

France, Israel reaffirm alliance

Macron, Netanyahu talk of shared struggle to fight anti-Semitism. — International, 6A



Roger that

Federer wins record eighth Wimbledon with easy victory over Cilic. — Sports, 1C

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ARKANSAS' NEWSPAPER

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In the news

■ **Nino Welcome**, a 7-year-old from Springfield, Mo., who has a rare disability that limits his mobility, won't be able to ride in the 1970 Ford Mustang that his grandfather restored and gave to him, after, police said, a vandal opened a window and tossed in some fireworks, torching the vehicle.

■ **Sarah Cummins**, a 25-year-old Purdue University pharmacy student who was left with a nonrefundable contract for the Ritz Charles in Carmel, Ind., and a plated dinner for 170 guests after she and her fiance called off their wedding, decided to turn the event into a dinner party for the homeless.

■ **Anne Bentley**, a curator at the Massachusetts Historical Society, said a sword belonging to Col. Robert Gould Shaw, the white commanding officer of the first all-black regiment raised in the North during the Civil War, will go on display at the society after it was found in a distant relative's attic.

■ **Anthony Booth Armer**, 28, was sentenced to one day in jail, plus probation and community service, after he pleaded guilty to trespassing charges related to a series of videos of his death-defying leaps off buildings and cliffs in Southern California.

■ **Joji Crisostomo**, a district minister for Iglesia Ni Cristo, said the Filipino church doesn't have final plans for the 62-acre abandoned village it bought in East Haddam, Conn., for \$1.85 million, the second ghost town the church has bought, after its 2011 purchase of Scenic, S.D.

■ **Bryan Gurney**, the Ramsey, N.J., police chief, said a hive of aggressive bees, which put a beekeeper and his wife in the hospital and prompted officials to warn people away from the area, had been moved to a farm.

■ **Lynda Waggoner**, an official with the group that runs Frank Lloyd Wright's Falling-water house in Pennsylvania, said *Mother and Child*, a large bronze statue by Jacques Lipchitz, was toppled when the creek under the building "rose to a deluge."

■ **Aaron Tucker**, a former inmate who served nearly two years in prison on a weapons charge, missed a job interview when he got off a bus to help a driver who had been hurt in a car crash in Westport, Conn., but he said he has since gotten other job offers.

■ **Rashada Hurley** and Timothy Lowe face charges including kidnapping and sexual battery, accused of beating and kidnapping a woman from a supermarket parking lot in Hialeah, Fla., then taking her to a motel and raping her while on their honeymoon, authorities said.

Wildfires strike Italy



AP/ROBERTA FILIPPINI

Wildfires flare up Sunday in the Padule del Chiarone area, near the central Italian town of Capalbio, where a camping site was evacuated as a precaution.

Joint training in Romania



AP/ANDREEA ALEXANDRU

Romanian soldiers take part in a joint exercise with U.S. troops on Sunday in Bordusani, Romania. The operation was part of U.S.-led military maneuvers in Eastern Europe involving NATO and partner countries.

Digital team's role questioned

Senator wants look at Trump campaign efforts, fake news

COMPILED BY
DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

The top Democrat on the Senate Intelligence Committee called for more investigation into the digital activities of Donald Trump's campaign, over concerns about Russian-directed misinformation efforts to influence the presidential election.

Trump's lawyer, speaking on several Sunday news shows, defended him in light of last week's developments

in the Russia investigations.

Sen. Mark Warner, D-Va., said he wants to look into the activities of Cambridge Analytica, a data firm that advised Trump's campaign, as well as Trump's digital efforts during the election because of the way false election stories about Hillary Clinton were circulated and targeted online.

"The ability to manipulate these search engines and some of these social media platforms is real; it's out

there," Warner said Sunday on CNN's *State of the Union*. "We need information from the companies, as well as we need to look into the activities of some of the Trump digital campaign activities."

Separately, on CBS' *Face the Nation*, Warner said there were "trolls," or paid individuals who worked for Russian services, who tried to interfere in the election and disseminate fake news.

The comments come as
See **TRUMP**, Page 5A

Budget office puts off scoring of health bill

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FROM WIRE REPORTS

WASHINGTON — Adding to uncertainty over the fate of the Senate health care bill, the Congressional Budget Office indicated Sunday that it no longer expects to release its analysis today on the estimated cost and scope of insurance coverage under the latest GOP bill.

The Senate Budget Committee announced Sunday that the release had been postponed. The committee

did not give an explanation or say when the analysis was expected, adding that it would provide further information and updates as appropriate.

The announcement came hours after Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell late Saturday put off plans to hold a vote on the bill this week, after Republican Sen. John McCain said he would be at home in Arizona recovering from surgery to remove a blood clot from above his left eye. McCain's absence will leave Republicans with-

out the votes necessary to advance the legislation.

The No. 2 Senate GOP leader, John Cornyn of Texas, said he still expected the Senate to move quickly, holding a vote as soon as McCain returns. But amid growing public unease over the bill, some Republicans suggested the delay will make McConnell's task of winning enough support even harder.

Conservative critics will now have more time to mobilize, said Sen. Rand Paul, See **HEALTH**, Page 2A

Fentanyl abuse on the upswing in state, nation

Agencies examine policies for handling of potent drug

SCOTT CARROLL
AND ERIC BESSON
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

A man in a white pickup pulled up to CHI St. Vincent Infirmary in Little Rock the morning of April 11, pushed two limp bodies out of the vehicle and drove away.

Nurses went outside and found Madeline Tate and a 22-year-old friend lying on the ground. The two were blue in the face and struggling to breathe. They were dying.

Nurses found a syringe and a spoon in the friend's pocket and determined that he and Tate had overdosed. They quickly moved Tate, 20, and her friend to the emergency room and injected them with naloxone, an anti-opioid medicine used to reverse the effects of an overdose.

The normally fast-acting antidote took effect slowly. But their heart rates stabilized and their breathing returned to normal.

Their lives had been saved.

Tate and her friend later told doctors that they had injected themselves with two drugs. The first was heroin.

The second was fentanyl, a synthetic painkiller that is 50 to 100 times stronger than morphine.

The overdoses, as detailed in a police report and recalled by Tate and her family, were among a rising number across the country involving fentanyl and its powerful analogs.

Law enforcement encounters with fentanyl spiked from roughly 1,000 in 2013 to 14,400 in 2015, according to the latest report from the National Forensic Laboratory Information System, a program of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration that collects information from forensic labs.

Fentanyl is often prescribed as a patch or spray to treat chronic pain, but See **FENTANYL**, Page 3A

U.S. student in Iran sentenced on spying

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DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

TEHRAN, Iran — A U.S. student from Princeton University was arrested in Iran and sentenced to 10 years in prison on charges he was spying for the United States, an Iranian judiciary official

said Sunday.

In the same news briefing, the Iranian judiciary said President Hassan Rouhani's brother has been detained over allegations of financial misconduct, authorities said Sunday.

News of the detentions
See **IRAN**, Page 5A

Venezuelans at polls reject charter's rewrite

Leaders unmoved by symbolic vote

COMPILED BY
DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE STAFF
FROM WIRE REPORTS

CARACAS, Venezuela — Hundreds of thousands of Venezuelans lined up across the country and in expatriate communities around the world Sunday to vote in a symbolic rejection of President Nicolas Maduro's plan to rewrite the constitution.

A 61-year-old woman was killed and four people were wounded in shooting that broke out after government supporters on motorcycles swarmed an opposition polling site at a church in the traditionally pro-government Catia neighborhood of

western Caracas.

The opposition mayor of the Caracas borough of Sucre, Carlos Ocariz, said pro-government paramilitary groups attacked voters outside Our Lady of Carmen Church around 3 p.m. The chief prosecutor's office said Xiomara Soledad Scott, a nurse, was killed and four others were wounded in the incident.

Video posted to social media showed large crowds outside the church, then hundreds of people running in panic as motorcycle-riding men zoomed past and shots rang out.

See **CHARTER**, Page 3A



AP/ARIANA CUBILLAS

People line up to cast their ballots at a polling station in Caracas, Venezuela, during a symbolic referendum against rewriting the nation's constitution.

WEATHER

LITTLE ROCK
Today Sunny.
High Lower 90s. East winds 5 mph.
Tonight Mostly clear.
Low Lower 70s. South winds 5 mph.



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Fentanyl

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black-market versions of the drug, manufactured in China and Mexico, are being used to replace or amplify heroin, according to a DEA report.

“Due to the high potency of fentanyl and other synthetic opioids, transnational criminal organizations across the globe are competing for the U.S. market,” the report says.

That market is easily accessible. Fentanyl can be purchased online, in a variety of forms that include powders, pills and liquids, from sellers overseas.

It’s acquired through theft, as well. In Little Rock, police have fielded numerous reports of prescription fentanyl vanishing from nursing homes, pharmacies and medicine cabinets.

Fentanyl is not the scourge in Arkansas that it is in other states — Kentucky authorities connected it to nearly half the overdose deaths in the state last year — but the potent synthetic painkiller is showing up more frequently in the Natural State.

The Arkansas Crime Laboratory identified 56 positive samples of fentanyl through the first three months of 2017, commonly as an off-white powder or as a compound in counterfeit pills, said Felisia Lackey, the lab’s chief forensic chemist. That compares with 66 positive samples in 2016, 85 the previous year and 12 in 2014.

The relatively small number of fentanyl cases in Arkansas has still been enough to gain the attention of hospitals, ambulance services and law enforcement agencies.

Metropolitan Emergency Medical Services of Little Rock, the largest ambulance service in the state, and UAMS Medical Center, the largest hospital system in the state, met in June to discuss developing interagency guidelines on treating fentanyl overdoses.

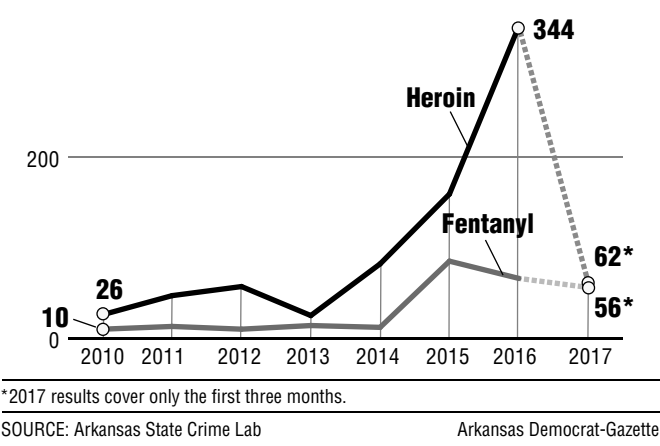
MEMS Executive Director Jon Swanson said there are concerns over whether naloxone, the anti-opioid medicine, is strong enough to revive someone who has overdosed on fentanyl or carfentanil, the drug’s more powerful cousin.

Swanson said there are also concerns for medics and other first responders. Toxicologists say exposure to the smallest amounts of fentanyl through inhalation can be deadly. In larger amounts, skin contact can be deadly.

“One of the concerns that we would have is recognizing the

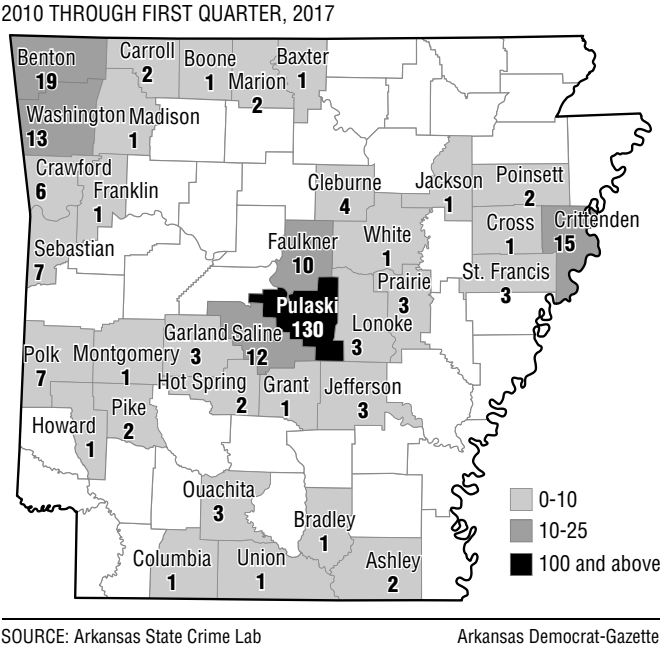
Rise in fentanyl, heroin

Police across Arkansas have increasingly found heroin and the powerful synthetic opioid fentanyl, according to lab test results.



Fentanyl seizures

Since 2010, law enforcement has most frequently found fentanyl in Pulaski County.



presence of the stuff,” Swanson said. “It might not be apparent to us.”

UAMS spokesman Leslie Young said the hospital has not seen a notable increase in fentanyl-related cases but is working to address safety concerns associated with the drug.

The hospital has posted fliers to warn staff members about carfentanil and the “significant threat of overdose for anyone coming in contact with this drug.” The fliers, which show a lump of powdered carfentanil, urge staff members to immediately contact a supervisor, police or the Occupational Health and Safety Administration if they encounter the drug.

“We’re taking a proactive approach in light of news around the country,” Young said.

Little Rock police are also examining how to handle fentanyl

2012, doctors in the state wrote 116 painkiller prescriptions for every 100 people, according to the IMS Health National Prescription Audit. That ranked as the eighth-highest rate in the nation.

In 2015, doctors prescribed enough hydrocodone to supply every Arkansan with 37 pills for the year, according to an Arkansas Prescription Monitoring Program report.

Lane said that when some people build a tolerance to prescription painkillers, it becomes cheaper to use heroin, which police across central Arkansas have found more regularly, and in larger quantities, in recent years. State Crime Lab data show positive heroin tests have increased from 82 in 2014 to 159 a year later and 344 in 2016.

Lane said the “circle of addiction” then leads to an even stronger, cheaper substance — fentanyl.

That’s how it happened for Madeline Tate. Her parents, Tom and Hope Hankins, said she started abusing prescription pills as a teenager and eventually moved on to harder and cheaper drugs, including meth and heroin.

Tate said that the morning of April 11, the day she was left clinging to life outside CHI St. Vincent Infirmary, she and the 22-year-old friend had been going through heroin withdrawal.

After countless phone calls in search of the drug, they finally found a seller at a house on Colonel Glenn Road in Little Rock. They bought a bag of heroin and a bag of fentanyl, which Tate said she and her friends thought of as “the good stuff.”

“I just knew that if you were sick, it would make you feel better,” she said.

They combined the heroin with small amounts of fentanyl and shot up with Tate’s boyfriend in his pickup. Almost immediately, Tate knew something was wrong. Her boyfriend froze up. She looked at her friend in the backseat and saw he’d also gone stiff.

“And then I started to go out,” Tate said. “Looking in the rear-view mirror, that’s the last thing I remember.”

Tate awoke in a hospital bed. Doctors told her she was lucky. They said that if her boyfriend had waited just minutes longer to dump her and the friend outside the hospital, she would have died.

Tate said in a phone interview from a drug rehabilitation center that her fentanyl overdose was a wake-up call.

“We didn’t realize how strong it really was,” she said.

Opioid epidemic strikes home for Arkansas family

Parents cope with daughter’s abuse of heroin and fentanyl

SCOTT CARROLL
ARKANSAS DEMOCRAT-GAZETTE

Hope Hankins was driving to work the morning of April 11 when she got a phone call from her daughter’s boyfriend.

“She’s done it again,” he told her.

Hankins’ daughter, Madeline Tate, had overdosed on a combination of heroin and fentanyl. It was her third overdose involving heroin since 2015.

Hankins tearfully recalled waiting at CHI St. Vincent Infirmary for doctors to let her see Tate. She remembers being grateful that her 20-year-old daughter survived. But she also remembers being angry.

Hankins said she and her husband Tom had sought help for Tate for years. She’d had four stints at drug rehabilitation centers. They had arranged for court-ordered drug testing. They had even hired a private investigator to keep tabs on Tate.

to Tate’s leg bone to access her venous system, a painful procedure known as intraosseous infusion.

Her family has also felt a physical toll from her addiction. Hope Hankins said her constant stress and worrying has increased her blood pressure and caused her hair to fall out in clumps. She said she’s also sought treatment for anxiety attacks.

There’s also crying and arguments between her and her husband. The fights come from their frustration, their helplessness over how to help their daughter.

“It’s like a hell I’d never wish my enemy to have to live in,” Hope Hankins said.

The two are optimistic about Tate’s chances for sobriety this time. She’s at a 90-day treatment center in Mississippi, the longest program she’s tried. Hope Hankins visited a few weeks ago and said there was a “light and brightness” in her daughter’s eyes that she hadn’t seen in years.

“You think that drug addiction and heroin addiction is so far away from you. It’s not. It’s right here.”

— Hope Hankins

“We don’t know if this is the end or not,” Tom Hankins said. “But we pray to God it is.”

In Arkansas, 392 people died from drug overdoses in 2015, a rate of 13.8 people per 100,000, according to the latest figures from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“You think that drug addiction and heroin addiction is so far away from you,” Hope Hankins said. “It’s not. It’s right here.”

Information for this article was contributed by Eric Besson of the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette

Charter

● Continued from Page 1A

Maduro, whose South American nation has been battered by shortages and anti-government protests, made no mention of the incident in comments on state television shortly after the official close of opposition polls at 4 p.m., but he called for an end to violence that he blamed on the opposition.

“I’m calling on the opposition to return to peace, to respect for the constitution, to sit and talk,” Maduro said. “Let’s start a new round of talks, of dialogue for peace.”

Voting was extended across parts of the country Sunday as the opposition said it had been overwhelmed by the crowds, and officials said they believed that several million people had cast ballots to reject the government’s plans.

The opposition called supporters to 2,000 sites across the country to fill out ballots featuring three yes-or-no questions: Do they reject the constitutional assembly? Do they want the armed forces to back congress? Do they support the formation of a government comprised both of Maduro backers and opponents?

While no official results or estimates of voter turnout were available by early evening in Venezuela, opposition alliance members celebrated the strong display of support, with opposition deputy Juan Andres Mejia saying that millions of people have cast votes, “without a doubt,” according to a post on this Twitter account.



AP/ARIANA CUBILLOS

Volunteers count ballots after a polling station closed during a symbolic referendum Sunday in Caracas, Venezuela.

polling stations in a rehearsal for a July 30 vote to elect members of the constituent assembly that will retool Venezuela’s 1999 constitution.

Cilia Flores, Maduro’s wife and a candidate for the assembly, said the strong government turnout was proof of the people’s “love” for “President Nicolas Maduro and the revolution.”

“The National Constituent Assembly is peace,” she said. “Change is coming July 30 with the constituent, and it fills us with much more determination.”

The opposition says that vote has been structured to pack the assembly with government supporters and allow Maduro to eliminate the few remaining checks on his power, creating a Cuba-style system dominated by his Socialist Party.

The opposition instead hoped that its referendum would send a message to the ruling party.

“If I was one of Nicolas Maduro’s advisers, I would tell him to look at what’s happening all over the country [and] stop trying to impose this constituent on the people,” said Henrique Capriles, the opposition governor of Miranda state. “What Maduro should do in the next hours is cancel the fraudulent constituent.”

The success of the opposition’s symbolic referendum will be measured by how many millions participate. Democratic Unity, a coalition of about 20 opposition parties, printed 14 million ballots for voters inside and outside the country of 31 million people. Few expected turnout to be that high, but analysts said participation by more than 8 million people would significantly add to pressure on the government.

Participation appeared to be high, with large crowds of people lining up at tables in churches and parks across the capital. Ballots were still being counted late Sunday.

“Since we opened at 7 a.m., the line hasn’t let up,” said Pedro Garcia, organizer of a voting station filled with hundreds of people in the south Caracas neighborhood of El Valle, a stronghold of government support that has been weakening in recent years.

Juan Madriz, a 45-year-old insurance company employee, said he didn’t object to rewriting the constitution per se, but he rejected Maduro’s decision to do so without putting that decision to a vote, as his predecessor Hugo Chavez did.

“If they’re forcing us, it isn’t democracy,” Madriz

said.

Isabel Santander, a 67-year-old retired auditor, said she was voting against the constitutional assembly as a protest against the country’s economic collapse.

“I signed because there’s no medicine, no food, no security,” she said. “There’s no separation of powers, no freedom of expression.”

Maduro and the military dominate most state institutions, but the opposition controls the congress and holds three of 23 governorships. The country’s chief prosecutor has recently broken with the ruling party.

The government calls the opposition vote a manipulation aimed at destabilizing the country, and it has been urging supporters to participate in the constitutional assembly, which it calls a way of restoring peace to Venezuela.

“Some comrades and brothers may be worn out by the right’s great media campaign. Now they’ve invented this July 16 thing to put the burden on their own people and evade their responsibility,” Socialist Party Vice President Diosdado Cabello said Saturday. “That’s how the right is, manipulative, fooling their own people.”

For the government-backed rehearsal, hundreds of people lined up outside a school in El Valle guarded by heavily armed soldiers and militiamen, waiting quietly to place a practice vote that also served as a show of support for the government.

“Our president Chavez supported the poor, the people,” said Yveth Melendez, a 41-year-old homemaker. “Today we’re following his legacy, with President Nicolas Maduro. ... The constitutional assembly is something that benefits the people.”

Polls show that barely 20 percent of Venezuelans favor rewriting the Chavez’s 1999 constitution — about the same level of support as for Maduro.

Opponents of Venezuela’s government blame it for turning one of the region’s

most prosperous countries into an economic basket case with a shrinking economy, soaring inflation and widespread shortages. The government blames the crisis on an economic war waged by its opponents and outside backers. The petroleum-rich nation has been hit hard by falling world oil prices.

Clashes between protesters and police have left at least 93 people dead, 1,500 wounded and hundreds behind bars.

FOOD SCARCE

Though it was once the richest country in South America, food prices in Venezuela have skyrocketed in recent years, forcing many people to scavenge for things to eat.

The cost of basic groceries is now about five times the minimum wage.

On July 1, the monthly minimum wage was raised for the third time this year, to help control inflation. Still, the increase does little to help struggling families, and the country’s inflation rate could reach 720 percent this year, according to the International Monetary Fund.

Since April, protesters have taken to the streets, demanding international food aid and early presidential elections.

Chavez, who was elected in 1998, became widely popular for his promise to share the country’s oil wealth with the poor and to guarantee food security. To fund his “21st Century Socialism” agenda, he relied on oil revenue, which accounted for 93 percent of exports in 2008.

The government imported goods and sold them at subsidized prices to make food affordable to the country’s poor.

But when oil prices collapsed, government spending became unsustainable. By late 2014, oil money had stopped flowing in. Venezuela had saved little from the oil price boom of the 2000s. Under Maduro, the country slashed imports and used thinning reserves to pay its foreign debt and avoid default. As a result, food and medicine became scarce.

And compounding the problem, a series of government actions paralyzed local food production. For years, oil revenue had enabled the government to import most consumer goods. Meanwhile, the government increased regulations, stifling domestic production. And when the country cut imports, weakened local producers could not keep up with the demand.

Still, the government blames its opposition and foreign enemies for the food scarcity, accusing private companies of intentionally cutting back production in an attempt to destabilize the country.

As a result, Venezuelans have turned to expensive imports or to the black market. For many people, staples such as eggs and rice have become unaffordable.

Information for this article was contributed by Michael Weissenstein and Fabiola Sanchez of The Associated Press; by Carolina Millan, Noris Soto, Fabiola Zerpa and Nathan Crooks of Bloomberg News; by Mercy Benzaquen and Sergio Pecanha of The New York Times; and by Cody Weddle and Jim Wyss of the Miami Herald.

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