scoring with 11 points followed by Kusler with eight

NORTHERN STATE STATISTICAL STANDOUTS

Lexi Wadsworth: 100.0 FT%, 11 points

Brianna Kusler: 40.0 3pt%, 100.0 FT%, 7 rebounds, 8 points

Jessi Marti: 5 rebounds, 1 block, 6 points

UP NEXT

Northern State women's basketball continues their cross-divisional road trip as they head to Nebraska to face Wayne State this afternoon.

Northern State Men's Basketball Fends off Augustana and Moves to First in the North Division

Sioux Falls, S.D. – The Northern State men's basketball team (13-4, 9-2 NSIC) took on Augustana University (11-6, 6-5 NSIC) and came out on top 82-77 for their fourth straight win.

With under 30 seconds remaining in regulation, Northern was barely holding on to a 1-point lead. However, Mason Stark came up clutch yet again for the Wolves, cashing in a contested floater with 20 seconds remaining to extend Northern's lead beyond reach.

The Wolves were cashing in their 3-point shots early, as four Northern players combined to go 6-of-9 from beyond the arc in the first nine minutes of regulation. Despite the success of the long ball Augustana managed to keep pace, always staying within striking distance of the lead.

Every time Northern built up a decent lead Augustana quickly closed the gap, and with less than 30 seconds in the first half the Wolves led by just two points. However, Parker Fox ended the half with a break away slam-dunk, bringing the score to 41-37 at halftime.

Augustana wasted no time taking their first lead of the game after the break, scoring nine points in the first three minutes to Northern's three. A couple of hard-hitting dunks from Parker Fox gave the Wolves new life however, enabling them to keep pace and take back the lead with ten minutes remaining.

For the remainder of the game neither team could take control, as the lead seemed to swap with every possession. However, like they have all season, the Wolves came up clutch when they needed to, closing out the game for their fourth straight win.

Northern shot 47.5% from the floor, 42.3% from the 3-point line and 71.4% from the foul line. 30 of their points came from the paint, 17 off of turnovers and nine from the bench.

Despite fouling out late in the game, Parker Fox lead the Wolves in scoring with 21 points, as well as getting six steals. Just behind was Andrew Kallman, going 7-of-12 for 20 points. Also getting in the double digits was Mason Stark, with 16 points and a team high of four assists.

Meanwhile, Tommy Chatman and Gabe King each scored eight points and combined for five rebounds. Rounding out the scoresheet were Jordan Belka and Cole Dahl, scoring three and six points respectively.

With Minnesota Duluth losing to Minnesota State on Friday night, Northern's win now moves them to first place in the NSIC North Division and second in the NSIC overall.

Northern will hope to extend their lead in the North Division tomorrow versus Wayne State. Tip-off is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. from Rice Auditorium on January 18.

Dacotah Bank to buy First State Bank of Claremont

Dacotah Bank has signed agreements to purchase First State Bank of Claremont and Stohr Agency. The agreements include the Groton and Langford locations.

"We are pleased to announce to the First State Bank of Claremont and Stohr Agency customers and communities that Dacotah Bank is here for you," said Joe Senger, Chief Executive Officer.

First State Bank of Claremont's Groton and Langford locations fit nicely in the middle of Dacotah Bank's existing locations across South Dakota, North Dakota and Minnesota. Closely surrounding First State Bank of Claremont's locations are our branches in Aberdeen, Clark, New Effington, Roslyn, Sisseton and Webster. Along with the geographic alignment of locations, the customer base is a natural fit as well. Groton and Langford are agricultural-centric communities and Dacotah Bank is the 12th largest Ag lender in the nation.

First State Bank of Claremont president Jeff Stohr shared, "our bank has roots dating to 1903 and our family has associated with it since 1937. We have fantastic employees who will continue serving the customers and communities we cherish. In many ways our objectives align well with Dacotah Bank, and they will bring greater lending capacity and a variety of additional products and services that I believe will serve our employees, customers and communities well for years to come."

The addition of Groton and Langford bring our total number of locations to 34 from which we offer a number of convenient traditional and mobile financial services.

A "Dakota-grown" company, our home office is just 20 miles west of Groton and 46 miles southwest of Langford in Aberdeen, S.D. While some of our locations were established in the late 1800s and have been serving local communities since, Dacotah Bank's charter location in Aberdeen was founded in 1955.

The agreement for acquisition is pending regulatory approval. An open house at the bank locations is planned for late 2020.

A Parents Only Forum for Gospel Solutions to Social Issues

Gospel Solutions to Social Issues are presenting a seminar specifically for Parents Only on February 5th at Groton United Methodist Church, 906 N 1st St., Groton, SD at 6:30PM. Speakers include Andrea Kost the Safe Harbor Shelter Coordinator and Levi Jensen and Shane Johnson, SD Highway Patrol Troopers and Pastor Brandon Dunham. If you are concerned about deterring drug problems and problems with social media in this digital age for our youth, please attend. Sponsors are the Groton United Methodist Church, the Groton C&MA Church and the Groton Emmanuel Lutheran Church. There is no charge for the event but a free will offering will be taken.

Levi Jensen and Police Dog Handler Shane Johnson with the SD Highway Patrol will be presenting on drug awareness for parents of all ages of children, grandparents, and school administrators. There will be some drug samples on hand for attendees to view, along with time to ask questions both during and after the presentation. Those that have a vested interest in deterring the drug use in our region and community are encouraged to attend.

Andrea Kost, the Safe Harbor Shelter Coordinator has worked with at risk children since the age of 21. Andrea was the recreational coordinator and personal counselor at New Beginnings for a year and a half. Andrea and her husband also started "Almost Home", a therapeutic foster care for girls age 13-21 coming out of lock down residential facilities and also housed 40 plus teenage girls in their home. Andrea will be sharing her firsthand knowledge of social media and teens. Andrea will present an open discussion about raising our children to be Christian adults in a digital age. She will be discussing popular apps and websites, which ones to be wary of, and how to monitor your youth/teens activities. She will also be talking about how to balance sheltering them and exposing them to an online world to help them to be smart consumers.

Refreshments will be served after the event. A snow date has been set for Feb. 12th

Blizzard Warning

URGENT - WINTER WEATHER MESSAGE
National Weather Service Aberdeen SD
338 AM CST Sat Jan 18 2020

Brown-Spink- Including the cities of Aberdeen, Richmond Lake Rec Area, and Redfield
338 AM CST Sat Jan 18 2020

...BLIZZARD WARNING REMAINS IN EFFECT UNTIL 6 PM CST THIS EVENING...
...WIND CHILL ADVISORY IN EFFECT FROM 6 PM THIS EVENING TO NOON CST SUNDAY...

* WHAT...Blizzard conditions expected. Additional snow accumulations of up to one inch. Winds gusting as high as 55 mph. For the Wind Chill Advisory, very cold wind chills expected. Wind chills as low as 35 below zero.

* WHERE...Brown and Spink Counties.

* WHEN...For the Blizzard Warning, until 6 PM CST this evening.
For the Wind Chill Advisory, from 6 PM this evening to noon CST Sunday.

* IMPACTS...Plan on slippery road conditions. Widespread blowing snow could significantly reduce visibility. Strong winds could cause tree damage. The dangerously cold wind chills could cause frostbite on exposed skin in as little as 10 minutes.

PRECAUTIONARY/PREPAREDNESS ACTIONS...

Travel should be restricted to emergencies only. If you must travel, have a winter survival kit with you. If you get stranded, stay with your vehicle.

Use caution while traveling outside. Wear appropriate clothing, a hat, and gloves.

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

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Upcoming Events

Friday, January 17, 2020

Silver Bowl Debate at Sioux Falls

No School - Faculty Inservice

POSTPONED: 5 p.m.: Boys' basketball at Sisseton. C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV and then Varsity

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

Monday, January 20, 2020

Moved to Feb. 4 - Double header with boys in Groton. Girls Basketball hosts Langford Area

Tuesday, January 21, 2020


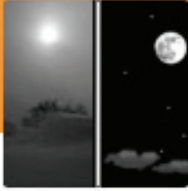



4 p.m.: Basketball Double Header with Ipswich here. Girls JV at 4 p.m., Boys JV at 5 p.m., Girls Varsity at 6 p.m. followed by boys varsity game.

4:00pm: Wrestling: Boys 7th/8th Tournament vs. Aberdeen Central @ Aberdeen Civic Arena

GUN SHOW: Dakota Territory Gun Collectors Association 18th Annual ABERDEEN Gun Show. Saturday, February 1, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Sunday, February 2, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Dakota Event Center on LaMont East. Terry Ennen 701-391-2416.

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Blizzard Warning		Wind Chill Advisory				
Today	Tonight	Sunday	Sunday Night	M.L.King Day		
						
Blowing Snow and Windy	Patchy Blowing Snow and Blustery then Mostly Clear	Cold	Partly Cloudy	Cold		
High: 2 °F	Low: -15 °F	High: -3 °F	Low: -16 °F	High: 1 °F		

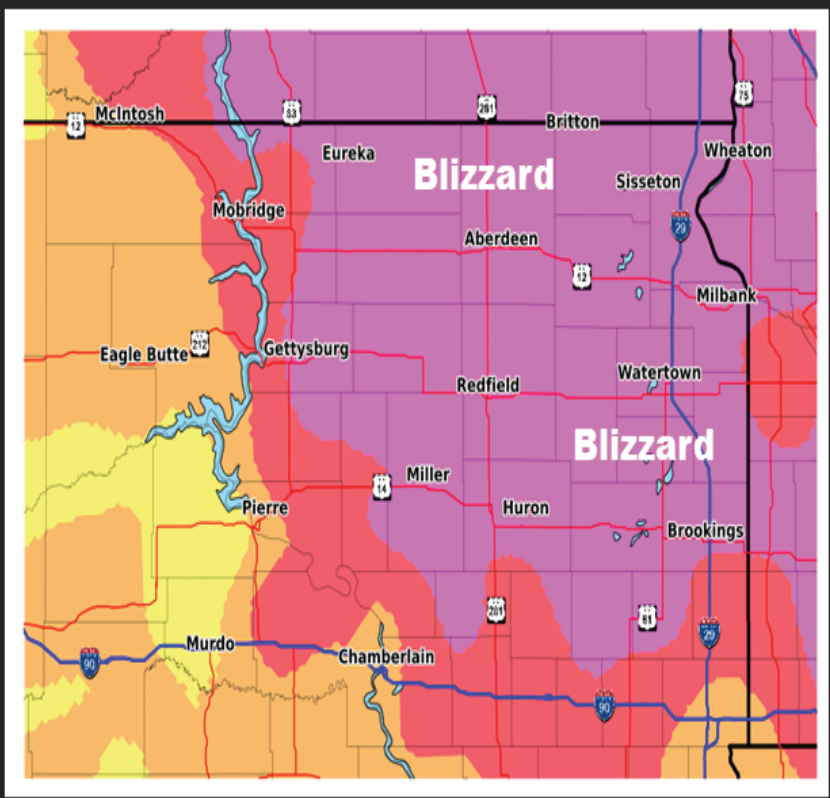
 **BLIZZARD CONTINUES TODAY**
Through 6pm Today

Details

- Linger light snow, light accumulation this morning.
- Strong NW winds 25-50 mph decreasing toward evening.
- Wind chills turning bitterly cold.

Be Prepared For

- **Very hazardous to impossible travel through today. Don't be caught off guard!**



Minor  Patchy Blowing Snow with reduced visibilities expected	Moderate  Areas of Blowing Snow with reduced visibilities expected	Significant  Widespread Blowing Snow and greatly reduced visibilities expected	Blizzard  Significant Blowing Snow possible, travel may be impossible
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Strong winds will continue to promote blizzard conditions across the eastern Dakotas through much of today. Slackening winds toward evening should bring an end to the blowing/driftng snow.

Today in Weather History

January 18, 1979: An area of low pressure moving across the region brought widespread heavy snow of 5 to 10 inches to much of Minnesota from the 18th through the 20th. Travel was difficult if not impossible in many areas where there were near blizzard conditions. Schools and businesses closed along with many flights canceled.

January 18, 1999: One to 4 inches of snowfall combined with winds of 30 to 45 miles an hour brought blizzard conditions to part of northeast South Dakota. Highway 12 and Interstate 29 were most affected by the low visibilities. There was a seven-car pileup on Highway 12 near Andover with minor injuries. As a result, traffic was shut off in the westbound lanes for a few hours. Over 200 people were stranded overnight at a restaurant near Summit. There was also a rollover north of Summit which resulted in minor injuries. One traveler said the visibility was frequently near zero.

January 18, 2014: A strong Alberta Clipper low-pressure system moved over the Northern Plains Friday night and Saturday morning. Anywhere from a trace to just near 3 inches of fresh snowfall accompanied this low-pressure system. Over this area, strong northwest winds of 25 to 40 mph developed by late Friday night with gusts of 45 to 55 mph. A few areas even experienced gusts to 58 mph or higher again. This system packed such a wallop that a couple of instances of thundersnow occurred as evidenced by the cloud to ground lightning strikes showing up in southwestern Day County and northwestern Clark County early Saturday morning.

Numerous reports of visibility reduced to one-quarter mile or less across northeast South Dakota, specifically on or just to the east of the Glacial Lakes region, were received. [Click HERE](#) for more information.

1943: Idaho's coldest night on record occurred as the low temperature dropped to 60 degrees below zero at Island Park Dam.

1950: Oregon continued in the grips of one of its worst winter months ever. A significant winter storm brought a thick glaze of ice to Columbia River Gorge, stopping automobile traffic in its tracks. Hundreds of motorists were stranded and had to be rescued by train. Even that was difficult with the coating of ice. The storm caused widespread power outages.

1971: A warm Santa Ana condition brought a 95 degree reading to Los Angeles, the highest January temperature on record. It was 95 degrees in Palm Springs, the highest temperature on record for January as well.

1973: The first tornado death of the year has been registered north of Corey, Louisiana during the afternoon hours. Although a girl was killed when a tenant farm was destroyed, a baby received only minor injuries when it was carried 300 to 400 yards by the tornado.

1980: A tropical depression that developed on January 15th became Tropical Storm Hyacinthe on the 18th. From the 18th through the 27th this storm produced a world record rainfall amount of 223.5 inches at Cratère Commerson, on the island of La Réunion.

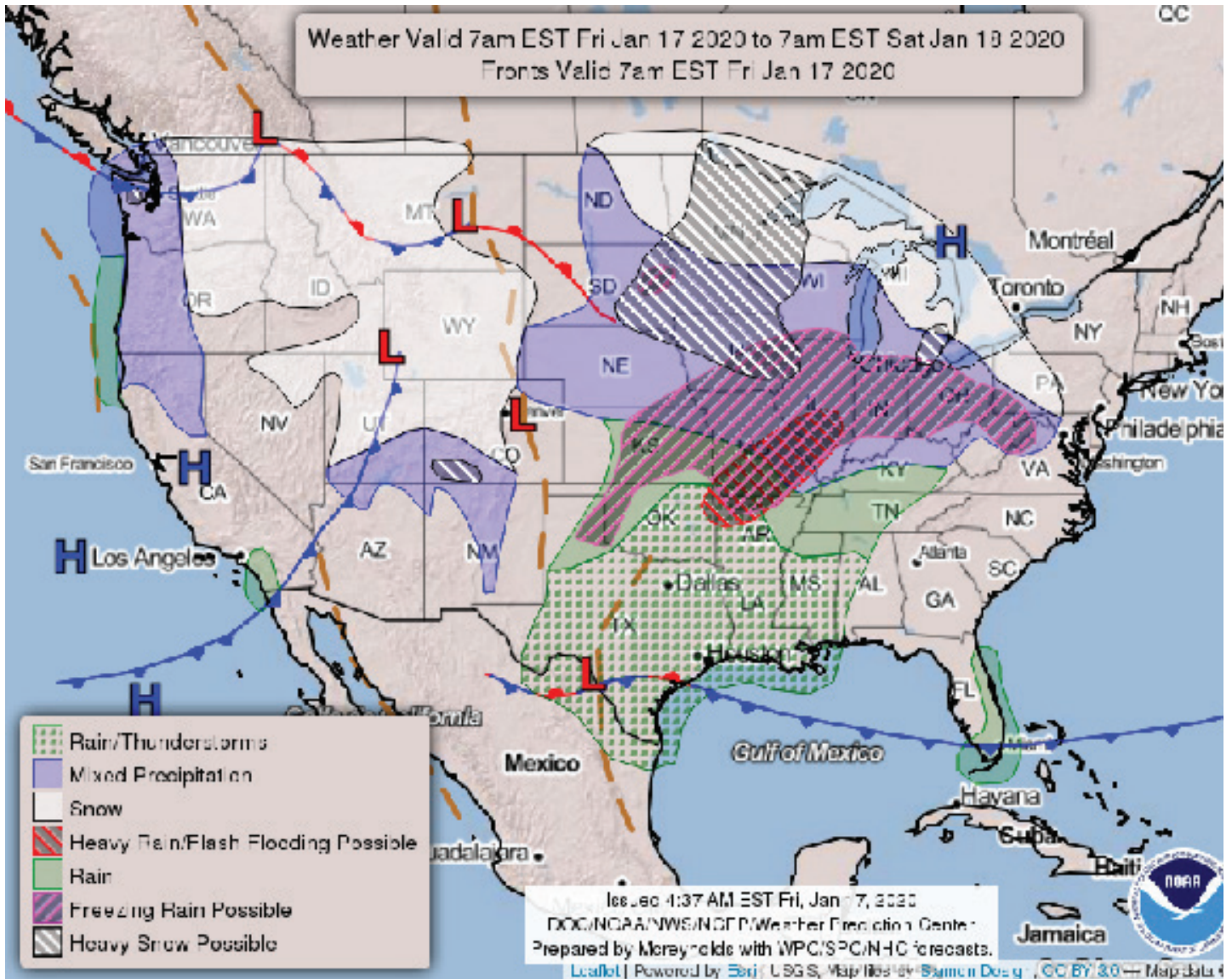
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 12 °F at 11:59 PM
Low Temp: 12 °F at 11:59 PM
Wind: 43 mph at 3:32 AM
Snow: 3" Moisture Content: 0.35

Record High: 51° in 1944
Record Low: -34° in 1970
Average High: 22°F
Average Low: 1°F
Average Precip in Jan.: 0.28
Precip to date in Jan.: 0.35
Average Precip to date: 0.28
Precip Year to Date: 0.35
Sunset Tonight: 5:20 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 8:07 a.m.



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START IMMEDIATELY!

The great American novelist, Sinclair Lewis, was invited to give a lecture to a group of college students who wanted to become writers. As they sat quietly and waited expectantly, he opened his remarks by asking, "How many of you intend to become successful writers?"

Immediately, everyone in the audience held up a hand to declare their intentions.

"In that case," said Lewis, "my advice to you is to go home immediately and write."

Shortly after creating Adam, God directed him to care for and tend to the Garden that He had created for him. And, ever since then, man has been responsible to work with God and take care of His creation. Each day we are to accept every task that comes our way and do it as "though we are working for the Lord." Why? Because He has tasked us to care for His creation!

"Remember," said Paul, "the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward" if we "work hard and cheerfully" for Him. We must accept every task and each responsibility He offers us and recognize it as an opportunity to worship and serve Him every day. "Whatever we do - in word or deed - we are to do it for the glory of God!" We work for the Creator of the universe!

Prayer: Father, may we always remember that whatever we do, we are to do as an act of worship. We do this from hearts full of love because of Your salvation. In Christ's Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Colossians 3:23-24 Work willingly at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people. Remember that the Lord will give you an inheritance as your reward, and that the Master you are serving is Christ.

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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 Friday:

Mega Millions

03-25-30-54-70, Mega Ball: 9, Megaplier: 3

(three, twenty-five, thirty, fifty-four, seventy; Mega Ball: nine; Megaplier: three)

Estimated jackpot: \$103 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$321 million

Friday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS BASKETBALL

Rapid City Central 63, Campbell County, Wyo. 50

West River Tournament=

Consolation Semifinal=

Hot Springs 48, Edgemont 33

New Underwood 63, Newell 42

Semifinal=

Faith 62, Upton, Wyo. 40

Wall 63, Moorcroft, Wyo. 53

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Marty Indian vs. Omaha Nation, Neb., ppd.

Ponca, Neb. vs. Elk Point-Jefferson, ppd.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Custer 53, Wall 41

Rapid City Central 46, Campbell County, Wyo. 43

West River Tournament=

Consolation Semifinal=

Rapid City Christian 80, Upton, Wyo. 37

Semifinal=

Faith 61, Newell 28

POSTPONEMENTS AND CANCELLATIONS=

Leola/Frederick vs. Strasburg-Zeeland, N.D., ppd.

Marty Indian vs. Omaha Nation, Neb., ppd.

Ponca, Neb. vs. Elk Point-Jefferson, ppd.

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

Chicago flights halted; plane slides off Kansas City taxiway

CHICAGO (AP) — The Federal Aviation Administration halted all flights in and out of Chicago's O'Hare Airport for hours Friday night due to a sprawling winter storm, which forced the closure of schools, universities and government offices as it moved across large sections of the Midwest.

The FAA lifted the stop at 9:45 p.m., but by then hundreds of flights already were canceled Friday at at one of the nation's busiest airports.

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Earlier Friday, a plane slid off an icy taxiway at Kansas City International Airport. The Delta Air Lines flight was taxiing to be de-iced before flying to Detroit when the nosegear slipped off the taxiway, said Delta spokeswoman Martha Witt. There were no reports of injuries aboard the Airbus A319, which was carrying 123 passengers and a crew of six. Witt said the airline was trying to put passengers from Delta flight 1114 on other planes.

The airport was closed and numerous flights were canceled in the morning but flights resumed about noon. Most Friday flights from Nashville, Tennessee, were canceled, likely disrupting travel plans for fans of the Tennessee Titans flying into Kansas City for Sunday's AFC championship game with the Chiefs, KCTV reported.

At 9 p.m., the Chicago Department of Aviation was reporting nearly 690 flights had been canceled at O'Hare, with 169 flights cancelled at Midway, the city's other international airport. A winter weather advisory was issued for the Chicago area through early Saturday, with 2 to 5 inches of snow expected.

"If there is travel you don't need to make, consider postponing it," said meteorologist Ricky Castro.

Lambert International Airport in St. Louis reported more than 130 flights canceled as of noon Friday and American Airlines suspended all flights to Missouri's Columbia Regional Airport until noon Saturday.

The slippery conditions come after the National Weather Service issued winter weather advisories, saying the storm will create hazardous travel conditions from the Plains into the Northeast through the weekend. Snow is forecast over much of the Great Lakes, with a blizzard warning for parts of the Upper Midwest.

The winter weather advisory extended south into western Oklahoma and northern Arkansas, where freezing rain was expected Friday.

In South Dakota and Minnesota, dozens of schools canceled classes Friday ahead of snowfall expected during the day.

In Kansas Gov. Laura Kelly closed state offices in the Topeka area, urging people in a news release to "stay safe and warm, exercise caution and allow road crews to do their job."

A storm that hit during the morning commute Friday coated the roads of Salt Lake City with up to 5 inches (13 centimeters) of snow. Advance warning allowed a delayed start for state government and some schools, which kept the number of crashes to a relatively low 75, police said.

Winter storm pounds parts of Upper Midwest with heavy snow

SIoux FALLS, S.D. (AP) — A winter storm was pounding parts of the Upper Midwest with heavy snow and making travel treacherous Friday.

Blowing and drifting snow and whiteout conditions were expected to move in overnight Friday in the Dakotas, Minnesota and Iowa.

In South Dakota and Minnesota, dozens of schools canceled classes Friday ahead of the snowfall. South Dakota Gov. Kristi Noem ordered state government executive branch offices in 42 counties to close early on Friday.

A winter storm warning across the region was expected to give way to blizzard-like conditions by Saturday with gusty winds of 50 mph whipping up snow and bringing down power lines and tree branches. The University of North Dakota also closed Friday afternoon.

Snow was making driving dangerous in parts of Minnesota. The Minnesota State Patrol urged people not to travel unless they had to. In North Dakota, officials closed Interstate 29 from Fargo to the South Dakota border late Friday afternoon.

Totals of 5 inches (12.7 centimeters) to 9 inches (22.8 centimeters) of snow are expected across much of central and southern Minnesota and western Wisconsin Friday. As of 4 p.m. Friday, the National Weather Service in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, reported more than 6 inches (15 centimeters) of snow.

Lawmakers weigh ban on many flavors of vaping products

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota lawmakers are considering banning many flavors of vaping products in order to curb usage among teens.

Rep. Carl Perry, an Aberdeen Republican, filed a bill in the House on Thursday that would make it illegal to sell or possess vaping flavors other than mint, menthol and tobacco. The bill, as currently written, would put a South Dakotan flavor to federal policies that ban fruit, candy, and dessert flavors from small, cartridge-based e-cigarette. The proposed law would allow mint flavors. but also apply to large, tank-based vaping devices.

“I’m trying to make it so our youth don’t have as much access to vaping products,” said Perry.

He said he decided to introduce the bill after speaking with school principals from his community who described an “epidemic” of vaping use among teens. He also received help from the American Heart Association, American Cancer Society and other doctor’s groups in writing the bill.

The bill has been referred to the House Health and Human Services Committee, where it would need to be approved before it could go to the full House for a vote. It would then need to clear the Senate and be signed by Gov. Kristi Noem to become law.

Perry said the bill would likely undergo revisions if it advances through that process. He said he did not want to stop people who use vaping products to quit smoking.

Perry successfully led a charge last year to add e-cigarettes and vaping products to the list of tobacco products that are not allowed in public buildings and workplaces. He said increased public awareness that vaping can cause illnesses and death has strengthened his cause this year. Most of those who got sick said they vaped products containing THC, the compound that gives marijuana its high.

Perry’s bill includes language that would allow law enforcement to seize flavored vaping products without a warrant.

He also introduced a bill on Thursday that would change the state’s minimum age to purchase tobacco products from 18 to 21. He described that legislation as “cleaning up” state law to be compliant with federal policies that recently upped the age requirement.

Nathan Sanderson, the Executive Director of the South Dakota Retailers Association, said the association was reviewing Perry’s bills. He said, “Philosophically, we’re supportive of aligning state law with federal law.”

He expected the to have some input on the language of the law.

A pro-vaping advocacy group was not so warm to the proposed flavored vaping ban.

Gregory Conley, the president of the American Vaping Association, said flavored vaping products are essential to helping adult smokers quit tobacco-use. He argued that a flavor ban would not reduce its use among youth, but create a black market for the products instead.

AP FACT CHECK: Trump’s compulsive claims of ‘biggest’ ever

By **CALVIN WOODWARD** and **HOPE YEN** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Size matters to President Donald Trump. So much that he exaggerates continually, sometimes spectacularly, the size of what he does.

Just as his tax cuts are far from the biggest in history, the economy isn’t the best ever and his election victory in 2016 was no landslide of historic proportions, Trump’s two trade deals don’t stand atop the field of presidential endeavors. One is a partial settlement of trade grievances with China; the other is a refresh of what past presidents created for North America.

The opening of the Senate impeachment trial stirred other fabrications from the president this past week while Democratic presidential contenders engaged in their final debate before the first votes of the 2020 campaign, in Iowa.

A sampling from a week in political rhetoric:

TRADE

TRUMP on his trade agreement with China: “This is the biggest deal there is, anywhere in the world by

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far.” — remarks Wednesday at the signing.

TRUMP on the China deal and his updated North American trade agreement: “So we’ve done two of the biggest trade deals. They are the two biggest trade deals in the world ever done.” — remarks at the White House on Thursday.

THE FACTS: Neither claim is true.

The China agreement is not nearly as big as the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement, so it’s not the largest ever, much less “by far.” The deal with Canada and Mexico was an update of the long-standing North American Free Trade Agreement worked out by Presidents George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton.

The North American agreement also is not the largest ever.

For instance, 123 countries signed the Uruguay Round agreement that liberalized trade and produced the World Trade Organization in 1994. The organization’s initial membership accounted for more than 90% of global economic output, the Federal Reserve Bank of Boston found, and that was before China joined the organization.

Also bigger: the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which would have joined North America with Pacific Rim countries in freer trade. Trump took the U.S. out after the deal was negotiated and before the U.S. ratified it. The European Union was formed from a giant deal.

The China deal leaves tariffs in place on about \$360 billion in imports from China and pushes substantial remaining disputes ahead to a second phase of negotiations.

TRUMP on China deal: “I did the biggest deal ever done in the history of our country yesterday in terms of trade — and probably other things too, if you think about it.” — remarks Thursday.

THE FACTS: Trump is even more wildly off the mark in speculating that his China trade deal eclipses all other international agreements, even outside trade.

The Montreal Protocol, aimed at protecting Earth’s ozone layer, was ratified by every member state of the United Nations. A variety of other agreements — on the rights of children, world health standards, droughts — achieved nearly universal ratification. More than 190 countries signed the Paris accord on climate change, of which more than 180 have ratified it. The U.S. is pulling out of it.

IMPEACHMENT

TRUMP: “We demand fairness’ shouts Pelosi and the Do Nothing Democrats, yet the Dems in the House wouldn’t let us have 1 witness, no lawyers or even ask questions.” — tweet Monday, referring to House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif.

THE FACTS: Not true. The House Judiciary Committee, which produced the articles of impeachment, invited Trump or his legal team to come. He declined.

Absent White House representation, the hearings proceeded as things in Congress routinely do: Time is split between Democratic and Republican lawmakers to ask questions and engage in the debate. Lawyers for Democrats and Republicans on the committee presented the case for and against the impeachment articles and members questioned witnesses, among them an academic called forward by Republicans.

The first round of hearings was by the House Intelligence Committee and resembled the investigative phase of criminal cases, conducted without the participation of the subject of the investigation. Trump cried foul then at the lack of representation, then rejected representation when the next committee offered it.

His lawyers will participate in the Senate’s impeachment trial.

TRUMP: “You had a fake whistleblower that wrote a report that bore no relationship to what was said. Everything was false.” — remarks Thursday.

THE FACTS: Trump’s statement is false. The whistleblower’s account of a phone call between Trump and Ukraine’s leader in July closely resembled what was said, judging by the rough transcript released later by the White House itself and by the testimony of officials who listened in on the call.

Witnesses in the impeachment hearings and other sources also verified the whistleblower’s description

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of events before and after the call as Trump and his aides pressed Ukraine to investigate one of Trump's political rivals, Democrat Joe Biden. The Senate impeachment trial will explore whether Trump abused his power.

ECONOMY

TRUMP: "In Wisconsin, the unemployment rate has reached its lowest level in history." — Milwaukee rally Tuesday.

THE FACTS: He's citing outdated figures.

Wisconsin did post a record low unemployment rate of 2.8% in April and May. But it has since edged up and is now at 3.3%. That's slightly lower than the U.S. average of 3.5%, but suggests that the state hit a rough patch in the middle of last year.

TRUMP: "More than 300,000 people under Obama, 300,000 people, left the workforce. Under just three years of my administration, 3.5 million people have joined the workforce." — Milwaukee rally.

THE FACTS: Trump is wrong about Barack Obama's record.

More than 5 million people joined the U.S. labor force during Obama's presidency, according to Labor Department figures. These gains reflect the recovery from the Great Recession as well as population growth. More than 4.8 million people have joined the labor force in three years of Trump's presidency.

TRUMP: "Under the Trump economy, the lowest-paid earners are reaping the biggest, fastest and largest gains. ... Earnings for the bottom 10% are rising faster than earnings for the top 10%, proportionally." — Milwaukee rally.

THE FACTS: Actually, the top 10% of earners saw the biggest raises of any income bracket over the past year. Their usual weekly earnings jumped 8% or \$168, according to the Labor Department. The bottom 10% saw weekly incomes grow 7% or \$30.

Over a broader range — the top and bottom 25% — weekly earnings also grew at faster rate for the wealthier group.

TRUMP: "We've created 7 million jobs since the election including more than 1 million manufacturing and construction jobs. Nobody thought that was possible." — Milwaukee rally.

THE FACTS: His numbers are roughly right, though they are less impressive than Trump claims.

Job gains under Trump over the past three years were lower than during the final three years of Obama's presidency. More than 8 million jobs were added during that period under Obama, including 1.2 million combined in manufacturing and construction. What these figures suggest is that much of the job growth under Trump reflects the momentum from a recovery that officially began in the middle of 2009.

IMMIGRATION

TRUMP: "We have loopholes. Like a visa lottery. We put things in the lottery, and they come in — they become American citizens. Do you think these countries are giving us their finest? Oh, let's give them our best citizens." — Milwaukee rally.

THE FACTS: This is a perpetual falsehood from the president. Countries don't nominate their citizens for the program. They don't get to select people they'd like to get rid of.

Foreigners apply for the visas on their own. Under the program, citizens of countries named by the U.S. can bid for visas if they have enough education or work experience in desired fields. Out of that pool of qualified applicants, the State Department randomly selects a much smaller pool of tentative winners. Not all winners will have visas approved because they still must compete for a smaller number of slots by getting their applications in quickly.

Those who are ultimately offered visas still need to go through background checks, like other immigrants.

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TRUMP: "Mexico's paying for the wall. ... You know that. It's all worked out." — Milwaukee rally.

THE FACTS: Mexico isn't paying for Trump's long-promised border wall.

Trump has argued that the updated trade agreement with Canada and Mexico will pay for the wall because of economic benefits he predicts will come from the deal. Nothing in the trade agreement would cover or refund the construction cost or require a payment from Mexico.

CHILD CARE

BIDEN, on his early days in Washington: "I was making \$42,000 a year. I commuted every single solitary day to Wilmington, Delaware — over 500 miles a day, excuse me, 250 miles a day — because I could not afford ... child care. It was beyond my reach." — Democratic presidential debate Tuesday.

THE FACTS: That's a stretch.

Biden's wife and daughter died in a car accident after he won a Senate seat in 1972. As a single parent working far out of town, Biden might have faced steeper child care costs than people who work locally do. But his Senate salary — actually \$42,500 — was worth more than \$256,000 in today's dollars. That's more than four times the median household income.

HEALTH CARE

TRUMP: "I was the person who saved Pre-Existing Conditions in your Healthcare, you have it now." — tweet Monday.

THE FACTS: That's false. People with preexisting medical problems have health insurance protections because of Obama's health care law, which Trump is trying to dismantle.

One of Trump's major alternatives to Obama's law — short-term health insurance, already in place — doesn't have to cover preexisting conditions. Another alternative is association health plans, which are oriented to small businesses and sole proprietors and do cover preexisting conditions.

Meanwhile, Trump's administration has been pressing in court for full repeal of the Obama-era law, including provisions that protect people with preexisting conditions from health insurance discrimination.

With "Obamacare" still in place, insurers in the individual marketplace must take all applicants, regardless of medical history, and charge the same standard premiums to healthy people and those who have poor health or past medical problems. Before Obama's law, any insurer could deny coverage or charge more to anyone with a preexisting condition who was seeking to buy an individual policy.

BERNIE SANDERS: "'Medicare for All' ... will cost substantially less than the status quo." — Democratic debate.

THE FACTS: There's no guarantee of that.

The nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office said in a report last year that total spending under a single-payer system like the Vermont senator and Democratic presidential candidate favors "might be higher or lower than under the current system depending on the key features of the new system."

Those features have to do with the design of the system, questions such as payment rates for hospitals and doctors, and whether patients are required to pay part of the cost of their care. Sanders says his plan would require no cost-sharing from patients, no copays and no deductibles. But completely free care could trigger a surge in demand for medical services, raising costs. Other countries that provide coverage for all do use cost-sharing to help keep spending in check.

A research report last year by the nonprofit Rand think tank estimated that a Medicare for All plan similar to what Sanders wants would modestly raise total U.S. health spending.

MILITARY

TRUMP, on killing Iran Gen. Qassem Soleimani: "The Democrats and the Fake News are trying to make terrorist Soleimani into a wonderful guy." — tweet Monday.

TRUMP: "You know what bothers me? When I see a Nancy Pelosi trying to defend this monster from Iran ... When Nancy Pelosi and the Democrats want to defend him, I think that's a very bad thing for this

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country." — remarks on Jan. 9 at event on environmental regulations.

THE FACTS: That's a fabrication. Democrats did not praise or defend the Iranian general. They criticized the action Trump took.

Pelosi called the U.S. missile strike "provocative and disproportionate" while branding Soleimani a "terrible person." Similarly, Democratic presidential candidates criticized Trump's strategy and the fact he didn't notify or consult Congress in advance, while making clear they considered Soleimani anything but "wonderful."

The Iranian was "a murderer, responsible for the deaths of thousands, including hundreds of Americans," said Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

Even so, Republican Rep. Doug Collins of Georgia asserted Democrats were "in love with terrorists" then retracted the statement and apologized.

"I left parts of my body in Iraq fighting terrorists," Democratic Sen. Tammy Duckworth of Illinois, a former Army pilot who lost both her legs while serving in Iraq, told CNN after hearing Collins' initial remarks. "I don't need to justify myself to anyone."

TRUMP: "Our military has been totally rebuilt." — Milwaukee rally.

THE FACTS: It hasn't.

The administration has accelerated a sharp buildup in defense spending, but it will take years for freshly ordered tanks, planes and other weapons to be built, delivered and put to use.

The Air Force's Minuteman 3 missiles, for instance, a key part of the U.S. nuclear force, have been operating since the early 1970s, and modernization started under the Obama administration. They are due to be replaced with a new version, but not until later this decade.

BIDEN: "I was asked to bring 156,000 troops home from that war, which I did. I led that effort." — Democratic debate.

THE FACTS: Biden is roughly right about bringing troops home, but he didn't mention that the U.S. had to send some back.

Obama did designate Biden, his vice president, to take the lead in pulling U.S. forces out of Iraq and coordinating efforts to maintain stability in Baghdad. His results were mixed. Biden and Obama failed to win agreement from the Iraqi government to keep a limited number of U.S. troops there after December 2011. That was the deadline for a complete U.S. pullout under a deal negotiated by the Bush administration. Biden was still vice president when Obama was compelled to return American troops to Iraq in 2014 after the rise of the Islamic State group.

ELECTABILITY

TRUMP, on the 2016 election: "There have been some great movements where somebody came along and out of the nowhere, won the state of New Hampshire, won Iowa, won South Carolina down the way, won a state someplace, but we won 32 states."

THE FACTS: Trump won 30 states, not 32.

It was no landslide. He won with about 57% of electoral votes, a comfortable margin but no better than average or below average. Obama and Clinton each won bigger victories twice and many other presidents outperformed Trump.

Moreover, Republican Trump lost the popular vote to Democrat Hillary Clinton, a rare occurrence for a winning candidate.

Trump routinely inflates the number of electoral votes he won, too.

WARREN: "The only person on this stage who has beaten an incumbent Republican any time in the past 30 years is me." — Democratic debate.

SANDERS: "Just to set the record straight, I defeated a Republican incumbent running for Congress."

WARREN: "I said, I was the only one who's beaten an incumbent Republican in 30 years."

THE FACTS: Sanders wins this argument — one of the stranger disputes of the night — by a matter of months. In November 1990, Sanders beat Republican incumbent Peter Smith to take Vermont's only House seat. That was 29 years and two months ago. Sanders' win, technically, slips in the 30-year window.

Associated Press writers Josh Boak, Paul Wiseman, Robert Burns, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar, Lisa Mascaro, Deb Riechmann, Jill Colvin, Colleen Long and Kevin Freking in Washington and Amanda Seitz in Chicago contributed to this report.

EDITOR'S NOTE — A look at the veracity of claims by political figures.

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Scientists seek rare species survivors amid Australia flames

By **CHRISTINA LARSON** and **MATTHEW BROWN** Associated Press

Australia's unprecedented wildfires season has so far charred 40,000 square miles (104,000 square kilometers) of brushland, rainforests, and national parks — killing by one estimate more than a billion wild animals. Scientists fear some of the island continent's unique and colorful species may not recover. For others, they are trying to throw lifelines.

Where flames have subsided, biologists are starting to look for survivors, hoping they may find enough left of some rare and endangered species to rebuild populations. It's a grim task for a nation that prides itself on its diverse wildlife, including creatures found nowhere else on the planet such as koalas, kangaroos and wallabies.

"I don't think we've seen a single event in Australia that has destroyed so much habitat and pushed so many creatures to the very brink of extinction," said Kingsley Dixon, an ecologist at Curtin University in Perth.

Not long after wildfires passed through Oxley Wild Rivers National Park in New South Wales, ecologist Guy Ballard set out looking for brush-tailed rock wallabies.

The small marsupials resemble miniature kangaroos with long floppy tails and often bound between large boulders, their preferred hiding spots.

Before this fire season, scientists estimated there were as few as 15,000 left in the wild. Now recent fires in a region already stricken by drought have burned through some of their last habitat, and the species is in jeopardy of disappearing, Ballard said.

In prior years, his team identified a handful of colonies within the national park. After the recent fires, they found smoking tree stumps and dead animals.

"It was just devastating," said Ballard from the University of New England in Armidale. "You could smell dead animals in the rocks."

But some wallabies, his team discovered, were still alive. "All you can do is focus on the survivors," he said.

Australia's forests and wildlife evolved alongside periodic wildfires. What's different this year is the vast extent of land burned — an area as big as Kentucky — against a backdrop of drought and searing temperatures attributed to climate change. Last year, among the driest in more than a century, saw temperatures that routinely topped 104 degrees Fahrenheit (40 degrees Celsius).

Not all animals will perish in the blazes. Some can shelter in rock crevices or hide deep in underground burrows. Yet when survivors emerge into a fire-scorched wasteland, they will face hunger, thirst and non-native predators, including introduced foxes and feral cats.

Since fires swept through parts of Oxley Wild Rivers National Park nearly two months ago, there's been little rain and no green shoots.

So Ballard's team has trekked through the ash-covered forest carrying water and sacks of sweet potatoes, carrots and food pellets.

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"There are so few left that, with a species this rare, every individual counts," he says.

Elsewhere in New South Wales, conservation workers are dropping vegetables from airplanes into scorched forests, hoping that wallabies and other species find a meal.

In the state of Victoria, authorities estimate that brush-tailed rock wallabies lost 40% of their habitat as did another rare marsupial, the long-footed potoroo, according to a preliminary damage assessment.

The full toll on Australia's wildlife includes at least 20 and possibly as many as 100 threatened species pushed closer to extinction, according to scientists from several Australian universities.

"The worry is that with so much lost, there won't be a pool of rare animals and plants to later repopulate burnt areas," said Jim Radford, an ecologist at La Trobe University in Melbourne.

The fires could knock out rainforest species dating back to the time of the Gondwana supercontinent, before the modern continents split apart, he said.

University of Sydney ecologist Christopher Dickman estimated that more than 1 billion animals have been killed so far. His calculations took previously-published animal density numbers for different vegetation types and multiplied that by acreage burned.

He says that number does not include bats, amphibians, insects or other invertebrates.

The wildlife toll includes tens of millions of possums and small marsupials known as gliders, which live in tree tops and can leap extraordinary distances by using a parachute-like membrane of skin between their ankles and wrists. State officials in Victoria predicted more than a 25% reduction in glider numbers from the fires.

"The implications for some species are pretty grim," Dickman said. "If we can't protect them here, they're gone. No one else has them."

The Australian government announced Monday that it was spending \$50 million on emergency wildlife rescue efforts and habitat recovery.

Fires are still burning in the Blue Mountains, a UNESCO World Heritage site west of Sydney — one of the last strongholds of the regent honeyeater, an elegant black and yellow bird that has already lost 95% of its breeding habitat since European settlers arrived in Australia.

There are only 300 to 400 of the birds left in the wild, says Ross Crates, an ecologist at Australia National University. They are dependent on nectar from certain eucalyptus tree blossoms, but the dry weather has meant that many trees are producing no nectar.

After the wildfires subside, Crates plans to survey what's been newly scorched. "Even for birds that survive the fires, we are concerned about how they will feed and nest."

In recent months, areas that don't usually burn went up in flames. Some rainforests dried up in the drought and extreme heat, allowing fire to sweep through them.

Few images have tugged at heartstrings more than koalas clinging to burnt trees. Unlike birds or ground mammals, they cannot fly away or burrow underground.

While koalas are not classified as vulnerable to extinction, their populations in some fire-ravaged areas may have been snuffed out. "We know there's been a massive reduction of their overall habitat, and we're not even at the end of fire season," said Mathew Crowther, an ecologist at the University of Sydney.

"Koalas won't go extinct in the next few years, but if their habitat is destroyed bit by bit, it could eventually be death by a thousand cuts. We have to look at long-term trends — what will the temperatures and wildfires be like in the future?"

Brown reported from Billings, Mont. and Larson from Washington, D.C.

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UK plans Brexit celebrations but warns businesses may suffer

By GREGORY KATZ Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — The British government has announced plans for special events on the night of Jan. 31 when the country officially leaves the European Union but the country's treasury chief has admitted that some U.K. business sectors will suffer as a result.

Sajid Javid told the Financial Times in an interview Saturday that Britain's regulations will not be aligned with the EU in the future and that those changes may hurt some businesses. Currently the EU is Britain's largest trading partner.

"There will not be alignment, we will not be a rule-taker, we will not be in the single market and we will not be in the customs union — and we will do this by the end of the year," he said, referring to a deadline at the end of 2020 for conclusion of what are expected to be contentious trade talks with the then-27 member EU.

Britain will officially leave the EU bloc on the night of Jan. 31, even though it will keep following EU rules for an 11-month transition period. It will be the first nation ever to leave the bloc. The British government plans to mark the occasion with a series of upbeat events.

British Prime Minister Boris Johnson plans to make a speech to the nation that night after holding a rare cabinet session in the north of England to emphasize his government's plan to spread opportunity to that economically beleaguered region.

The government also plans to mark Brexit by projecting a clock onto the prime minister's official residence at 10 Downing Street in London that will count down until 11 p.m., when the break takes place.

The entire government neighborhood of Whitehall is to be illuminated for the occasion as part of a light show, with Union flags flown on all the poles in Parliament Square. The government will also create a commemorative coin that will enter circulation that day.

But Johnson's Conservative government is no longer actively pushing a plan to have the familiar chimes of the Big Ben clock tower at Parliament sound at 11 p.m. despite a private fundraising push in support of activating the chimes, which are under repair.

Britain voted in a 2016 referendum to become the first nation to leave the 28-nation EU, but the process has moved more slowly than expected. A stalemate last year kept a withdrawal bill from passing, leading to a rare December election that gave Johnson's pro-Brexit Conservative Party a strong majority in Parliament.

The Brexit divorce bill quickly passed when the new Parliament convened. A transition period will last until the end of 2020 as negotiators try to forge a trade arrangement between Britain and the remaining EU nations.

Johnson, who is also seeking a trade deal with the United States, has ruled out seeking an extension of the deadline for the EU talks.

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

Putin's moves leave Russian opposition with few options

By DARIA LITVINOVA Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — Russian President Vladimir Putin played it differently this time.

Instead of openly declaring plans to extend his rule like he did in 2011, Putin proposed constitutional amendments to appear to give more power to Russia's parliament.

Instead of announcing the move as a *fait accompli*, he said the people should vote and decide.

And then he executed a swift, unexpected reshuffle of Russia's leadership, putting a low-profile official with no political aims in charge of the government.

Putin announced what many see as a strategy for staying in power well past the end of his term in 2024. And the proposed constitutional reforms that might allow him to remain in charge as prime minister or as head of the State Council didn't elicit much public outrage.

Neither did the resignation of Dmitry Medvedev, Russia's prime minister, whom Putin quickly replaced

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with the little-known tax chief, Mikhail Mishustin.

There was a smattering of calls for protest: One opposition supporter urged people to join his one-man picket in front of the Presidential Administration on Saturday, while another called for protesters to turn out against the "constitutional coup" at a Sunday rally in honor of two slain activists.

It was very different from what happened in 2011-2012, when efforts to engineer Putin's return to the presidency crushed Russian hopes for liberalization and sparked massive protests in Moscow.

In his speech Wednesday, Putin presented his plan to amend the constitution as a way to improve democracy. By suggesting that lawmakers could name prime ministers and Cabinet members, he also curtailed the authority of the president, who currently holds that power.

Putin also said the constitution could specify a greater role for the State Council, an obscure consultative body of regional governors and federal officials, indicating that he might take a leading position there.

He also sought to prioritize the primacy of Russian laws, so that the European Court of Human Rights would no longer have the authority to issue rulings that Moscow opposed.

All this would "strengthen the role of civil society, political parties and regions in making key decisions about the development of our state," Putin said Thursday in discussing the amendments with lawmakers.

New Prime Minister Mishustin was praised by government officials and commentators as an "effective manager" with expertise in finance who would be able to drive Russia's stagnating economy out of a slump.

Many Russians might see that as a positive change rather than a sophisticated political plot. According to a survey released Friday by Russia's state-funded pollster VTsIOM, 45% of the respondents saw the shakeup as Putin's genuine desire to change the existing power structure.

But opposition leaders like Alexei Navalny said the changes are not the kind that people are looking for. Putin is looking to "remain a lifelong, ultimate leader" and run Russia as "property" divided between himself and his backers, Navalny tweeted.

And the announced changes do nothing to address what Russians really want, said Navalny ally Lyubov Sobol.

"People demand to end corruption, people demand to improve their living conditions. They demand a reform of the health care system, they're worried about pension reform. All these demands, they are not going anywhere," Sobol told The Associated Press.

Vladimir Milov, an opposition politician, echoed that sentiment. Russians are willing to put up with worsened living conditions if they see potential for growth in the future — but Putin's address shows he's not interested in that, he said.

"This is the main conflict between Putin and society right now," Milov said. "Society can't wait for economic growth to start again, and Putin doesn't care, he's occupied with other things. At some point, this will backfire."

Still, the announced constitutional reforms are unlikely to trigger a new wave of protests.

"All recent protests happened when discontent that has been building up for a while spilled out, triggered by something. Amending the constitution is unlikely to be a trigger," Milov said.

Denis Volkov, a sociologist with the independent Levada polling center, said the government shakeup is so vague it is unlikely to spur public anger.

"What is happening is not clear. Is this about a presidency? About some other governing body? It is unclear what people should express their unhappiness about," Volkov said. "It is hard to protest against something that's unclear."

In addition, Volkov noted, back in 2011-2012 Putin's approval ratings were much lower — more than half of the country wanted him out. "Right now there is no urge to replace the country's leader," he said.

And the question remains whether the opposition will be able to galvanize people to protest. The Kremlin last year turned up the pressure on activists and politicians, sandbagging them with high-figure fines and exhausting them with arrests and trials.

There are several criminal cases open against Sobol and other Navalny allies. Sobol said she owes the government more than \$400,000 in fines, and expects more fines to be imposed on opposition figures.

"There is a high probability that political pressure on us will continue this year," she said.

Still, Sobol vowed the opposition will continue the fight — by protesting, contesting the government's actions in court and exposing corrupt officials.

On Thursday, Navalny said in a post online that Mishustin's wife earned some \$12 million over the past nine years, according to her tax returns, even though she never owned nor ran a business. He demanded answers from Mishustin, who headed Russia's tax service until he was named prime minister this week, and alleged there was corruption involved.

Dmitry Gudkov, a former lawmaker turned opposition politician, believes an early parliamentary election is likely, since he says the Kremlin would want the vote to be this year instead of next.

"They're in a rush and want to (pass the proposed constitutional amendments) with the sitting parliament, which they fully control," Gudkov. "Clearly that changes our strategy."

How Trump's impeachment differs from a criminal trial

By ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Yes, it's a trial — but the Senate's impeachment proceedings against President Donald Trump won't resemble anything Americans have seen on Court TV.

In Trump's trial, the Senate will serve as both judge and jury. The Republicans who control the chamber can forge their own rules if they have enough votes. And the presiding judge is the top one in America, yet can be decisively overruled.

A look at some of the key differences between a courtroom trial and the impeachment trial that will play out in the coming days:

THE JUDGE

COURTROOM TRIAL: Federal trials, both civil and criminal, are presided over by District Court judges who are nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate. They rule on questions of evidence, motions to dismiss a case or to exclude certain testimony, and all other disputes that emerge both before and during the trial.

SENATE TRIAL: None other than John Roberts, the chief justice of the United States, will preside over this case. He made the short trip Thursday from the Supreme Court to the Capitol to be sworn in. Exactly what role he'll play is unclear, though it may be a modest one in keeping with his insistence that judges aren't meant to be politicians. And even if Roberts were to make a ruling from the chair, 51 senators can vote to overrule him.

THE JURY

COURTROOM TRIAL: It's a bedrock principle of American jurisprudence, and enshrined in the Constitution, that defendants have the right to have their fate decided by a jury of their peers — ordinary citizens who, by design, are meant to lack personal connections to the parties, or other biases or motives that could sway their judgment. They're questioned in advance on their ability to evaluate the evidence fairly and impartially.

SENATE TRIAL: The jury pool here is already preordained under the Constitution and neither side gets any say in who gets to hear the case. The 100 senators who make up the chamber will decide the case, invariably bringing their own partisan leanings toward one side or the other. They're not required to check any political prejudices or biases at the door — nor will they. They're also not impassive observers, carrying the power on a majority vote to approve rules or even dismiss the charges.

THE WITNESSES

COURTROOM TRIAL: The attorneys for both sides get to call the witnesses they think will bolster their side of the case. The lawyers themselves handle the direct questioning and cross-examination, though judges may also ask clarifying questions. Jurors are not invited to interrupt the proceedings with their own questions, nor do they get to decide whether witnesses are called.

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SENATE TRIAL: The senators themselves, in their roles as jurors, will have the opportunity to submit questions in writing. Under the rules, senators can even be called as witnesses in the trial. And it's not even automatic that there will be witnesses: It requires 51 votes for witnesses to be called.

THE PROSECUTORS

COURTROOM TRIAL: Federal criminal cases are tried by prosecutors who work for the Justice Department, their names generally unfamiliar to the American public. In state and local proceedings, those prosecutors are often known as assistant district attorneys. They don't align themselves with particular political parties or affiliations.

SENATE TRIAL: The prosecutors here aren't prosecutors in the traditional sense. They're actually seven Democratic members of Congress, all selected by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and given the title of "manager." Some of the seven are familiar faces from their time leading congressional investigations into Trump, including Rep. Adam Schiff of California and Rep. Jerrold Nadler of New York.

THE VERDICT

COURTROOM TRIAL: To declare a defendant guilty in a criminal case, either on the state or federal level, a jury must be unanimous in its decision — no exceptions. If a jury can't reach a verdict after a prolonged period of deliberations, then a judge can declare it as deadlocked and dismiss it from duty.

SENATE TRIAL: No such unanimity is required here. It would take a two-thirds majority of senators, 67 if all 100 are voting, to convict the president. Since Republicans make up the majority of the Senate, a conviction is seen as unlikely. If Trump were convicted on either of the two articles against him, he would automatically be removed from office.

Follow Eric Tucker on Twitter at <http://www.twitter.com/etuckerAP>

Anti-Trump protests have shrunk. What's it mean for 2020?

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Days after President Donald Trump killed an Iranian general and said he was sending more soldiers to the Middle East, about 100 protesters stood on a pedestrian bridge over Chicago's Lake Shore Drive with an illuminated sign that read "No War in Iran."

Some 200 people marched in the bitter cold near Boston, while a few dozen people demonstrated on the steps of Los Angeles City Hall and at similarly sized gatherings across the U.S.

Three years after Trump took office and millions of people swarmed to the Women's March in Washington and companion marches across the country, these typically modest protests are often the most visible sign of today's Trump resistance.

Activists say the numbers should not be mistaken for a lack of energy or motivation to vote Trump out of office come November.

The anti-Trump movement of 2020, they say, is more organized and more focused on action. Many people have moved from protesting to knocking on doors for candidates, mailing postcards to voters, advocating for specific causes or running for office.

But the movement that sprung up to oppose Trump's presidency also is more splintered than it was when pink-hatted protesters flooded Washington the day after his inauguration for what is generally regarded as the largest protest in the city since the Vietnam era. There have been schisms over which presidential candidates to back in 2020, as well as disagreements about race and religion and about whether the march reflected the diversity of the movement. Those divisions linger even as many on the left say they need a united front heading into November's election.

The disputes led to dueling events in New York City last year, the resignation of some national Women's March leaders and the disbanding of a group in Washington state.

Organizers expect about 100,000 people across the country to participate in this year's Women's March,

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which is scheduled for Saturday in over 180 cities. They say up to 10,000 people are expected at the march in Washington, far fewer than the turnout last year, when about 100,000 people held a rally east of the White House. Instead of a single big event, the group has been holding actions in a run-up to the march this week around three key issues: climate change, immigration and reproductive rights.

The week reflects that the movement is "moving into the next stage," said director Caitlin Breedlove.

Leaders of MoveOn.org, which organized some of the anti-Iran war protests, agreed. Mobilization manager Kate Alexander said the group and its members pulled together over 370 protests in 46 states in less than 48 hours to show resistance to Trump's actions. The president ordered airstrikes that killed Gen. Qassem Soleimani, the head of Iran's Quds Force who has been blamed for deadly attacks on U.S. troops and allies going back decades. Iran pledged retribution, sparking fears of an all-out war.

Alexander noted that the Iran protest is just one of many issues MoveOn members have organized in response to in the past few years.

"It's not that there are fewer people mobilizing — it's that they're mobilized in different campaigns. There's more to do," Alexander said. "I don't believe people are tuning out. I think people are lying in wait."

While waiting, many have passed on some major moments in Trump's presidency. Resistance groups rallied on the eve of the House vote for impeachment, but even some of those who participated said they were disappointed more people didn't turn out.

Several organizations also said much of their organizing is done through social media or text message and email programs, which are less visible but have a significant impact. In 2018, the Women's March had over 24 billion social media impressions, Breedlove said.

Atef Said, a sociology professor at the University of Illinois at Chicago, said all social movements evolve over time. He noted the Trump resistance movement is global and will continue regardless of whether Trump is reelected.

"Movements always rise and decline in terms of numbers on the ground," he said.

Andy Koch, a 30-year-old nurse who lives in Chicago, has seen that ebb and flow firsthand. Koch has been active in protesting Trump's policies even before he took office. When Koch was a student at University of Illinois at Chicago, Trump's campaign canceled a 2016 speech at the campus following tense student protests.

Koch said the anti-Trump activism swelled when he first took office and again in early 2017 when he announced his first travel ban affecting people from several predominantly Muslim countries.

Roughly 1,000 people mobilized in Chicago immediately after Trump authorized the attack on the Iranian leader, and then the crowds subsided a few days later after the threat of war seemed to subside following Trump's address to the nation Jan 8. That day, a few dozen — including Koch — showed up in 20-degree Fahrenheit (minus 7 Celsius) temperatures outside Trump International Hotel Chicago during rush hour.

Koch understands that masses of people won't show up for every protest. "What allows those numbers to come out ... is continued organizing going on in between these events," he said.

He said there have been numerous smaller protests he's been involved with, including protesting U.S. foreign policy in Venezuela and Syria, and they've taken other forms. For instance, he's helped plan a teach-in on Iranian foreign policy this week at UIC.

Maya Wells, a 21-year-old political science senior at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, was a speaker at a rally last week in Charlotte. Wells, who is Persian American and has family in Iran, said she doesn't look at the numbers of people who turn out but rather at the fact that they took time out of their day to be there.

"I see more people coming. Because some of my friends who are conservatives and voted for Trump, they're against this," she said, adding that the most recent protest wasn't the last.

"There will be more days to come," Wells said. "I have no doubt in my mind."

This story has been corrected to show Women's March organizers expect about 10,000 people, not 100,000 people, to attend Saturday's protest in Washington, D.C.

Associated Press writers Sophia Tareen in Chicago and Sarah Blake Morgan in Charlotte, N.C., contributed to this report.

Amid hacking fears, key caucus states to use app for results

By RYAN J. FOLEY and CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Two of the first three states to vote in the Democratic presidential race will use new mobile apps to gather results from thousands of caucus sites — technology intended to make counting easier but that raises concerns of hacking or glitches.

Democratic Party activists in Iowa and Nevada will use programs downloaded to their personal phones to report the results of caucus gatherings to the state headquarters. That data will then be used to announce the unofficial winners. Paper records will later be used to certify the results.

The party is moving ahead with the technology amid warnings that foreign hackers could target the 2020 presidential campaign to try to sow chaos and undermine American democracy. Party officials say they are cognizant of the threat and taking numerous security precautions. Any errors, they say, will be easily correctable because of backups.

“We continue to work closely with security experts to test our systems and identify incidents, including disinformation monitoring, and we are confident in the security systems we have in place,” said Iowa Democratic Party Chair Troy Price.

The technology aims to produce a more efficient and reliable way of calculating and releasing results to the public than the complicated math and thousands of phone calls that the caucus system has long relied upon.

But the use of a new app by an unidentified developer, coupled with the high stakes of the contests, has concerned some observers. They worry that unofficial results could be inaccurate if hackers or other problems taint the data. That’s a problem even if the paper backups eventually provide an accurate tally.

“Scary would be a darn good word,” said Brandon Potter, chief technology officer of ProCircular, an Iowa company that has done vulnerability assessments for local elections officials. “If it’s secure, awesome. But it opens up all kinds of questions.”

Party officials in both states declined to identify the vendor that developed their apps, saying they did not want to create a potential target for hackers.

Microsoft developed an app that was used by both political parties in the 2016 Iowa caucuses and credited with helping obtain results from 95% of precincts within four hours. During that cycle, Microsoft’s role was announced months beforehand, and the company discussed security measures.

Some critics say the party should again identify the developers, along with the certification and security testing they have gone through, to boost public confidence.

“It would be really nice to know who developed it, how competent they are and what oversight they were subjected to,” said Douglas Jones, a University of Iowa computer science professor and election security expert. “The caucus night reporting, which is so important in determining which candidates drop out, which continue, who gets a boost from the caucus — all of that is definitely vulnerable to an attack on the app.”

Jones said hacking could take several forms. Hackers could try to corrupt the app before it’s downloaded, activate malware that might be lurking on phones or target the server that houses the app. Another concern: The app could crash amid heavy use as precincts report results.

He and others agreed that the official results of the Feb. 3 Iowa and Feb. 22 Nevada caucuses will eventually be accurate. Each precinct keeps paper copies of the results and numerous participants at each site will know the precise outcome.

Because of hacking concerns, the Democratic National Committee scrapped the Iowa party’s plan to hold a virtual caucus in which those unable to attend in person could use smartphones to record their preferences. Party officials said the risks posed by the reporting apps were much lower than with electronic voting.

The state parties worked with the technical team at the DNC to vet developers and design security protocols around the use of the app.

The Belfer Center at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government conducted simulation and training exercises with Iowa officials that included scenarios in which there were problems with a mobile reporting app. The training emphasized the importance of using authentication, secure networks to transmit data and encryption to guard against attacks.

"I do think that we need to give the Iowa team a lot of credit for how seriously they looked at all these issues," said Eric Rosenbach, co-director of the Belfer Center.

DNC spokesman David Bergstein said national officials were coordinating with the Iowa party and the Department of Homeland Security "to run efficient and secure caucuses." He said he is confident that state Democrats are "taking the security of their caucuses extremely seriously from all perspectives."

Party officials said they would not be sending the app to precinct chairs for downloading until just before the caucus — to narrow the window for any interference. And while using the app is encouraged, precinct chairs still have the option of phoning in results.

Democrat Ruth Thompson, who will chair a Des Moines precinct, said she was not concerned about security risks related to the app.

"The Russians don't care what's on my phone," she said. "I know we've got the app, but we have a paper backup. If there is a hack or something, there is the opportunity to correct it."

Hacking fears aren't new. In 2012, a video purporting to be from the hacking collective Anonymous called on supporters to "peacefully shut down" the Republican caucuses. In response, party leaders increased their security measures for the website where the results were posted.

Ultimately, it was old-fashioned data errors that tainted the results that year: The party chairman on caucus night declared Mitt Romney the winner by eight votes over Rick Santorum. Two weeks later, Santorum was declared the winner by 34 votes when results were certified.

Cassidy reported from Atlanta. Follow the reporters on Twitter: @RJFoley and @AP_Christina.

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

Trump assembles a made-for-TV impeachment defense team

By **ERIC TUCKER** and **ZEKE MILLER** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has assembled a made-for-TV legal team for his Senate trial that includes household names like Ken Starr, the prosecutor whose investigation two decades ago resulted in the impeachment of Bill Clinton. Former Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz said he will deliver constitutional arguments meant to shield Trump from allegations that he abused his power.

The additions Friday bring experience in the politics of impeachment as well as constitutional law to the team, which faced a busy weekend of deadlines for legal briefs before opening arguments begin Tuesday even as more evidence rolled in.

The two new Trump attorneys are already nationally known both for their involvement in some of the more consequential legal dramas of recent American history and for their regular appearances on Fox News, the president's preferred television network.

Dershowitz is a constitutional expert whose expansive views of presidential powers echo those of Trump. Starr is a veteran of partisan battles in Washington, having led the investigation into Clinton's affair with a White House intern that brought about the president's impeachment by the House. Clinton was acquitted at his Senate trial, the same outcome Trump is expecting from the Republican-led chamber.

Still, the lead roles for Trump's defense will be played by White House Counsel Pat Cipollone and Trump personal lawyer Jay Sekulow, who also represented Trump during special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia investigation.

Democrats released more documents late Friday from Lev Parnas, an indicted associate of Trump lawyer

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Rudy Giuliani, with photos, text and audio, as they make their case against the president over his actions toward Ukraine.

There are some signs of tension involving the president's outside legal team and lawyers within the White House.

Some White House officials bristled that the announcement was not coordinated with them. The White House waited until late Friday night to confirm the full roster of the president's lawyers.

Hours after Dershowitz announced his involvement with the team in a series of tweets Friday, he played down his role by saying he would be present for only an hour or so to make constitutional arguments.

"I'm not a full-fledged member of the defense team," he told "The Dan Abrams Show" on SiriusXM. He has long been a critic of "the overuse of impeachment," he said, and would have made the same case for a President Hillary Clinton.

A legal brief laying out the contours of the Trump defense, due at noon Monday, was still being drafted, with White House attorneys and the outside legal team grappling over how political the document should be. Those inside the administration have echoed warnings from Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell that the pleadings must be sensitive to the Senate's more staid traditions and leave the sharper rhetoric to Twitter and cable news.

White House lawyers were successful in keeping Trump from adding House Republicans to the team, but they also advised him against tapping Dershowitz, according to two people who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss internal discussions. They're concerned because of the professor's association with Jeffrey Epstein, the millionaire who killed himself in jail last summer while awaiting trial on sex trafficking charges.

A Fox News host said on the air that Starr would be parting ways with the network as a result of his role on the legal team.

Other members of Trump's legal defense include Pam Bondi, the former Florida attorney general; Jane Raskin, who was part of the president's legal team during Mueller's investigation; Robert Ray, who was part of the Whitewater investigation of the Clintons; and Eric D. Herschmann of the Kasowitz Benson Torres legal firm, which has represented Trump in numerous cases over the last 15 years.

Giuliani told The Associated Press that the president has assembled a "top-notch" defense team and he was not disappointed not to be included.

Giuliani, who many in the White House blame for leading Trump down the path to impeachment by fueling Ukraine conspiracies, had previously expressed interest in being on the legal team. But he said Friday his focus would be on being a potential witness, though there is no certainty that he would be called.

"I will be getting ready to testify," he said.

Trump was impeached by the House last month on charges of abuse of power and obstructing Congress, stemming from his pressure on Ukraine to investigate Democratic rivals as he was withholding security aid, and his efforts to block the ensuing congressional probe.

Senators were sworn in as jurors Thursday by Chief Justice John Roberts.

The president insists he did nothing wrong, and he complains about his treatment daily, sometimes distracting from unrelated events. On Friday, as Trump welcomed the championship Louisiana State University football team to the Oval Office for photos, he said the space had seen "a lot of presidents, some good, some not so good. But you got a good one now, even though they're trying to impeach the son of a bitch. Can you believe that?"

While the president speaks dismissively of the case, new revelations are mounting about his actions toward Ukraine.

The Government Accountability Office said Thursday that the White House violated federal law in withholding the security assistance to Ukraine, which shares a border with hostile Russia.

Democrats deep into their own preparations released more information from the trove Parnas has turned over to prosecutors linking the president to the shadow foreign policy being run by Giuliani.

Friday's release included multiple photos of the Soviet-born Florida businessman, including several with Giuliani and some with Trump and Trump's son, Don Jr.

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It also included messages between Parnas and a staff member for Rep. Devin Nunes, R-Calif., a Trump ally. The GAO report and Parnas documents have applied fresh pressure to senators to call more witnesses for the trial, a main source of contention that is still to be resolved. The White House has instructed officials not to comply with subpoenas from Congress requesting witnesses or other information.

Views on it all are decidedly mixed in the Senate, reflective of the nation at the start of this election year. "I'll be honest, a lot of us do see it as a political exercise," Republican Joni Ernst of Iowa told reporters on a conference call. "The whole process has really been odd or unusual or bizarre."

Others spoke of the seriousness of the moment.

"Totally somber," tweeted Democrat Chris Murphy of Connecticut. He sits next to Elizabeth Warren, one of four senators running for the Democratic nomination to challenge Trump in the fall, and said they agreed their "overwhelming emotion was sadness."

All said they will be listening closely to all arguments.

As she filed for re-election Friday in West Virginia, GOP Sen. Shelley Moore Capito told reporters, "I think it's been a very politicized process to this point and the president hasn't had a chance to present his side."

Starr, besides his 1990s role as independent counsel, is a former U.S. solicitor general and federal circuit court judge.

More recently, he was removed as president of Baylor University and then resigned as chancellor of the school in the wake of a review critical of the university's handling of sexual assault allegations against football players. Starr said his resignation was the result of the university's board of regents seeking to place the school under new leadership following the scandal, not because he was accused of hiding or failing to act on information.

Dershowitz's reputation has been damaged in recent years by his association with Epstein. One of Epstein's alleged victims, Virginia Roberts Giuffre, has accused Dershowitz of participating in her abuse. Dershowitz has denied it and has been battling in court for years with Giuffre and her lawyers. He recently wrote a book, "Guilt by Accusation," rejecting her allegations.

Giuffre and Dershowitz are also suing each other for defamation, each saying the other is lying.

Associated Press writers David Caruso in New York, David Pitt in Iowa, Anthony Izaguirre in West Virginia, Sean Murphy in Oklahoma and Lisa Mascaro in Washington contributed to this report.

Former Walmart exec, Royals owner David Glass dies at 84

By DAVE SKRETTA AP Sports Writer

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (AP) — Former Walmart Inc. chief executive David Glass, who owned the Kansas City Royals for nearly two decades before selling the franchise last fall, died last week of complications from pneumonia. He was 84.

The Glass family said the businessman died Jan. 9. He had been dealing with health issues for some time.

Glass began negotiations early last year to sell the Royals, who reached the World Series twice under his ownership and won the title in 2015. The deal valued at about \$1 billion with a group led by Kansas City businessman John Sherman was completed Nov. 26 after Major League Baseball owners voted unanimously to approve it.

"I am deeply saddened by the news of David's passing," Sherman said in a statement. "His voice among other owners was so respected. He served on and led several Major League Baseball committees to better our game. His passion for baseball and love for Kansas City was the driving force in bringing success on the field for this franchise.

"Personally, I will be forever indebted to David for reaching out to offer the generational opportunity to be part of this proud and storied franchise," Sherman added. "On behalf of the entire ownership group, I want to express deepest gratitude to the heart of a man who carefully placed a treasure in the hands of Kansas Citians. We pledge to carry it forward with his passionate commitment and selfless spirit."

Glass was born in Mountain, View, Missouri, and joined the U.S. Army after he was graduated from

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high school. He earned a degree from Missouri State before beginning his business career at Crank Drug Company in 1960.

Glass left the company in 1968 and worked for two other companies until 1976, when Walmart founder Sam Walter recruited him to be his company's chief financial officer. Glass continued to take on a bigger role with the company until 1988, when he was named president and CEO of the retail giant. Over the ensuing 12 years, he led the company through a period of dramatic growth and expansions internationally and into new retail formats.

"When we lost my dad, David provided a steady, visionary hand the company needed to lead it forward. He did so with a deep sense of humility while maintaining the values and principles dad founded the company on," former Walmart chairman Rob Walton said. "More than anyone beyond Sam Walton, David Glass is responsible for making Walmart the company it is today. On behalf of the entire Walton family, I want to express our appreciation for David as a leader and as a friend. He will be deeply missed."

He also will be missed in Kansas City, his home-away-from home due to his ownership of the Royals.

Glass helped to keep the franchise in Kansas City following the death of founding owner Ewing Kauffman in 1993. He served as caretaker of the organization until April 2000, when he purchased sole ownership for \$96 million — a strong bid at the time. And while his ownership will be remembered for two American League pennants and a World Series trophy, for many years he was considered a pariah among fans for his notoriously frugal ways.

The Royals endured many 100-loss seasons, and they became known for trading top talent while refusing to sign notable free agents. Many fans also viewed him as an absentee owner more committed to Arkansas than Kansas City.

But most of those opinions changed when Glass hired Dayton Moore as general manager in 2006. Glass vowed to build the organization the right way, and he gave Moore the resources and responsibility to accomplish that objective.

"When I sat down across the table from Mr. Glass, as he began to share his vision for the Kansas City Royals, it was all about wanting to create a model organization," Moore said Friday. "It was all about putting a competitive team on the field for our fans and our city. I came to understand he owner a baseball team for all the right reasons. It wasn't about him as an owner, it was about being a great steward of the franchise and preserving the great game he enjoyed as a little boy."

Glass continued that enjoyment even after he agreed to sell the franchise. He showed up to Kauffman Stadium several times late in the season, watching the Royals with the same boyhood fascination as always.

"I'm here because where else would you want to be on a Saturday evening but the ballpark?" Glass said told The Associated Press one September afternoon, leaning over the dugout during batting practice. "I'm not going to stop enjoying baseball. I went to my first game in 1946 and I've been a baseball junkie ever since."

Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said in a statement that "Glass was one of our game's most active and respected owners for more than a quarter of a century."

"While providing great leadership for our industry, he also was a tremendous fan of the game. The Royals' 2015 World Championship was a tribute to his stewardship of the franchise and his passion for baseball in Kansas City."

Glass had been in declining health, increasing his urgency to sell the club. But he had called Moore on Christmas Day and later said he was looking forward to attending spring training with a group of his friends.

"We weren't expecting to get this news this early in 2020, that's for sure," Moore said.

Regardless of how he was perceived by the public, Glass always had the unwavering support of Moore and Ned Yost, his longtime manager. Yost even called watching Glass raise the World Series trophy at Citi Field in 2015 "one of the top three highlights of my baseball career, because we had accomplished it for him."

"I will never forget the thrill of seeing over 800,000 people of this community come together on one sunny November day to salute the newly crowned world champions. It's been a fantastic ride," Glass said upon announcing the sale of the franchise, "and I want to thank our great fans for supporting us through

the years. But now it's time for someone else to oversee this franchise into its next championship."

During his ownership of the Royals, Glass served on key MLB committees. He was the chairman of MLB Advanced Media, a member of Major League Baseball's executive council and — not surprising, given his background — an integral part of the finance committee.

Glass was elected to the board of the Hall of Fame, too.

Glass and his wife, Ruth, have three children, six grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. They also were actively involved in several philanthropic endeavors, and Missouri State named its business hall in his honor.

The family said a memorial will be held Jan. 27 at Northwest Arkansas Fellowship Bible Church in Rogers, Arkansas.

"Due to his authentic humility, we think David Glass may be the most under-appreciated CEO in the history of business," said Doug McMillon, the current president and CEO of Walmart. "The choices he made and the results of the company reflect his wisdom, dedication and servant leadership. We will miss him immensely and are eternally grateful."

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

Ex-US Rep. Collins gets over 2 years in insider trading case

By LARRY NEUMEISTER and JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The first member of Congress to endorse Donald Trump to be president was sentenced Friday to two years and two months in federal prison after admitting he helped his son and others dodge \$800,000 in stock market losses when he learned that a drug trial by a small pharmaceutical company had failed.

Ex-Congressman Christopher Collins, 69, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Vernon S. Broderick in Manhattan after the Republican pleaded guilty in October to conspiracy to commit securities fraud and lying to law enforcement officials.

Collins broke down and apologized to his family and his former constituents and colleagues.

"I stand here today as a disgraced former member of Congress," he said. "My life has been shattered."

The sentence came even after Collins' lawyers argued he was sorry and should face no prison time in the insider trading case.

Prosecutors, however, argued he should go to prison for nearly five years. They said Collins and his son, Cameron, were worth a total of \$35 million when they conspired to sell shares in a pharmaceutical company before devastating news was made public.

The trading, prosecutors said, enabled Cameron Collins and friends to dodge \$800,000 in losses.

Collins' attorneys requested leniency, citing his contrition, advanced age, charitable works and a low chance that he would commit any more crimes.

"This is a sad and tragic day for Chris and his family," defense attorney Jonathan Barr said. "He stands before you humbled, penitent and remorseful."

Collins had been a vocal Trump supporter, becoming the first member of Congress to endorse him as a presidential candidate. He also called for an end to special counsel Robert Mueller's probe into possible campaign collusion and blamed former President Barack Obama's administration for failing to push back on Russia.

He vehemently denied wrongdoing when he was charged in 2018, with a spokeswoman calling a House Ethics Committee inquiry into Collins a "partisan witch hunt."

When he spoke Friday, he fought back tears and displayed the Boy Scout's three-fingered sign, breaking down several times as he spoke about the scout code he violated, including a vow to be trustworthy, and his family.

"I violated my core values and there is no excuse, none whatsoever," he said, looking at members of

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the media seated in the jury box during much of his remarks.

"My life has been shattered. My reputation has been shattered. Worst, my family has been shattered," he said.

He added that he was in a "dark, dark place," wondering how to go on when his daughter pleaded with him to recover.

"I climbed out of the hole because of her," he said as his wife and daughter, who fought tears of their own.

Collins had represented western New York since his election to the state's 27th Congressional District in 2012. He resigned when he decided to plead guilty to a single conspiracy count, leaving the district's constituents without representation in Congress.

"Lawmakers bear the profound privilege and responsibility of writing and passing laws, but equally as important, the absolute obligation of following them," Geoffrey Berman, the Manhattan U.S. attorney, said in a statement. "Collins' hubris is a stark reminder that the people of New York can and should demand more from their elected officials, and that no matter how powerful, no lawmaker is above the law."

Prosecutors faulted Collins for campaigning for a reelection race he won after his arrest and then continuing to serve. They said Collins learned that Innate Immunotherapeutics Ltd., whose board he sat on, had failed a drug trial when he received a telephone call while he attended the annual Congressional Picnic at the White House on June 22, 2017.

Knowing that Innate's stock would plunge when news got out, Collins "from the White House lawn" tried to reach his son to tip him off so he could sell his shares, prosecutors said.

Prosecutors said he then conspired with family members to claim Cameron Collins and friends sold shares because they were spooked by a temporary halt in the trading of the stock rather than because they knew the stock price would fall 92% for the company headquartered in Sydney, Australia, with offices in Auckland, New Zealand.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Max Nicholas disputed the defense claim that the crime was the result of a tragic and emotional moment when Collins wasn't thinking straight after learning the drug trial failed. The prosecutor noted there was a 10-month gap between his first crime when he called his son and the second when he lied to the FBI, which described as Collins "doubling down."

"We do not agree this crime was emotional," Nicholas said.

Broderick called it baffling that Collins would exercise such poor judgment when he and his son had the financial means to deal with any loss.

"I have a difficult time reconciling that," the judge said.

"It was a stupid, impulsive action that doesn't make sense," Barr, Collins' defense attorney, responded. "He really thought this company had something that was going to be a magic bullet for somebody with a really serious illness."

During his remarks, Collins said he felt like he was reading his obituary as he was reading the letters from family and friends, which included one from former House Speaker John Boehner. He said some current members of Congress sent him texts Friday morning.

"It may sound like it, but this is not your obituary," the judge told him after announcing his sentence, due to begin March 17. His lawyers asked him to be assigned to a prison in Florida near where he now lives.

"You have your future ahead of you. Make some good come out of this bad situation," Broderick said.

Rollback proposed for Michelle Obama school lunch guidelines

By CAROLE FELDMAN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Trump administration on Friday took another step toward dismantling Michelle Obama's school nutrition guidelines, proposing a new rule that could lead to more pizza and fries and less fruit and a smaller variety of vegetables on school menus.

Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue, who announced the rule changes on Obama's birthday, said they were needed to give schools more flexibility and reduce waste while still providing nutritious and appetizing meals.

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But child nutrition advocates saw it differently.

"What a shameless, embarrassing capitulation to lobbyists at the expense of American children and their well-being," said Sam Kass, who served as executive director of Obama's "Let's Move" campaign to combat child obesity. "This country — and its kids — deserve so much better."

Under the proposal, schools would be allowed to cut the amount of certain types of vegetables served at lunch, and legumes offered as a meat alternative also could be counted as part of the vegetable requirement. Potatoes could be served as a vegetable.

The proposal also would allow schools to reduce the amount of fruit at on-the-go breakfast served outside the cafeteria.

Gay Anderson, president of the School Nutrition Association, said that while the nutrition standards had been a success overall, some requirements led to reduced participation in the program, higher costs and waste.

"USDA's school meal flexibilities are helping us manage these challenges and prepare nutritious meals that appeal to diverse student tastes," Anderson said in a statement.

The school meals program serves about 30 million students, most of them from low-income families.

"The Trump administration's assault on children's health continues today under the guise of 'simplifying' school meals," Colin Schwartz, the Center for Science in the Public Interest's deputy director for legislative affairs, said in a statement.

The proposal would give schools greater flexibility in offering entrees for a la carte purchases, which Schwartz said would "create a huge loophole in school nutrition guidelines, paving the way for children to choose pizza, burgers, French fries, and other foods high in calories, saturated fat or sodium in place of balanced school meals every day."

Geraldine Henchy, director of nutrition policy at the Food Research & Action Center, said the bottom line should be nutrition, but the revisions to the a la carte rule would result in students getting "a lot more fats, a lot more sodium, a lot more calories."

Specifically, the proposal would reduce the amount of red and orange vegetables that would have to be offered every day at lunch.

For breakfasts taken to go, fruit servings could be reduced from a cup to half a cup.

Rep. Bobby Scott, a Virginia Democrat and chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor, said the proposal "threatens the progress we've made toward improving nutrition in schools."

"For many children, the food they eat at school is their only access to healthy, nutritious meals," he said.

The American Heart Association said the rule would "put children's health at risk."

"Healthy school meals help combat childhood obesity and poor cardiovascular health, but they also help establish a foundation for a lifetime of healthy behaviors," the group said.

As first lady, Obama championed healthier school meals as part of the "Let's Move" campaign.

"With one in three of our kids on track to have diabetes, it's unconscionable that the Trump administration would do the bidding of the potato and junk food industries," Kass said.

The 2010 Health, Hunger-Free Kids Act set nutrition standards for school meals, requiring schools to offer fruits and vegetables and more whole-grain foods and to limit calories, fat and sodium.

The proposed rule is the second move by the Trump administration to scale back the school lunch program's nutrition standards. Under a 2018 rule, the administration reduced the whole grains that had to be served and allowed low-fat chocolate milk. Before the rule change, only fat-free flavored milk was permitted.

Perdue announced the proposed changes in San Antonio, Texas.

"Schools and school districts continue to tell us that there is still too much food waste and that more common-sense flexibility is needed to provide students nutritious and appetizing meals," he said.

The agency also proposed changes to the summer meals program, which serves 2.6 million children.

3 more linked to neo-Nazi group arrested in Georgia

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and JEFF MARTIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Three men linked to a violent white supremacist group known as The Base were charged with conspiring to kill members of a militant anti-fascist group, police in Georgia announced Friday, a day after three other members were arrested on federal charges in Maryland and Delaware.

The Base, a collective of hardcore neo-Nazis that operate as a paramilitary organization, has proclaimed war against minority communities within the United States and abroad, the FBI has said. Unlike other extremist groups, it's not focused on promulgating propaganda — instead the group aims to bring together highly skilled members to train them for acts of violence.

Its organizers recruit fellow white supremacists online — particularly seeking out veterans because of their military training — use encrypted chat rooms and train members in military-style camps in the woods, according to experts who track extremist groups.

The group, which has the motto "learn, train, fight," brings together white supremacists with varying ideologies.

The arrests show an intensified focus on the group from law enforcement officials who are concerned that the supremacists may go beyond plotting to violent acts, a threat made more urgent ahead of a pro-gun rally Monday in Richmond, Va. It was unknown if the men in Georgia had any plans to attend the rally.

There's an intensified focus on The Base after three members were arrested Thursday in Maryland and Delaware on federal felony charges. A criminal complaint included details of how some of the men built an assault rifle using parts, purchased thousands of rounds of ammunition and traded vests that could carry body armor. They were believed to be planning to attend the pro-gun rally in Richmond, according to a law enforcement official who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss an active investigation.

The arrests only added to rising fears that Monday's rally could quickly devolve into violence, with thousands of protesters planning to descend on Virginia's capital, and become a repeat of the 2017 white nationalist rally when a man drove his car into counter-protesters in Charlottesville, killing Heather Heyer, a 32-year-old paralegal and civil rights activist.

Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam signed an executive order banning guns from the state Capitol grounds for Monday's rally, but pro-gun groups filed an appeal seeking to overturn the ban. The Virginia Supreme Court upheld the ban Friday.

"These extremists are going to try to attach themselves to these events in order to exploit these strong feelings, to try to bring in new recruits," said Oren Segal, vice president of the Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism.

In encrypted chat rooms, members of The Base have discussed committing acts of violence against blacks and Jews, ways to make improvised explosive devices and their desire to create a white "ethno-state," the FBI has said in court papers.

On Friday, police in Georgia confirmed that three other men linked to The Base were arrested on charges of conspiracy to commit murder and participating in a criminal street gang. Authorities said the men planned to kill a married couple who were anti-fascist protesters — part of the Antifa movement — and believed killing the couple would send a message to enemies of The Base.

The arrests came after an undercover FBI agent infiltrated the group and participated in shooting drills in the mountains of northern Georgia, according to a police affidavit obtained by the AP. The drills were being done in preparation for what they believe is an impending collapse of the United States and ensuing race war. At the end of the firearms training, the Georgia men wore tactical gear and balaclava hoods that expose only part of the face while posing for photos with the undercover agent and the photos were later used in the group's propaganda, the affidavit says.

The men were identified as Luke Austin Lane, Michael Helterbrand, and Jacob Kaderli. The three remained in custody and it was not immediately clear whether they had attorneys who could comment on the allegations.

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Lane, Kaderli and the undercover agent drove to the couple's home in Bartow County to scope it out, according to the affidavit. After checking out the property and the surrounding neighborhood, Lane suggested using a sledgehammer as one way of breaching the door, then kill them with revolvers, according to the affidavit. Kaderli suggested they should burn the house down after the killings, it states.

While other extremist groups are focused on getting people together to produce propaganda and make a name for themselves around a specific ideology, The Base is focused on action, the experts say. They are interested in training their members to use firearms and explosives.

"To have that kind of broad tent, that's incredibly dangerous," said Joshua Fisher-Birch, a researcher with the Counter Extremism Project, a policy group formed to combat online extremist ideologies.

Members of The Base also believe in an extreme form of survivalism and preparation, offering real-life survivalist training to resist the "extinction" of the Caucasian race, the FBI has said.

"I think what marks The Base as a particular concern is that it is very blatant about its embrace of accelerationist ideas. This concept that societal collapse is not only imminent, but that they have a role to play in furthering it - so that we can have a race war in this country," Segal said.

"There are many groups active online that have an on-the-ground presence, but it's the sub-culture that the base is embracing is so vividly militant," he said. "It's so blatantly hateful it's going to attract a certain type of extremist, one who is looking for action."

A New Jersey man who authorities say was a recruiter for The Base was arrested by the FBI in November after he allegedly used the group to find fellow neo-Nazis to vandalize synagogues in Michigan and Wisconsin. Authorities said the group's plan to vandalize synagogues with anti-Semitic graffiti and break windows was part of what the group called "Operation Kristallnacht," a reference to a 1938 incident when Nazis torched synagogues in Germany, vandalized Jewish homes and business and killed close to 100 people.

The man, Richard Tobin, 18, had also discussed carrying out a suicide bombing and said he had saved manuals about how to carry out an attack, filling the back of a truck with barrels packed with explosive materials similar to the Oklahoma City bombing that killed 168 people in 1995.

Separately on Friday, the Justice Department charged a Wisconsin man who they say was also a member of The Base who spray painted swastikas, the group's symbol and anti-Semitic words on a synagogue in Racine, Wisconsin in September, at Tobin's direction. The man, Yousef Barasneh, 22, was arrested on a federal civil rights charge.

Tobin is not named specifically named in the charging papers against Barasneh, but the details match those in the criminal complaint that was filed against him in November. Authorities said Tobin and Barasneh were supposed to meet in person at one of the group's meetups in Silver Creek, Georgia, from Oct. 30 until Nov. 2. Tobin ultimately didn't attend.

Prosecutors said recruitment posters for The Base were put up at Marquette University in Milwaukee and the group also held a separate training session for members in Wood County, Wisconsin.

Martin reported from Atlanta. Associated Press writer Colleen Long in Washington contributed to this report.

Mexico readies for Central American migrants at south border

By **MARÍA VERZA** and **SONIA PÉREZ D.** Associated Press

CIUDAD HIDALGO, Mexico (AP) — Border security forces in southern Mexico were preparing Friday for the expected arrival of hundreds of Central Americans traveling through Guatemala and vowed to prevent a repeat of the headline-grabbing "caravans" of past years when massive flows of migrants and asylum seekers overwhelmed agents.

National Guard and army troops stood watch as rafts plied the Suchiate River between the two countries as dawn painted the sky a vibrant tangerine. About 100 more guardsmen arrived in the afternoon with riot shields to await orders.

A soldier who requested anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly said more small

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groups of soldiers were expected to continue arriving from Tapachula. Small groups of migrants on the Guatemalan side grew slowly as the day wore on.

"We have been tasked with being vigilant, and if we see a large group on the other side, we will deploy a human wall on this side to contain them," another marine and member of the National Guard told The Associated Press, speaking on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to reporters.

It was expected that more Central Americans could arrive late Friday or on Saturday. River levels were so low that a backhoe was in the middle of its bed dredging up the muddy soil and men were damming sections so it would be deep enough for rafts to cross.

About a dozen Honduran cane-cutters were bathing in the murky waters on the Guatemalan side and sizing up the situation.

One of them, 37-year-old Osman Durán, was in the first caravan in 2018. He made it to the U.S. border and jumped the fence to turn himself in, only to be deported later. His wife and daughter are in Mississippi awaiting resolution of their asylum petition.

"We have to wait for the group and see what decisions are made," Durán said.

Local resident Marvin García, 41, who has made a living poling a raft on the Suchiate for two decades, predicted that migrants would avoid the kind of chaos seen in 2018 when there were clashes with agents at the border gates on the Mexican side, migrants jumping off the bridge into the water and wading across in large numbers.

"We are waiting," García said. "It is not known what will happen, whether they will throw themselves (into the water), but I don't think what happened last year will be repeated."

He added that far fewer are crossing these days compared with a half-year ago, when Mexico began deploying thousands of federal agents after U.S. President Donald Trump threatened punishing trade tariffs, though it still happens along the length of the porous border.

Francisco Garduño, commissioner of Mexico's National Immigration Institute, was emphatic that migrants who try to enter the country irregularly would go no farther than here.

"They cannot enter because it would be in violation of the law," he told AP, declining to talk in specifics about border reinforcements but saying there were "sufficient" troops to keep things orderly.

Mexico's Interior ministry said in a statement that immigration agents and officials from the country's refugee agency would be on hand to offer protection and potential temporary employment to those migrants who entered the country legally and agreed to stay in the south.

Representatives of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees office and medical NGOs were also at the river.

Christy Rivas, a 33-year-old who left her two children with her mother back in the Honduran capital, Tegucigalpa, made her way onto the border bridge with another migrant to ask whether they would be allowed to pass. A Mexican agent halfway across asked if they were "part of the caravan" and directed her to the immigration outpost. Fearful of being entrapped and deported, they went back to wait for others to arrive: "United is better," Rivas said.

She's aware that Mexico and the United States have made it more difficult to get to and then stay in the U.S., but said it's a necessary risk because there's no work back home. That's a complaint commonly cited by people on the migratory route out of Central America's Northern Triangle Region of Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala, along with rampant gang violence, grinding poverty and to a lesser extent political persecution.

Rivas planned to hire a "coyote," or smuggler, to get her to the Texas border and across illegally because she doesn't have documents to claim asylum — but that depended on getting into Mexico first.

"Right now the problem is here," she said, motioning toward the bridge.

The first groups of about 1,460 migrants set out from San Pedro Sula, Honduras, on Wednesday, followed by some 2,083 on Thursday, according to the latest figures from Guatemala's immigration agency. However, most advanced in separate groups rather than as a single cohesive whole and at least 300 were rounded up by Guatemalan police Thursday and bused back to the Honduran border.

Just a day after taking office, President Alejandro Giammattei said this week they would be allowed to

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pass through his country as long as they carried the proper documentation. A Central American regional border pact allows free movement of citizens of the Northern Triangle nations and Nicaragua.

To the south, hundreds of men, women and children resumed walking around 4 a.m. after sleeping at a migrant shelter in Esquipulas, Guatemala.

Keidy Pineda, 21 years old and breast-feeding her nearly 2-year-old daughter Kendra as they made their way along the highway, carried just a small backpack with a few belongings. She said she fled Tegucigalpa because of poverty and dreams of a better life in the United States.

"We have nothing, just my daughter," Pineda said. "Her father was killed for getting mixed up with the wrong crowd. They left his body at the doorstep of my house."

Mari a na Avila, 47, left behind her small business in hopes of making it to the United States along with six family members.

"Back there it's impossible. You can't pay the electricity, there's nothing to eat," Avila said. "I have photos from when they beat me for extortion. Up there we are going to be well."

Less-organized migrants, tighter controls by Guatemalan and Mexican authorities and the presence of U.S. advisers have reduced the likelihood of a repeat of the huge, cohesive processions that the term "caravan" came to conjure in 2018.

Guatemala is stricter about checking documents, and Mexico has deployed thousands of National Guard agents in key corridors to do immigration control. Asylum seekers who manage to make it to the U.S. border are, after long waits, generally sent back to Mexico to await the outcome of their cases or, more recently, flown to other countries in the region and told their only option is to apply for refuge there.

Pérez D. reported from Esquipulas, Guatemala.

NOT REAL NEWS: A look at what didn't happen this week

By BEATRICE DUPUY, ARIJETA LAJKA and AMANDA SEITZ Associated Press

A roundup of some of the most popular but completely untrue stories and visuals of the week. None of these is legit, even though they were shared widely on social media. The Associated Press checked them out. Here are the real facts:

CLAIM: Democratic presidential candidate Tom Steyer criticized Democrats during the Iowa presidential debate, saying they would "destroy the economy in 15 minutes if they get in control."

THE FACTS: A video that circulated on social media following the debate was edited to make it appear Steyer made a derogatory comment about Democrats and the economy. A review of debate footage shows that Steyer was discussing President Donald Trump's campaign and the role the economy would play in it. "Look, we know how Donald Trump is going to run for president. He's going to run on the economy. He's already told Americans last month in Florida, 'You don't like me and I don't like you, but you're all going to vote for me because the Democrats are going to destroy the economy in 15 minutes if they get in control.'" The comment was made in response to a question from CNN moderator Abby Phillip, who asked the California businessman about spending more than \$100 million of his own money on television ads: "How do you convince voters you are more than just your money?" Sarah Dolan, executive director of the America Rising PAC, tweeted the misleading video as the debate ended. Trump then retweeted it early Wednesday. "I agree with him on this, 100%," Trump tweeted. "But why would anyone vote Democrat? We are setting all time records with the economy!" America Rising did not immediately respond to a request for a comment. Shortly after Trump's tweet, Steyer responded telling the president he should read the transcripts of his full remarks on the economy during the debate. "Read the transcript. It's actually perfect," he said in a tweet. "I said you're a fraud and a failure -- and I'll expose you. Now go to bed." Alberto Lammers, Steyer's campaign press secretary, told The Associated Press that Steyer's remark about Trump was in reference to a December speech Trump made at the Israeli American Council National Summit, in Hollywood, Florida. At the December event, Trump noted that many of the attendees work in

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real estate and should consider voting for him if they want to stay in business. "You're brutal killers," he said. "Not nice people at all. But you have to vote for me; you have no choice. You're not going to vote for Pocahontas, I can tell you that. You're not going to vote for the wealth tax." The remarks were published by the White House.

CLAIM: Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam said if people don't give up guns, the National Guard will cut off their power, and have them killed.

THE FACTS: The statement was fabricated. Since winning a majority of seats in the state legislature last year, Democrats have introduced multiple pieces of legislation around gun control, but none of them call for confiscating guns. In recent weeks, a number of posts featuring the fabricated quote attributed to Northam have circulated on blog posts and Facebook. "You will give up your guns, if you don't I'll have the National Guard cut your power, your phone lines, and your internet. Then, if you still refuse to comply I'll have you killed," the fabricated quote states, citing Northam, a Democrat, as the source. Northam has responded to the false claim, saying he has no plans to confiscate guns. "Saying things like that we're going to cut off people's electricity — I don't know where things like that come from but they're intimidating, they provoke fear, they're not necessary," he said, speaking at a Jan. 7 news conference where he discussed misinformation circulating around gun control. The fabricated quote has spread widely in recent weeks and in advance of a pro-gun rally expected to draw thousands of activists to the Virginia Capitol on Monday. One Facebook user said the quote was calling for "bloodshed and civil war." For the first time in a generation, Democrats gained full control of Virginia's statehouse in 2019 and are set to pass a number of gun-control measures, including limiting handgun purchases to once a month, imposing universal background checks on gun purchases, and allowing localities to ban guns in public buildings, parks and other areas, the AP reported. One piece of Senate legislation that would have made it a felony to own assault weapons such as AR-15s was killed amid fierce opposition. One of the key issues was that the bill did not include a clause that would have allowed current owners to keep those guns and it was seen as a way of confiscating weapons. Virginia lawmakers have banned guns inside the Capitol and a legislative office building. And due to a gun rights rally planned for Monday, the governor declared a state of emergency, issuing a temporary ban on guns on Capitol grounds as well. He said he did so to prevent the kind of violence that erupted at a 2017 white nationalist rally in Charlottesville, Virginia. Republicans and gun-rights groups have pledged stiff resistance to changes in the state's gun laws. More than 100 counties, cities and towns have declared themselves Second Amendment sanctuaries and vowed to oppose what they call "unconstitutional restrictions" on guns.

CLAIM: The Elizabeth Warren presidential campaign staged or digitally altered a text message exchange of a Bernie Sanders campaign volunteer calling Warren "Pocahontas."

THE FACTS: The image of a text message calling Warren "Pocahontas" sent from the Sanders' campaign text message system by a volunteer was posted to the Twitter account of a pro-Warren fundraising group Monday. The Sanders' campaign confirmed to The Associated Press on Monday that the message was sent to a possible voter through Sanders' messaging system by a rogue campaign volunteer. The screenshot of the campaign text message, addressed to a woman named Caitlin, asked: "Are you in for Bernie?" The person responded by saying they weren't because they were a Warren campaign volunteer. "Pocahontas, huh?" the text from the campaign replied — invoking the racial slur Trump regularly uses to mock Warren, who had previously claimed American Indian heritage. Twitter users falsely claimed that the Warren campaign had either staged the text message exchange or digitally manipulated it. "That's totally fake," one Twitter user wrote in response to the exchange. The Warren campaign has no affiliation with the Twitter account that posted the text message and did not have knowledge of the text message exchange. A Sanders campaign aide said the text was sent from its system, which uses volunteers who can enroll online to send text messages to voters across the country. The Sanders campaign told the AP a rogue volunteer enrolled in the system, sending out the text message. The campaign, which can view

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text messages sent by its volunteers, removed the individual from the program. The phone number listed on the text message has been disconnected.

CLAIM: New York Senate just passed a bill that would “automatically register illegal immigrants to vote.”

THE FACTS: The New York Senate passed legislation in January that would automatically register people to vote when they submit applications to state agencies like the Department of Motor Vehicles. The passage has led to a number of stories and social media posts that wrongly claim the bill would automatically register illegal immigrants to vote. “That claim is 100 percent false,” state Sen. Michael Gianaris, sponsor of the bill, told The Associated Press in a phone call. According to the automatic voter registration legislation, when eligible voters submit an application to an agency like the Department of Health or the Department of Motor Vehicles, that agency will transmit the application to the state board of elections. In New York state, in order to register and vote that person must be a U.S. citizen, at least 18 years old on Election Day, and must be a New York resident for a minimum of 30 days before the election. The bill clearly states that no agency “shall transmit to the state board of elections any application for registration for a person that is, by virtue of data collected by the agency ... demonstrably ineligible to register or pre-register to vote by reason of age or not being a citizen of the United States.” Concern around the issue was heightened because New York lawmakers voted last year to authorize driver’s licenses for immigrants who are living in the country illegally. A mistake in the automatic voter registration legislation that was being considered at the same time contained language that would have inadvertently added them to the voting rolls, despite the fact that it is not legal for them to vote. The AP reported that lawmakers noticed the mistake in the session’s final days last year, the language was corrected and the bill reintroduced this session. VineSight, a technology company that tracks misinformation online, highlighted false posts around the legislation to The Associated Press.

CLAIM: Wombats in parts of Australia stricken by wildfires are not only allowing other animals to take shelter in their deep burrows, but are actively herding fleeing animals into them.

THE FACTS: Wombats do not herd other animals. However, the large furry marsupials have been known to share their burrows with some small animals. As wildfires continue to rage in Australia, social media posts have highlighted the plight of animals threatened by the fires. The posts have also led to some false claims circulating online. Greenpeace New Zealand shared a post on Jan. 9 with a photo of a wombat, stating: “Reports from Australia say that countless small animals have escaped death because wombats, unusually, opted to share their massive complex burrows. With some reports saying that the animals have even been observed exhibiting ‘shepherding behavior.’” The group later corrected their Instagram post to say the shepherding aspect was not accurate, but before the correction was made social media users took screenshots of the post and shared it widely. One tweet with the false information was retweeted more than 72,000 times and received more than 277,000 likes. Wombat experts in Australia said other animals commonly use wombat burrows for shelter and occasional access to resources such as water. “I would describe this as wombats tolerating other species using burrows they dig,” Scott Carver, a senior lecturer in wildlife ecology at the University of Tasmania, told The Associated Press in an email. He said there was no evidence the wombats were “sharing or encouraging other animals” to go into the burrows. Carver, whose research has focused on wombats, said the idea they are herding other animals is likely just a misinterpretation of a wombat following another species into a burrow. Julie Old, associate professor at Western Sydney University, told The Associated Press in an email that wombats have multiple burrows and when they are not using them other animals take advantage. “Wombats are ‘ecological engineers’ because they build burrows, thus providing habitat for a range of other species, assisting in soil turnover etc.,” she said. “They are also the largest burrowing animals.”

This is part of The Associated Press’ ongoing effort to fact-check misinformation that is shared widely online, including work with Facebook to identify and reduce the circulation of false stories on the platform.

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Jury of 7 men, 5 women selected for Weinstein rape trial

By TOM HAYS and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — A jury of seven men and five women was selected Friday for Harvey Weinstein's rape trial after an arduous, two-week process in which scores of people were dismissed because they had already made up their minds about the disgraced Hollywood mogul.

Opening statements are expected Wednesday in the case against the 67-year-old executive who has come to be seen as the archvillain of the #MeToo era.

The once powerful and feared studio boss behind such Oscar winners as "Pulp Fiction" and "Shakespeare in Love" is charged with raping a woman in a New York City hotel room in 2013 and forcibly performing a sex act on another at his apartment in 2006. He has said any sexual activity was consensual. If convicted, he could get life in prison.

During jury selection, prosecutors accused Weinstein's lawyers of systematically trying to keep young women off the panel, though the final gender makeup of the jury turned out to be more closely balanced.

For its part, the defense raised an outcry and demanded a mistrial because one of the jurors is the author of an upcoming novel involving young women dealing with predatory older men. The request was denied, but Weinstein's lawyers continued to claim outside court that the juror had withheld the information on her questionnaire.

"We got the best jury we could get under the circumstances," defense attorney Donna Rotunno told reporters. "I'm obviously not happy with what happened in the end there. I think that was an absolutely ridiculous decision."

The defense said it wasn't specifically trying to exclude young women but didn't want jurors too young to understand the way men and women interacted in the early 1990s.

"That was a different time in New York and on planet Earth," said another Weinstein attorney, Arthur Aidala,

A stooped Weinstein, shuffling out of the courthouse with the use of a walker because of recent back surgery, had no comment when asked his thoughts on jury selection. "Ask Donna!" he said, referring to Rotunno.

Three alternates — one man and two women — were also seated and will sit through the trial and take the place of any jurors who can't make it through to deliberations.

On Day One of jury selection last week, one-third of the first 120 prospective jurors were promptly sent home after Judge James Burke asked if there was anyone who could not be impartial and about 40 hands went up. Each day for nearly a week afterward, dozens of people raised their hands whenever the question was asked of a new batch of potential jurors.

Of the more than 600 people summoned for the case, some marked themselves for disqualification by admitting they knew one of Weinstein's many accusers, had personal experience with sexual abuse or read "Catch and Kill," a book by Ronan Farrow, one of the first reporters to expose the allegations against Weinstein.

Weinstein's lawyers have tried, so far unsuccessfully, to move the trial out New York City, arguing that heavy publicity has turned the case into a "carnival" and that the media hub where celebrities and ordinary people often intersect can't possibly give their client a fair trial. The request is now before a state appeals court.

Cognizant of the media attention and the weight some people are attaching to the case, the judge cautioned potential jurors: "This trial is not a referendum on the #MeToo movement."

Supermodel Gigi Hadid was summoned for jury duty and briefly remained in the running even though she

said she had met the defendant. A man whose wife starred on a show that Weinstein's studio produced said he couldn't be impartial. A woman said she couldn't be impartial because she has a "close friend who had an encounter with the defendant in his hotel room."

Another man was scratched for saying he couldn't be fair-minded because he had often spotted Weinstein in Manhattan's Tribeca neighborhood. "On several occasions I've seen him on the phone screaming at someone," he said.

There was at least one instance of what jury consultants call "stealth jurors" — people eager to serve, especially on a high-profile case, because they hope to make a point or a profit.

On Thursday, the judge threatened to hold a potential juror in contempt of court for asking his followers on Twitter "how a person might hypothetically leverage serving on the jury of a high-profile case to promote their new novel."

Associated Press writer Jennifer Peltz contributed to this report.

Follow Tom Hays at twitter.com/aptomhays and Michael Sisak at twitter.com/mikesisak

Ukrainian president rejects prime minister's resignation

By YURAS KARMANAU Associated Press

KYIV, Ukraine (AP) — Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy rejected his prime minister's offer to resign and asked him to stay on the job Friday after he was caught on tape saying Zelenskiy — a former sitcom star with no previous political experience — knows nothing about the economy.

In a video released by Zelenskiy's office, the president called the situation "unpleasant" but asked Prime Minister Oleksiy Honcharuk and his Cabinet to carry on.

"I decided to give you and your government a chance if you manage to solve important issues that the public worries about," Zelenskiy said as he faced Honcharuk across the table. "It's not a moment when we can afford economic and political destabilization."

He instructed Honcharuk to look into multimillion-dollar bonuses given to executives of the state-controlled gas company and high salaries for Cabinet ministers that angered many in the economically struggling nation, directing the prime minister to report his findings by Feb. 4.

The furor comes at a fraught moment for Zelenskiy, who has found himself in the middle of the impeachment case unfolding against President Donald Trump in Washington. Trump stands accused of withholding nearly \$400 million in military aid to Ukraine to pressure the country's leader to investigate Trump political rival Joe Biden.

In the audio recording that surfaced earlier this week, Honcharuk was heard making what appeared to be disparaging comments about Zelenskiy's understanding of economics. He called Zelenskiy "a layman" in economics and said the president should be better educated about the national currency.

Zelenskiy, 41, is a former comedian whose only political experience before his election last spring consisted of playing a Ukrainian president on TV. He starred in "Servant of the People" as a high school history teacher who is propelled to the highest office after his rant against government corruption goes viral.

In a Facebook post earlier Friday, Honcharuk praised Zelenskiy as "an example of transparency and decency to me" and argued that the recording was manipulated, but announced that he was submitting a letter of resignation "in order to dispel any doubts about our respect and trust for the president."

The offer to step down was subject to approval by the Rada, Ukraine's parliament, which is dominated by Zelenskiy's party. It presented a legal quandary since Ukrainian law prevent the Cabinet's dismissal for a year after it presents its program. Honcharuk did so in September.

Analysts said the dismissal of Honcharuk and his Cabinet would badly damage the president and upset Ukraine's talks with international lenders.

"Zelenskiy fears an internal political crisis and doesn't want problems in talks with Western investors and the International Monetary Fund," said Volodymyr Sidenko, an analyst with the Razumkov Center

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think tank. "Honcharuk's resignation can destroy the idea of the government's unity and cast a doubt on Zelenskiy's ability to control the situation."

Sidenko charged that tycoons unhappy with the recent strengthening of the Ukrainian currency — a move that hurt their business — could be behind the scandal. "Several big oligarchs who own export-oriented businesses were interested in the resignation of Honcharuk's Cabinet," Sidenko said.

Honcharuk said that the recording was a compilation of "fragments of recorded government meetings," and he blamed unidentified "influential groups" for making it look as if he didn't respect the president.

"It is not true," the prime minister insisted.

Zelenskiy demanded an investigation into the source of the recording.

While Zelenskiy is a member of Servant of the People party and Honcharuk is an independent, it was Zelenskiy who proposed him to the parliament as prime minister.

Associated Press writers Daria Litvinova and Vladimir Isachenkov contributed to this report from Moscow.

AP Exclusive: AT&T under pressure to defy Maduro's censors

By JOSHUA GOODMAN Associated Press Writer

MIAMI (AP) — Last April, as a military uprising roiled Venezuela, Nicolás Maduro's socialist government ordered pay TV providers to immediately cease transmission of CNN and the BBC.

DirecTV, which is wholly owned by AT&T, quickly obliged, yanking the two networks off the air as live images of military trucks running over protesters were being broadcast to the world.

Now, pressure is building against the Dallas-based communications giant to stand up to Venezuela's government censors. In December, officials from the State Department met in Washington with executives from AT&T to urge them to help pull the plug on Maduro's propaganda machine, according to five people familiar with the discussion.

The meeting followed months of outreach to AT&T by Venezuela's opposition, according to the five individuals. Under a plan being promoted with the Trump administration, DirecTV, Venezuela's largest pay TV operator, would restore to its lineup a half dozen international news channels that local regulators have banned in recent years, according to the five individuals.

The strategy harkens back to a Cold War playbook of leveraging information to fight anti-U.S. propaganda and undermine authoritarian rule. But instead of covertly beaming U.S.-government produced content into foreign countries as Radio Free Europe did in the former Soviet Union, this proposed effort consists of pressuring a private company to bring back access to private, international news outlets that, until recently, Venezuelans took for granted.

AT&T faces a difficult choice: comply with a Maduro regime that the U.S. government no longer recognizes and has heavily sanctioned, or go along with the opposition's plan and risk seizure of its installations and the loss of its license on which some 700 Venezuelans depend for employment. According to corporate filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission, the company doesn't actually need a physical presence in Venezuela to beam content into the country. It could instead use broadcast centers in Argentina, Brazil or California.

The U.S. officials and opposition operators are concerned that DirecTV is being used to broadcast unfiltered state TV programming by Maduro to attack his opponents, who have no way to respond, according to the five individuals, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because of the politically-sensitive nature of the talks. Of particular concern, they said, is the private network Globovision, which is carried by DirecTV. The channel has been sanctioned by the U.S. Treasury Department and is accused by the opposition of spreading disinformation. Globovision is a customer of the AP.

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo was briefed and expressed initial support for the plans to enroll DirecTV to help undermine Maduro, according to two individuals with knowledge of the discussions.

Planning is in the early stages, the two individuals said, and it's just one of several options under consideration to pressure Maduro, who remains firmly in power even in the face of U.S. sanctions aimed at

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propping up Juan Guaidó, the opposition leader recognized as Venezuela's rightful leader by more than 50 nations.

The two individuals said no decision has yet been made on how much to lean on AT&T, which is pushing back strongly against any initiative that would jeopardize operations in a nation where it has a whopping 44% market share — its largest in the region.

DirecTV Latin America declined to comment.

The move to open up the airwaves would be significant because DirecTV reaches people who are dependent on the government, such as those in the working-class barrios of larger cities and the interior, says David Smilde, from the Washington Office on Latin America, a think tank. These groups don't have other access to outside news, he says.

"This wouldn't pose an immediate threat to Maduro, but it could complicate the longer-term ability of the government to control information," said Smilde, who has lived on and off in Venezuela for more than two decades. "Maduro could conceivably try to confiscate DirecTV equipment from people's homes, but this would be an extraordinarily unpopular move."

A key to Maduro's staying power is so-called communicational hegemony: dozens of government-controlled newspapers, social media accounts and TV channels that have replaced the once highly confrontational private news outlets with around-the-clock coverage of Maduro.

Further widening the information gap, the country's telecommunications regulator, Conatel, since 2017 has ordered pay TV platforms, of which DirecTV is the largest, to eliminate 10 international news channels, from CNN en Espanol to Colombia's NTN24, accusing them of violating the Law on Social Responsibility on Radio and Television. The law seeks to guarantee socially-responsible programming but has been criticized by press freedom groups as a tool for self-censorship due to its ambiguous language and heavy penalties.

When Conatel banished CNN en Espanol in 2017, it accused the network of "direct aggressions that strike against the peace and democratic stability of the Venezuelan people by generating a climate of intolerance." The government also removed the channel that broadcast sessions of the National Assembly after the opposition won control of the legislature in 2015.

Another law passed by the Maduro-controlled constitutional assembly in 2017 threatens up to 20 years in prison for anyone publishing material deemed hateful.

"The pay TV operators aren't the ones giving the orders," said Marianela Balbi, executive director of the Caracas-based Institute for Press and Society, "but they are accomplices in censorship."

International channels broadcast by DirecTV and other service providers had until recently filled a void left by Globovision, the last open-air network critical of the government, which was sold to a businessman linked to Maduro in 2013. Not long after the purchase, the channel softened its anti-government coverage. Globovision's billionaire owner, Raúl Gorrín, has been indicted by federal prosecutors in Miami in connection to an alleged money laundering scheme involving Maduro's stepsons. Gorrín, who was recently added to the Department of Homeland Security's most wanted fugitive list, did not respond to questions from the AP.

As government censorship has intensified, pressure on private broadcast service providers have increased, especially DirecTV, the only one operated by a U.S. company subject to sanctions imposed by the Trump administration.

Last week, Venezuelan social media briefly lit up after Carlos Vecchio, the Guaidó government's envoy in Washington said DirecTV would be "forced" by the U.S. sanctions to remove "treasonous" Globovision from its lineup.

Accompanying Vecchio's tweet was the photo of an order by the Treasury Department giving U.S. companies until Jan. 21 to wind down all operations with Venezuela's largest private TV network.

But in Venezuela, like in the U.S., DirecTV is required to carry several broadcast networks, including Globovision.

Experts said the U.S. government's options for compelling DirecTV to do its bidding in Venezuela are limited.

Peter Kucik, a Washington attorney and former Treasury official specializing in sanctions compliance, said

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that media companies typically enjoy broad authorizations and exemptions from sanctions because it has been longstanding U.S. policy to promote the free flow of information worldwide, including into authoritarian regimes. In the case of DirecTV, its decision to comply with Maduro's orders to remove channels took place prior to the blocking of the country's government.

"It's a complex issue, but in general providing any services to the now blocked Maduro government — including taking actions at its request or direction — could incur significant sanctions risk," said Kucik.

Press freedom groups say censorship is widespread in Venezuela.

A pay TV industry executive told the AP that Conatel has about 30 people who monitor the airwaves around the clock. When they see something of a political nature they don't like, they call the company and urge them to remove the content, sometimes in real time, the executive said. He spoke to the AP on the condition of anonymity because he feared retaliation.

Companies rarely resist, the executive said, fearing it could lead to heavy fines or the arrest of employees, as has happened to companies in other industries that disobey orders. Sometimes security forces are deployed to enforce the orders, he said.

Since Maduro took office in 2013, dozens of newspapers and radio stations have disappeared, leaving outlets that largely mimic the government's line while ignoring such issues as human rights abuses and growing malnutrition. Meanwhile, internet speeds are among the slowest in the world and the government frequently blocks anti-government content.

As a result, Venezuelans haven't joined the cord-cutting wave seen elsewhere and pay TV remains a dominant source of news and information.

But AT&T hasn't made money from its satellite service provider in Venezuela for years, due to strict government controls that keep the price of its packages artificially low — the equivalent of around 15 U.S. cents per month. The situation has become so dire, that DirecTV in 2012 stopped importing set-top boxes, choking its growth. In 2015, it wrote down its assets in the country by \$1.1 billion.

Nonetheless, as the cheapest form of entertainment in a nation ravaged by 2 million percent hyperinflation, its market share remains DirecTV's largest in the world.

Unlike other U.S. companies — General Motors, Kellogg Co. and Kimberly-Clark — that have abandoned Venezuela due to shrinking sales, government threats and the risk of sanctions, AT&T has remained, perhaps biding its time until there's an economic turnaround, or business-friendly government, said the Venezuelan telecommunications executive.

The company may also be committed to its satellite broadcast center, which sits atop a verdant hill overlooking Caracas, the executive said. DirecTV beams about a third of its programming to several parts of South America from this location, according to corporate filings.

The company is wary of being seen as a puppet of U.S. foreign policy and embracing Guaidó, the telecommunications executive said.

One idea being discussed to force its hand is for the National Assembly — which the U.S. and others recognize as Venezuela's only legitimate institution — to pass legislation ordering it to uphold the constitution, which guarantees access to "timely, truthful and impartial information, without censorship," according to two of the people familiar with the project.

The same individuals pointed out that Guaidó last week took a step in that direction by saying he would soon name his own ad-hoc Conatel board to fight "the propaganda of a dictatorship that tries to distort reality."

Some in the U.S. government, however, fear that pushing AT&T too hard could leave it to suspend operations in the country — an outcome nobody wants.

While critical news coverage is hard to come by, other channels offer programming that promotes American values and a view on the world light years from the day-to-day struggles with collapsing infrastructure and food shortage that Venezuelans face. Removing them would isolate the country even more, and drive Venezuelans, especially outside major cities, closer to the government, according to even government opponents.

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Andres Izarra, a former Venezuelan communications minister who also created the state-funded regional network Telesur, agrees that there's a woeful lack of diversity of opinion on television that keeps Venezuelans in the dark.

But he's skeptical that any plan to open up the airwaves would weaken Maduro's grip on power. "This seems to be a very desperate measure, since nothing else has worked, but it won't have any real effect on the politics on the ground," said Izarra, who is now living in exile after breaking with the government. "All it will do is allow Maduro to try and portray himself as a victim of U.S. aggression."

Joshua Goodman on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/APjoshgoodman>

Contact AP's global investigative team at Investigative@ap.org.

Report: Disney dropping the 'Fox' from movie studio names

NEW YORK (AP) — Disney is dropping the word "Fox" from the movie studios it acquired as part of last year's \$71 billion purchase of Fox's entertainment business, according to published reports.

Disney will still run them as separate studios within the company. But trade publication Variety reported that 20th Century Fox will become 20th Century Studios, while Fox Searchlight Pictures will be Searchlight Pictures. Variety said the studios' logos are largely unchanged except for the removal of the Fox name.

Variety said the Fox name created brand confusion with Disney because Fox News and the Fox broadcast network are owned by Rupert Murdoch's Fox Corp., while the movie studios now belong to Disney.

The news outlet said a decision has yet to be made on Disney's Fox television production businesses, 20th Century Fox Television and Fox 21 Television Studio.

Disney representatives did not return messages requesting comment.

Boeing is working on a new software issue on the 737 Max

By DAVID KOENIG AP Airlines Writer

Boeing is working to fix a newly discovered problem with software powering up on the 737 Max, adding to the list of tasks the aircraft maker faces to get the grounded plane back in the air.

Boeing said Friday it has told the Federal Aviation Administration about the issue.

"We are making necessary updates and working with the FAA on submission of this change, and keeping our customers and suppliers informed," Boeing said in a statement. "Our highest priority is ensuring the 737 MAX is safe and meets all regulatory requirements before it returns to service."

A person with knowledge of the situation said the issue concerns software that verifies whether monitors tracking key systems on the plane are working properly.

The monitor check is supposed to happen automatically when the plane or system is powered up, but during a recent review, one of the monitors didn't start up correctly, said the person, who spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss a detail that was not announced publicly.

The issue was discovered during a technical review that normally happens near the end of the software-development process, a sign that Boeing could be close to finishing changes designed to get the plane back in the air.

Boeing is rewriting software that played a role in crashes five months apart in Indonesia and Ethiopia that killed 346 people and led regulators to ground the plane worldwide in March 2019.

Boeing still must finish the software package, conduct one or more demonstration flights with FAA experts on board, and bring in airline pilots to test the changes it is making.

Separately on Friday, Fitch Ratings downgraded Boeing's debt rating. It cited uncertainty about when the Max will fly again, the challenge of catching up on deliveries that were halted last April, rising debt, and risks posed by fines, lawsuits and a damaged reputation.

Boeing Co. shares fell \$7.85, or 2.4%, to close at \$324.15.

Moody's Investors Service, which cut Boeing ratings on Dec. 18, signaled this week that another down-

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grade is possible because of a likely long and costly fight to regain confidence even if the Max returns to service relatively soon.

The Chicago-based company and new CEO David Calhoun are scheduled to report fourth-quarter financial results on Jan. 29. Some analysts, such as Ken Herbert of Canaccord Genuity, expect Boeing to announce a substantial new charge against earnings for the Max crisis.

"Now is the time for new CEO Calhoun to get as much bad news out as possible and to provide the company with some additional buffer heading into 2020," Herbert wrote in a note to clients.

Boeing took a \$5.6 billion charge in last year's second quarter and has disclosed billions more in higher production costs because of the Max.

The grounding has caused Boeing to halt production of the plane, prompted investigations by the Justice Department and Congress, led to lawsuits by the families of passengers in the two crashes, and caused the firing of former CEO Dennis Muilenburg.

The release of internal communications has further damaged Boeing's reputation, revealing that test pilots and other key employees had raised safety concerns about the Max. At least two said they wouldn't put their own families on the plane.

Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Saturday, Jan. 18, the 18th day of 2020. There are 348 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Jan. 18, 1993, the Martin Luther King Jr. holiday was observed in all 50 states for the first time.

On this date:

In 1778, English navigator Captain James Cook reached the present-day Hawaiian Islands, which he named the "Sandwich Islands."

In 1911, the first landing of an aircraft on a ship took place as pilot Eugene B. Ely brought his Curtiss biplane in for a safe landing on the deck of the armored cruiser USS Pennsylvania in San Francisco Harbor.

In 1919, the Paris Peace Conference, held to negotiate peace treaties ending the First World War, opened in Versailles (vehr-SY'), France.

In 1936, Nobel Prize-winning author Rudyard Kipling, 70, died in London.

In 1943, during World War II, Jewish insurgents in the Warsaw Ghetto launched their initial armed resistance against Nazi troops, who eventually succeeded in crushing the rebellion. The Soviets announced they'd broken through the long Nazi siege of Leningrad (it was another year before the siege was fully lifted). A U.S. ban on the sale of pre-sliced bread — aimed at reducing bakeries' demand for metal replacement parts — went into effect.

In 1949, Charles Ponzi, engineer of one of the most spectacular mass swindles in history, died destitute at a hospital in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, at age 66.

In 1957, a trio of B-52's completed the first non-stop, round-the-world flight by jet planes, landing at March Air Force Base in California after more than 45 hours aloft.

In 1967, Albert DeSalvo, who claimed to be the "Boston Strangler," was convicted of armed robbery, assault and sex offenses. (Sentenced to life, DeSalvo was killed in prison in 1973.)

In 1990, Washington D.C. Mayor Marion Barry was arrested in an FBI sting on drug-possession charges (he was later convicted of a misdemeanor).

In 1991, financially strapped Eastern Airlines shut down after more than six decades in business.

In 1996, Lisa Marie Presley-Jackson filed for divorce from Michael Jackson.

In 2005, the world's largest commercial jet, the Airbus A380 "superjumbo" capable of flying up to 800 passengers, was unveiled in Toulouse, France.

Ten years ago: Taliban militants wearing explosive vests launched a brazen daylight assault on the center of Kabul with suicide bombings and gunbattles that paralyzed the Afghan capital for hours. Mehmet Ali