



A Red Cross Point of Distribution Center during this past Saturday with residents lining up to receive emergency supplies. The PODs are set up to serve more than one village — see today's Update on storm responses, which includes reports of some residents getting angry and taking it out on Red Cross Emergency workers, when they found out their names were not on the list.

[Photo: THA]

ONLINE @ SAMOANEWS.COM

DAILY CIRCULATION 7,000

UPDATE: Police called to bring peace & order at one Am Red Cross distribution point

SOME BECOME ANGRY AT RED CROSS VOLUNTEERS WHEN TOLD THEY ARE "NOT ON THE LIST"

by Samoa News staff

More people are complaining that their homes, which have been damaged or destroyed by Tropical Storm Gita, have yet to be assessed by the government, causing some to lash out at American Red Cross workers, who were on hand over the weekend, as they began to distribute their emergency supplies to impacted victims.

At two locations — or points of distribution (POD) — some residents took their anger out on Red Cross volunteers complaining about their homes that suffered major damages not being assessed at all or correctly, according to reports received by Samoa News. Cops were called in at one Red Cross point of distribution when residents got a bit aggressive when they found out that their names were not on the Red Cross Distribution lists. No arrests were made, sources say. Samoa News was told residents made angry comments, claiming no assessors came to their houses to assess any damages or to make sure they were added to a list. These residents were told by the Red Cross Volunteers to please call E.O.C. @ 699-3800 for additional help or to have their houses re-evaluated when some complained as being listed as minor damages when they suffered heavy damages because of Tropical Storm Gita. ASG's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) in its post-storm bulletin as of 6 p.m last Saturday, noted that it's "VERY IMPORTANT" for the public to contact their pulenu'u at the Office of Samoan Affairs at 633-5201 or call EOC at 699-3800 if your homes suffered damages from the storm and an assessment has not been completed. Samoa News reported last Friday that the joint preliminary damage assessment

(Continued on page 11)

Weather service office says they are taking the lessons learned from Gita to heart

GENERATOR MAINTENANCE A MUST IS ONE OF THE LESSONS...

by Ausage Fausia

Samoa News Reporter

Elinor Lutu-McMoore, Meteorologist in-Charge at the Weather Service Office (WSO) in Tafuna said that her office learned a lot from Tropical Storm Gita, and this will help to improve their service to the public in the future.

"Tropical Cyclone Gita taught us many lessons and I believe that from those good lessons, our team will continue to improve our service in the future and to make sure, the public will be well informed," Lutu-McMoore said, during an interview with Samoa News last week.

Of particular importance was the fact that the local weather service communications were knocked out during Gita, when the power and communications lines went down at the airport, where the NSO is located.

Service was not restored until much later — after the worse of Gita and the monsoon trough had moved away from American Samoa.

This resulted in local radio stations and others seeking information on the storm/ cyclone to look to Samoa and casters, whose communication systems were still up and transmitting.

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(Continued on page 10)





Red Cross Volunteers hard at work at some of the Red Cross Point of distribution centers at the West side of the island over the weekend. At some PODs, frustrated residents, verbally abused volunteers, after standing in long lines only to find out that their names were not on the list. Residents were given phone numbers instead of supplies and told to contact the EOC to have their homes assessed and put on a list for emergency supplies.

[Photo: THA]



COURT BRIEFS

by Ausage Fausia
Samoa News Reporter

LUATUA FILISOUAIGA TA'AFUA

The Trial Division of the High Court of American Samoa has continued to July 23 the hearing on the case of former Executive Director of the American Samoa Government Retirement Fund, after the court granted the government's motion for another continuance, so that they can finalize their investigation, and also to give enough time to the defense to prepare.

Luatua Filisouaiga Ta'afua's case was scheduled last week for a motion to continue the trial date. Prosecuting the case was Robert Morris, while Gwen Tauiliili-Langkilde represented the defendant, who was not present when his case was called.

Tauiliili-Langkilde told the court that on November of last year, she filed a motion to compel the government to produce discovery and documents relating to the charges against her client.

And up until last week she had not received all the requested information she's looking for from the government, nor the Department of Public Safety. She told the court that the defense really needs the information to prepare for trial and without it, they can't present their case during trial.

Morris on the other hand told

the court that he understands the defense's argument and it's something he has been working so hard towards. He said that he spoke with police officers who are handling the case and informed them about the documents the defense attorney is asking for.

Morris then asked the court for another continuance, because the government's key witness is off-island and would not be available during the trial date that has been set.

After hearing arguments from both side, Acting Associate Justice Elvis Patea immediately granted the government's motion for another continuance, not only to give them time to await their key witness who is off island, but also to give more time for the defense to prepare for trial

The court is hoping that the matters will be resolved soon for this case, which has dragged on for too long.

Luatua, who is out on bond was charged in April of 2016 with 21 counts for allegedly misappropriating more than \$100,000 of Retirement Fund money, while he was director of the government pension plan.

TIMATA NAEA

The first of the inmates charged for escaping confinement last week has waived his rights to a preliminary examination (PX) in District Court.

Timata Naea waived his PX last Friday and his attorney, Deputy Public Defender Ryan Anderson told the court Naea wants his case bound over to the High Court.

He is scheduled to appear in High Court this morning at 9 a.m. for his arraignment.

He's being charged with escape from confinement, a felony, punishable for an imprisonment term of not more than 5 years, and or a fine of up to \$5,000, or both.

Besides this new case, Naea has a pending case in the High Court, where he's being charged with one count of stealing and one count of burglary.

WILSON TAVITA

A man with two bench warrants issued by the District Court for failure to appear for two separate cases was arrested for alleged possession of methamphetamine last Wednesday, when the vehicle he was driving was stopped by detectives from the DPS Vice and Narcotics Unit in front of a store in Tafuna.

Wilson Tavita is charged with two counts of unlawful possession of a controlled sub-

stance, to wit; methamphetamine — a felony — punishable by a term of imprisonment of not less than five or more than ten years, and a fine of not less than \$5,000 or more than \$20,000, or both.

Tavita made his initial appearance before District Court Judge Fiti Sunia last week. He is being represented by Assistant Public Defender Ryan Nelson while prosecuting the case is Assistant Attorney General, Gillian Sadler.

According to the government's case, it was the morning of Feb. 19, 2018 a police officer saw the defendant's vehicle pulling into the parking lot of a store in Nu'uuli.

The detective recognized Tavita as the driver of the vehicle, parked his police unit close to the rear of the defendant's vehicle, before stepping outside to make contact with him, where he notified Tavita of the bench warrants.

The defendant was then patted down for weapons and items were removed from his pants' pockets, which were placed on the police vehicle. During the pat down, another police officer observed a pouch, which held a glass pipe that containing a crystalline substance believed to be methamphetamine.

Other items pulled out from the defendant's pocket included a pack of cigarettes, a cell phone, and \$25.

His vehicle was searched for contraband on the scene, and police discovered drug paraphernalia including cut up straws.

Tavita and another man who was inside the vehicle when it was pulled over, were then transported to the Tafuna Sub-station.

When questioned by police, the defendant said he understood his rights and he refused to make a statement.

While preparing a property report on the evidence found on the defendant, the investigating officer found a cut up straw about an inch long, with both sides sealed, containing a crystalline substance inside the plastic cover of cigarettes. The substance tested positive for methamphetamine.

When confronted by police about the cut-up straw, Tavita said, "I forgot I still had that in my cigarettes."

The defendant was remanded into custody after his initial appearance last week, unable to post his \$10,000 surety bond. He's scheduled to appear in District Court later on this week for his PX hearing.



American Samoa Government
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH



PUBLIC NOTICE

The American Samoa Department of Health Early Intervention Program "Helping Hands" would like to inform the public that the Annual State Application under Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act as amended in 2004 for Federal Fiscal Year 2018 is available for public comment for a period of 60 days.

A copy of the document is available to review at the DOH Helping Hands Office located in the Lumana'i building in Fagatogo.

Please call the DOH Helping Hands office at 633-8553 if you have any questions regarding this public notice.

Signed,

Ruth Te'o, DOH Part C Coordinator

A true joint enforcement effort, says Lolo of revised agreement with StarKist and Feds

NOW AWAITING COURT DECISION TO PROPOSED REVISED CONSENT DECREE

by Fili Sagapolutele
Samoa News Correspondent

Gov. Lolo Matalasi Moliga has expressed appreciation to the US Justice Department for inclusion of American Samoa into the amended lawsuit and proposed revised consent decree against StarKist Co. and StarKist Samoa for violating environmental laws in territorial ways.

“The revised consent decree exemplifies what can happen when there is open communication and honest cooperation between federal and local governments on regulatory enforcement matters,” Lolo wrote in his Jan. 25th comment letter to the USDOJ, which included the governor’s letter in its filings on Feb. 12th supporting the federal court’s approval of the ‘consent decree’ reached between the feds, ASG and defendants.

“Too many times, federal enforcement efforts ignore local governments and the impact of their decisions on the local communities who end up bearing the brunt of the enforcement action,” Lolo points out.

The governor noted that although the case — before the federal court in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania — started out as a federal government enforcement only, American Samoa was added to the case and the “revised agreement reflects a true joint enforcement effort.”

The initial lawsuit and consent decree filed last September with the court prompted Lolo’s opposition saying in his Oct. 17, 2017 letter that the decree was “both improper and inadequate” as American Samoa would get nothing out of the \$6.3 million in civil penalties imposed on the defendants.

Under the initial decree, which was also opposed by Congresswoman Aumua Amata, American Samoa would receive only \$88,000 in emergency equipment to local first responders for chemical releases.

However, the proposed

revised degree, which gives American Samoa \$2.6 million in civil penalty and the rest to the federal government, is endorsed by Aumua and Lolo. Both have requested the court’s approval. Money for emergency equipment also remains intact in the revised decree.

In his Jan. 25th letter, the governor praised the hard work of ASG attorneys, who were given short notice and worked extremely hard to get up to speed with the case working closely with federal attorneys to expedite this matter. The governor also acknowledged the “work and professionalism” displayed by attorneys at USDOJ and US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA).

“It was made known to me that USDOJ and USEPA listened intently to our input and responded accordingly,” Lolo explained. “This reflected in the release of a Samoan translation of the case summary, the new allocation of penalty fines and our inclusion in the follow-up compliance monitoring.”

“It is my hope that this case will serve as an example of cooperating in future enforcement matters,” said Lolo, noting that funds from the settlement “will be used to protect our natural treasurers and to help deter future pollution.”

In conclusion, Lolo says American Samoa looks forward to “continuing this great working relationship with USDOJ and USEPA on this matter and on any future matters.”

Lolo had long complained about decisions made at the federal level impacting American Samoa without local input from territorial leaders and the community.

USDOJ has asked the federal court to approve the consent decree, which is supported by the federal government, American Samoa and StarKist. It’s unclear as to when the court will make a final decision.



Performers at the start of last Thursday night’s free Culture Crew and Island Rock concert at the Suigaula o le Atuvasa at Utulei beach, bringing the love of music to the island — a special concert held for people impacted during the Feb. 9 Tropical Storm Gita.

Tui Letuli, seen on the left, is a talented Pacifika Samoan musician and organizer, who recently returned home to American Samoa.

[photo: Leua Aiono Frost]



AMERICAN SAMOA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT “PESTICIDE APPLICATOR TRAINING”

ASCC Land Grant Program will be conducting a Pesticide Applicator Safety training for those who handle farm chemicals. If you are using farm pesticides, or you are planning to use chemicals in the near future, this is a good opportunity for you to attend this important training. The training schedule is as follows:

Date: February 26-March 2, 2018
Time: 12:00 noon - 4:00 p.m.
Place: ASCC Land Grant Training Room

Registration is FREE. To confirm your participation for this training, please call Joyce or Helen at 699-1575/2019.

Thank You.

FAAALIGA FA’ALAU’ITELE

“A’oa’oga mo i lātou o lo’o fa’aaogāina vailā’au o’ona”

‘O le a faia se a’oa’oga mo i latou o lo’o fa’aaogā vailā’au o’ona i fa’atoaga. A fai o lo’o ‘ē fa’aaogā vailā’au o’ona, po o ‘ē faamoemoe fo’i e te fa’aaogā i se taimi o i luma, o lou avanoa lelei leni e te ‘auai ai i leni a’oa’oga tāua. ‘O taimi la nei mo leni vasega:

Aso: Fepuari 26 - Mati 2, 2018
Taimi: 12:00 - 4:00 i le afiafi
Nofoaga e fai ai: Potu mo A’oa’oga, a le Vaega o Laufanua ma Atina’e a le Kolisi Tu’u Faatasi ma Alaalafaga a Amerika Samoa

‘E leai se totogi o le resitala. A fai e te fia ‘auai i leni a’oa’oga, fa’amolemole ia fa’afeso’ota’i mai Joyce po o Helen i le telefoni 699-1575/2019.

Fa’afetai.

A 13-year-old dies after falling from a cliff in French Alps

PARIS (AP) — French authorities say a 13-year-old boy has died after falling from a cliff in the French Alps while his 10-year-old brother survived.

The local gendarmerie said overnight searches by about 30 police and mountain rescue officers led to discovering the children early Sunday at the foot of a 150-meter (nearly 500-foot)

cliff in a forest at the Avoriaz ski resort.

Local media reported the children’s father called police Saturday afternoon after the brothers, who were skiing alone, failed to show up. The younger brother has been taken to the Thonon-les-Bains hospital. Police say his condition is not life-threatening.



Pacific Island News in Brief

Compiled by Samoa News staff

CUSTOMARY LANDS SAFE & SECURED SAYS SLRC CHIEF

The Lands and Titles Registration Act 2008 “expressly says ‘alienation of customary land is prohibited,’” Chief Executive of the Samoan Law Reform Commission, (SLRC) Telei’ai Lagipoiva Dr. Lalotoa Mulitalo Seumanutafa has reassured an international conference in New Zealand.

Invited to speak as a panellist at the Pacific Law, Custom and Constitutionalism meeting on the topic “Implications for Legal practice, Legislative Drafting & Constitutional Law Reform” given her background as a law drafts person for Samoa and the Pacific, D.r Mulitalo however was later asked to give the second keynote address on the topic “Customary Land Tenure”.

And she explained in detail why Samoa’s customary lands will not be alienated by the Land Titles Registration Act 2008, as perpetrated by opponents to the LTRA 2008.

In summary, the Dr Mulitalo noted five reasons in statutory interpretation and in case law analysis that support this position are as follows:

- ¥ Nothing in the Act allows the alienation of customary land;
- ¥ The Act expressly says ‘alienation of customary land is prohibited’;
- ¥ The very limited reason the term ‘customary land’ is used in this Act is that it is only due to the operation of other existing laws;
- ¥ Other related laws that allow customary leases for public purposes have more influence on customary land than this Act;
- ¥ Since enactment in 2008, no court proceedings have ever challenged the provisions of the LTR Act on any allegation of customary land being alienated.

“The Land Registration Act 1992/1993 was a deed system of registration, and the Land Titles Registration Act 2008 introduced the Torrens system of land registration in Samoa. (The latter uses ‘Title’ to transfer ownership, not Deeds.)

She reiterated that there is nothing in the Act allows alienation. “An analysis of the provisions of the Act shows no provision of this Act allows this. In fact,

the provisions of the Act prohibit this.” Dr. Mulitalo also did research into the Land Registry.

“A look at the Customary Land Lease Registry shows that out of the 81 % of the customary land of Samoa, some 1.5% only are under customary land lease.

“It is therefore a very small portion of customary land that is currently under lease under the Alienation of Customary Land Act 1965 (53 years old Act).

A total of 308 are registered customary land lease.

Of this number, some 31 are hotels and businesses whereas some 277 are other leases e.g. customary land leased for the LDS Church, Education, Digicel, Samoa Tel, SWA, Police, Other churches.

“These customary landowners are benefitting and enjoying from the customary land lease payments made under these lease, without them losing their customary land.”

(SOURCE: SAMOA PRESS SECRETARIAT)

SSFA GEARS UP FOR 2019 PACIFIC GAMES

The critics have labelled the Aquatic Center at Tuanaimato, as a “great white elephant draining government coffers in maintenance expenses,” but not according to the Samoa Sports Facilities Authority, (SSFA).

“Without the Aquatic Center, Samoa would not had the leverage to bid and secure the hosting rights for international sporting events starting from the 2007 Pacific Games, (when the Aquatic Center was build) until now,” says SSFA’s Chief Executive Officer Moefaau Polailevao Salale Moananu.

Because swimming and athletics are compulsory sports for international sport events, Samoa needed the Aquatic Center to host the 2007 Pacific Games and most recently the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games.

Close to two thousand athletes, officials, VIP and spectators from 63 nations and territories participated in the nine sports: aquatics, archery, athletics, boxing, lawn bowls, rugby sevens, squash, tennis and weightlifting contested in the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games.

“The spin-offs from the Youth

Games translated into thousands of dollars in tourism revenues directly injected into our economy,” noted Moefaau.

And due to Samoa’s hosting success rate of these world sporting events, not including the United Nations SIDs conference which brought over 4,000 visitors, it has boosted Samoa tourism profile.

“The latest Central Bank report showed that annual tourism revenues are in the neighborhood of close to \$400 million tala a year,” he noted.

As for the Pacific Games next year, Moefaau has reassured that the Aquatic Center is ready to cater for swimming participants and spectators for the 2019 regional event.

This is reflected by the maintenance of the Aquatic Center since the 2007 Pacific Games. The Chinese government has been financing the maintenance of the facilities at a cost of about \$2 million per year.

As for the Apia Parks athletic tracks the SSFA Chief says that it needs resurfacing from the wear and tear due to the recent Cyclone Gita flooding. But its “cosmetics work and we have included the resurfacing of the track in a funding proposal to China per Memorandum of Understanding already signed between our government and the Republic,” added Moefaau.

Under that MOU, Moefaau says China is also being approached to include a new gymnasium to replace the Netball gym totaled by Cyclone Evans as well as sporting equipment and a range of structural rehabilitational work needed for the tennis courts, the stadiums and the Apia Park gymnasium.

The Tuanaimato gym and sports facilities continued the Chief Executive is in great shape after upgrade for the 2015 Commonwealth Youth Games.

The NUS gymnasium is also ready for the 2019 Pacific Games, he added.

As the countdown continues, Moefaau is confident that all the sporting facilities will be ready for the Pacific Games 2019.

A total of 26 sports will be contested in next year’s games. The 14 listed are core sports, which are mandatory in all Pacific Games events with the remaining 12 out of the 23 optional sports to be selected by the Samoa Association of Sports and National Olympic Com-

mittee, (SASNOC).

(SOURCE: SAMOA PRESS SECRETARIAT)

CENTRAL BANK OF SAMOA WARNS OF FACEBOOK FRAUD

It has been brought to our attention that there are supposedly some people or well organized criminals that are using facebook as a tool to get to your hard earned money.

They come in the form of get rich quick schemes promising you huge amounts of returns if you invest your money with them. The business models and the products that they promote may be different (and very complicated), but the concept is still the same: invest your money with us, and we will give you a huge return! This means, for example, if you invest \$1,000 with them, you will get \$10,000 in return within a few weeks. Or, invest \$10,000 with them, and you get \$100,000 in return within a few weeks from investing.

Please be alert and vigilant of these scammers on the social network (like facebook, twitter, snapchat, instagram and the like).

Central Bank of Samoa offers the following tips:

Social Networks may look harmless, but once you log in to your facebook account for example, you better be careful of who you talk to on facebook.

Never trust anyone that you don’t know personally or face to face. If you have never seen the person that you are talking with on facebook before, then you shouldn’t trust these types of people.

You will not know who really is behind on that other side of the Internet. Some people seem really friendly and well informed on the Internet, but that is most likely not who they really are. You would not invite criminals and scammers into your home, likewise, you wouldn’t want to talk with these types of people on the Internet as every time you speak with them, you are inviting them into your private life.

And lastly, avoid being snared by easy money or get rich quick schemes. It would be prudent to ‘avoid’ talking with these types of people online or people you have never seen before face to face.

Should you require any further details on this, please contact the Central Bank.

(SOURCE: SAMOA PRESS SECRETARIAT)



One of the Red Cross’ POD centers that began delivering emergency supplies over the weekend.

For today, Monday, the PODs, according to EOC in its 6 p.m. special bulletin last Saturday are: Pago Pago, at the Department of Youth & Women Affairs (DYWA) is also serving Fatumafuti, Fagaalu, Gatavai, Utulei, Fagatogo, Happy Valley, Fagasa, Aua, and Laulii; while in Amouli — Guest House Fuata is also serving Amaua, Sailele, Aoa, Alao, Tula, Aunuu.

[Photo: THA]

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US visa boss insists mission statement isn't anti-immigrant



FILE- This Dec. 13, 2017, file photo shows L. Francis Cissna, director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, during an interview in his office in downtown Los Angeles. Cissna told The Associated Press on Friday, Feb. 23, 2018, that he cut a reference to the U.S. being a “nation of immigrants” from Citizenship and Immigration Services’ mission statement because he felt it didn’t belong on what he called a bureaucratic document.

(AP Photo/Reed Saxon, File)



By **ELLIOT SPAGAT**, Associated Press

SAN DIEGO (AP) — The head of the federal agency that grants citizenship and immigration benefits said Friday that he had a message for anyone who considers his new mission statement anti-immigrant: “A thousand times no.”

Francis Cissna told The Associated Press that he cut reference to the U.S. being a “nation of immigrants” from

Citizenship and Immigration Services’ mission statement because a “bureaucratic” document was the wrong platform to say so. He said the country is indisputably a nation of immigrants.

The agency’s mission statement is “not something where you put eternal professions of American values. That sort of thing belongs chiseled in the wall of a monument, not in some bureaucratic mission

statement,” he said.

Cissna said he was surprised by criticism after announcing the change Thursday to his 18,000 employees. He said the White House had no involvement.

“This was all inside my head,” he said.

Cissna, who became director Oct. 1 after 12 years in various positions at the parent Department of Homeland Security, said he proposed a complete rewrite of the mission statement

with senior agency leaders and union officials at a meeting in mid-October. It was widely discussed in the agency over several months.

The old statement read, “USCIS secures America’s promise as a nation of immigrants by providing accurate and useful information to our customers, granting immigration and citizenship benefits, promoting an awareness and understanding of citizenship, and ensuring the integrity of our immigration system.”

Cissna said he “read it a bunch of times and it just didn’t do it and I thought I would just start from scratch.”

The new statement reads, “U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services administers the nation’s lawful immigration system, safeguarding its integrity and promise by efficiently and fairly adjudicating requests for immigration benefits while protecting Americans, securing the homeland, and honoring our values.”

Cissna said it was important to add “protecting Americans” because that’s why the Homeland Security Department was created in 2003 after aerial attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

“What I hope will happen is that people will better understand what it is we do and who it is we truly serve, namely the American people,” he said. “I think that was lost for a little while.”

The director also told employees to stop calling applicants “customers.”

In his message to them

on Thursday, he wrote, “Use of the term leads to the erroneous belief that applicants and petitioners, rather than the American people, are whom we ultimately serve. All applicants and petitioners should, of course, always be treated with the greatest respect and courtesy, but we can’t forget that we serve the American people.”

Cissna told the AP on Friday that the word “customers” is business-speak and disrespectful to visa applicants.

“It’s demeaning to them because a lot of times the sorts of things they’re applying for relates to intimate family matters or refugees,” he said. “We’re not selling anything. We’re not working in a bakery.”

Cissna said feedback has been positive from employees, but others had strong reactions.

Annaluisa Padilla, president of the American Immigration Lawyers Association, called the changes the “latest insidious attempt by the Trump administration to diminish the valuable contributions that immigrants have made to our nation and our local communities will not turn Americans away from our most fundamental values.”

NumbersUSA, a group that advocates for immigration limits and tough enforcement, welcomed the change.

“Every government agency should remember that it serves Americans and American interests first and foremost. It’s great to see USCIS doing exactly that,” said Chris Chmielenski, director for content and activism.

To the **people of American Samoa**, our thoughts are with you.

The team at National Pacific Insurance are **ready to help**. If you have an insurance claim for damage caused by Cyclone Gita, **please get in touch**.

We are **extending our office hours** and will be open from **8am to 6pm** Monday to Friday beginning this week.

You can call us on **633-4266** or mobiles **733-1003** or **254-4040**.

Unfortunately our Tafuna office location is currently closed due to power outage. However you can reach us at our **Utulei Office; located on 2nd Floor Centennial Building**.

Please get in touch for any queries you have in relation to Cyclone Gita and your insurance cover.

Thank you

Your Team at NPI

Serving the Community since 1977



**NATIONAL
PACIFIC
INSURANCE**



One of the performers at last Thursday night’s free Culture Crew and Island Rock concert at the Suigaula o le Atuvasa at Utulei beach, addressing the crowd.

[photo: Leua Aiono Frost]



Govs fear for election security amid Russian cyberattacks



Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, left, speaks with Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper at the National Governor Association winter meeting Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018, in Washington.

(AP Photo/Jose Luis Magana)

By STEVE PEOPLES, Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Will your vote be safe this year from foreign adversaries working to undermine U.S. democracy? Some of the nation’s governors aren’t so sure.

State leaders of both parties worried aloud Sunday about the security of America’s election systems against possible cyberattacks ahead of this fall’s midterm elections, aware that Russian agents targeted more than 20 states little more a year ago, and the Trump administration has taken a mostly hands-off approach to the continued interference.

U.S. intelligence leaders report Russian hackers are already working to undermine this November’s elections, which will decide the balance of power in Congress and in statehouses across the nation.

“In my lifetime, I’ve never seen anything like this. It’s scary,” Rhode Island Gov. Gina Raimondo, a Democrat, said. “The biggest concern is when you have a president and an administration that denies the problem and doesn’t acknowledge the existence of the problem, it’s hard to believe that they’re going to be offering any real solutions or funding to make our system more secure.”

Election security has been overshadowed by a near-constant string of chaos and controversy out of the White House over the last year. As most of the nation’s governors gathered in Washington for a weekend conference, issues like gun violence, Trump’s leadership and the economy dominated most hallway conversations. Yet non-partisan experts and both Democratic and Republican elected officials suggest there is no issue more critical to Amer-

ican democracy than the integrity of the nation’s elections, which are facing unprecedented cyberattacks.

The Trump administration has so far done little to help secure the mishmash of 10,000 local voting jurisdictions across the nation that mostly run on obsolete and imperfectly secured technology. Russian agents targeted election systems in 21 states ahead of the 2016 general election, the Department of Homeland Security says, and separately launched a social media blitz aimed at inflaming social tensions and sowing confusion.

The search for a solution has been shaped by partisan politics.

While Democratic governors lashed out at the Trump administration for ignoring the threat, some Republicans, such as Kentucky Gov. Matt Bevin insisted the media are overstating the problem. Several other Republicans, however, were openly concerned about outside interference but declined to criticize the Trump administration’s inaction.

“There’s obviously nothing more important than protecting the mechanism of democracy, and they’ve shown that they can at least meddle if not directly influence,” Tennessee Gov. Bill Haslam, who leads the Republican Governors Association, said of Russian hackers. “We’re paying attention to it.”

Earlier in the month, senior officials from the Department of Homeland Security participated in a series of “coordination meetings” with state and local election officials and private companies to discuss cybersecurity for the nation’s election infrastructure, the White House said last week. A Trump spokesman, however, declined to respond to the governors’ concerns when asked to com-

ment Sunday.

Trump rarely mentions the Russian threat. The president has instead repeatedly condemned special counsel Robert Mueller’s probe into Russian election meddling as “a witch hunt.”

Mueller’s team has charged 13 Russian individuals and three Russian companies in a plot to interfere in the 2016 presidential election.

“I do think hackers are a threat for the nation,” said Oklahoma Gov. Mary Fallin, a Republican. “We’ve seen a lot of foreign influence trying to break into our election cycle.”

But Fallin, like several governors, downplayed the threat in her state. She noted that Oklahoma participated in the recent meetings with the Department of Homeland Security.

Alaska Gov. Bill Walker, an independent, said his state, which allows some voters to return ballots electronically, recently earned the top grade for election security — a B — in a national report released by the Center for American Progress.

“We’re Number 1 in the nation and we’re closest to Russia,” he said. “Our elections are in good shape.”

Few governors could detail what specific steps are being taken to strengthen election security when asked. Democrats in particular suggested that the Trump administration has done almost nothing.

“It’s one of the most, if not the most, immediate threats,” said Colorado Gov. John Hickenlooper. “So now we’ve been able to prove that Russia hacked. What’s our response? Does our country have a response?”

Washington state Gov. Jay Inslee, another Democrat, likened Russia’s cyberattacks to Japan’s Dec. 7, 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor.

LAND COMMISSION

NOTICE is hereby given that ELIA ESERA TAVAI of UTULEI, American Samoa, has executed a LEASE AGREEMENT to a certain parcel of land commonly known as VAILOA which is situated in the village of UTULEI, in the County of MAOPUTASI, EASTERN District, Island of TUTUILA, American Samoa. Said LEASE AGREEMENT is now on file with the Territorial Registrar to be forwarded to the Governor respecting his approval or disapproval thereof according to the laws of American Samoa. Said instrument names TASILA TASILA & LAISARINI TASILA as LESSEES.

Any person who wish, may file his objection in writing with the Secretary of the Land Commission before the 26TH day of MARCH, 2018. It should be noted that any objection must clearly state the grounds therefor.

POSTED: JANUARY 23, 2018 thru MARCH 26, 2018
SIGNED: Taito S.B. White, Territorial Registrar

KOMISI O LAU’ELE’ELE

O LE FAASALALAUAGA leni ua faia ona o ELIA ESERA TAVAI ole nu’u o UTULEI, Amerika Samoa, ua ia faia se FEAGAIGA LISI, i se fanua ua lauiloa o VAILOA, e i le nu’u o UTULEI i le itumalo o MAOPUTASI, Falelima i SASA’E ole Motu o TUTUILA Amerika Samoa. O lea FEAGAIGA LISI ua i ai nei i teuga pepa ale Resitara o Amerika Samoa e fia auina atu ile Kovana Sili mo sana fa’amaoniga e tusa ai ma le Tulafono a Amerika Samoa. O lea mata’upu o lo’o ta’ua ai TASILA TASILA & LAISARINI TASILA.

A iai se tasi e fia fa’atu’iese i lea mata’upu, ia fa’aulufaleina mai sa na fa’atu’iesega tutsusia ile Failautusi o lea Komisi ae le’i oo ile aso 26 o MATI, 2018. Ia manatua, o fa’atu’iesega uma lava ia tutsusia manino mai ala uma e fa’atu’iese ai.

01/26 & 02/26/18

LAND COMMISSION

NOTICE is hereby given that TOLUAO SEUTAATIA of PAVAI, American Samoa, has executed a LEASE AGREEMENT to a certain parcel of land commonly known as FUIALOA which is situated in the village of PAVAI, in the County of TUALAUTA, WESTERN District, Island of Tutuila, American Samoa. Said LEASE AGREEMENT is now on file with the Territorial Registrar to be forwarded to the Governor respecting his approval or disapproval thereof according to the laws of American Samoa. Said instrument names SUAINA & TYRONE HUNT as LESSEES.

Any person who wish, may file his objection in writing with the Secretary of the Land Commission before the 19TH day of MARCH, 2018. It should be noted that any objection must clearly state the grounds therefor.

POSTED: JANUARY 18, 2018 thru MARCH 19, 2018
SIGNED: Taito S.B. White, Territorial Registrar

KOMISI O LAU’ELE’ELE

O LE FAASALALAUAGA leni ua faia ona o TOLUAO SEUTAATIA ole nu’u o PAVAI, Amerika Samoa, ua ia faia se FEAGAIGA LISI, i se fanua ua lauiloa o FUIALOA, e i le nu’u o PAVAI i le itumalo o TUALAUTA, Falelima i SISIFO ole Motu o TUTUILA Amerika Samoa. O lea FEAGAIGA LISI ua i ai nei i teuga pepa ale Resitara o Amerika Samoa e fia auina atu ile Kovana Sili mo sana fa’amaoniga e tusa ai ma le Tulafono a Amerika Samoa. O lea mata’upu o lo’o ta’ua ai SUAINA & TYRONE HUNT.

A iai se tasi e fia fa’atu’iese i lea mata’upu, ia fa’aulufaleina mai sa na fa’atu’iesega tutsusia ile Failautusi o lea Komisi ae le’i oo ile aso 19 o MATI, 2018. Ia manatua, o fa’atu’iesega uma lava ia tutsusia manino mai ala uma e fa’atu’iese ai.

01/26 & 02/26/18



Red Cross Volunteers hard at work at some of the Red Cross Point of distribution centers at the West side of the island over the weekend. At some PODs, frustrated residents, verbally abused volunteers, after standing in long lines only to find out that their names were not on the list. Residents were given phone numbers instead of supplies and told to contact the EOC to have their homes assessed and put on a list for emergency supplies.

[Photo: THA]



Pictured here [l-r] Siliato Tufele; President Roberts, 2nd counselor of Pago Pago Mapusaga Stake; Meaole Sofara Jr; Rep. Sam Meleisea; Rep. Vui Florence Saulo; and Milford Magalei, during a gathering Friday night at the LDS Falenui chapel-hall. The event was to honor Tufele, Sofara, and Magalei as they got their Boys Scouts Eagle pins.

[photo: MA]

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Michelle Obama to release memoir in November

NEW YORK (AP) — Michelle Obama’s memoir, one of the most highly anticipated books in recent years, is coming out Nov. 13.

The former first lady tweeted Sunday that the book, to come out a week after the 2018 midterm elections, is called “Becoming.” By Sunday night, her memoir was in the top 20 on Amazon.com.

“Writing ‘Becoming’ has been a deeply personal experience,” she said in a statement. “It has allowed me, for the very first time, the space to honestly reflect on the unexpected trajectory of my life. In this book, I talk about my roots and how a little girl from the South Side of Chicago found her voice and developed the strength to use it to empower others. I hope my journey inspires readers to find the courage to become whoever they aspire to be. I can’t wait to share my story.”

She and her husband, former President Barack Obama, last year reached a joint agreement with Penguin Random House for their respective books. The deal is believed to be well in excess of \$30 million. “Becoming” will be released in the U.S. through the Crown Publishing Group, a Penguin Random House division that has published works by both Obamas.

(Continued on page 12)



A look at the American Red Cross Welcome Kit received by a family in Tualauta who also last Friday got a temporary shelter — or tent — which was installed on the family’s compound. The tent is provided by the US Federal Emergency Management Agency and the welcome kit, according to the ASG Emergency Operations Center (EOC), will help make the tents livable.
The kit comprises a clean up kit, ice cooler, mini-first aid kit, gloves, small tarp, and small portable stove with canisters of gas.
“Family homes must have been assessed as destroyed, or having major damage to receive this assistance from the Red Cross,” according to EOC.

[photo: FS]

➤ After school...

Continued from page 5



Florida Governor Rick Scott lays out his school safety proposal during a press conference at the Florida Capitol in Tallahassee, Fla., Friday, Feb 23, 2018. Scott proposed banning the sale of firearms to anyone younger than 21 as part of a plan to prevent gun violence.
(AP Photo/Mark Wallheiser)

added that recent mass shootings show that “so long as these high powered weapons of war remain available for purchase these killings will continue.”
Talia Rumsky, a 16-year-old Stoneman Douglas High student who was at school during the shooting, was among those who travelled to Tallahassee on Wednesday to lobby lawmakers about gun control.
She said Scott’s plan to make it illegal for anyone under 21 to purchase a gun is a start, but said she doesn’t think it goes far enough.
“This is a great first step and we appreciate it,” the sophomore said. “But it’s not enough and we’re going to make sure they know it’s not enough and is not solving our problems.”
Trump told reporters Friday that schools need some kind of “offensive” capability to deter and respond to attackers.
“If they’re not gun free, if there are guns inside, held by the right people, by highly trained professionals, you’re going to see this end. It won’t be happening again. Our schools are essentially gun-free zones and that makes them very dangerous places,” the president said.

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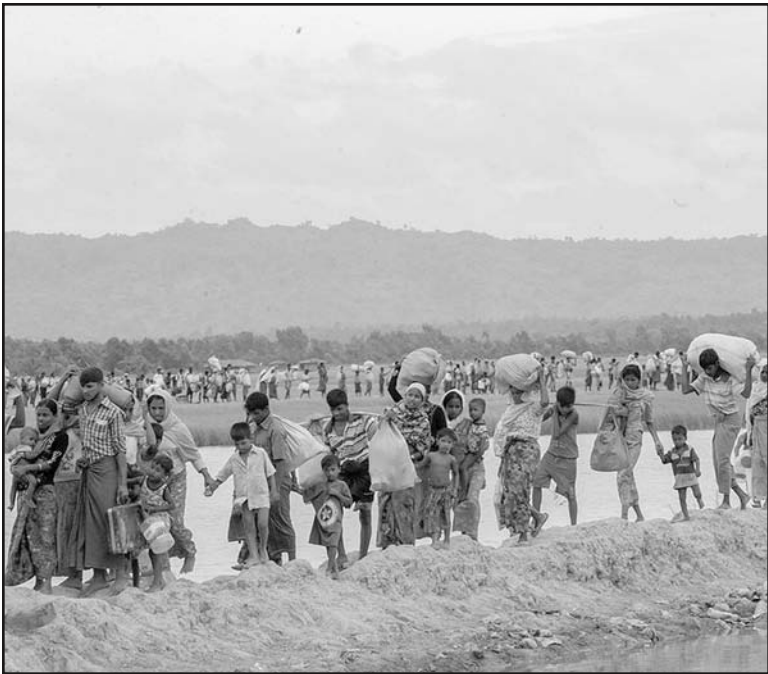
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Months after exodus began, Rohingya see no end to suffering



FILE- In this Sept. 18, 2017 file photo, Lalmoti, an elderly Rohingya Muslim woman, lies in a sling as her son and grandson ask for direction to the hospital in Kutupalong refugee camp, Bangladesh. Six months after waves of attacks emptied Rohingya villages in Myanmar, sending 700,000 people fleeing into Bangladesh, there are few signs anyone is going home soon. Life isn't easy in the refugee camps, but the Rohingya living there have one immense consolation. "Nobody is coming to kill us, that's for sure," says one man.

(AP Photo/Dar Yasin, File)

COX'S BAZAR, Bangladesh (AP) — Their houses are often made of plastic sheets. Much of their food comes from aid agencies. Jobs are few, and there is painfully little to do. The nightmares are relentless.

But six months after their horrors began, the Rohingya Muslims who fled army attacks in Myanmar for refuge in Bangladesh feel immense consolation.

"Nobody is coming to kill us, that's for sure," said Mohammed Amanullah, whose village was destroyed last year just before he left for Bangladesh with his wife and three children. They now live in the Kutupalong refugee camp outside the coastal city of Cox's Bazar.

"We have peace here," Amanullah said.

On Aug. 25, Rohingya insurgents attacked several security posts in Myanmar's Rakhine state, killing at least 14 people. Within hours, waves of revenge attacks broke out, with the military and Buddhist mobs marauding through Rohingya villages in bloody pogroms, killing thousands, raping women and girls, and burning houses and whole villages. The aid group Doctors Without Borders has estimated that at least 6,700 Rohingya were killed in Myanmar in the first month of the violence, including at least 730 children younger than 5. The survivors flooded into Bangladesh.

Six months later, there are few signs Rohingya are going home anytime soon.

Myanmar and Bangladesh have signed an agreement to

gradually repatriate Rohingya in "safety, security and dignity," but the process has been opaque and the dangers remain. New satellite images have shown empty villages and hamlets leveled, erasing evidence of the Rohingya's former lives. And with 700,000 having fled Myanmar since August, more Rohingya continue to flee.

So for now, the refugees wait.

"If they agree to send us back, that's fine, but is it that easy?" asked Amanullah. "Myanmar must give us citizenship. That is our home. Without citizenship, they will torture us again. They will kill us again."

He said he would only return under the protection of U.N. peacekeepers: "They must take care of us there. Otherwise it will not work."

Buddhist-majority Myanmar doesn't recognize the Rohingya as an official ethnic group, and they face intense discrimination and persecution. Myanmar authorities maintain that security operations in Rakhine state have been aimed at clearing out insurgents. M. Shahriar Alam, Bangladesh's junior foreign minister, said his country would not repatriate any Rohingya against their will, but urged the international community to continue to put pressure on Myanmar to create conditions for a sustainable repatriation.

He also expressed displeasure at reports that Rohingya were still arriving in Bangladesh.

"We need to recognize that the problem has its origin in Rakhine and its comprehensive solution has to be found there," Alam was quoted as saying

Sunday by the United News of Bangladesh agency. "Bangladesh is only unjustifiably bearing the brunt of it."

On Sunday, two Nobel Peace laureates visited refugee camps in Cox's Bazar and talked to rape victims. Myanmar security forces have been accused of raping and sexually assaulted women and girls before and during major attacks on Rohingya villages.

Katia Gianneschi, a spokeswoman for the Nobel Women's Initiative who accompanied Yemen's Tawakkol Karman and Northern Ireland's Mairead Maguire to the camp, said in an email that the women talked to the victims and heard their stories. Another laureate, Iran's Shirin Ebadi, will join her colleagues on Monday.

The Nobel Women's Initiative, established in 2006, is a platform of six female Nobel Peace laureates.

The three laureates, who are on a weeklong visit to Bangladesh to meet the refugees, accused Myanmar leader Aung San Suu Kyi and her country's military of unleashing atrocities, and said the international community should bring those responsible to justice.

Minara Begum, 25, who said she was raped and tortured by soldiers, told reporters after the laureates' visit that they hugged her and held her tightly and cried as they heard the stories of brutality.

"They were overwhelmed. They cried with us. They could not hold their tears," Begum said. "I was also touched by their eagerness to know our sad stories."

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Weather...

Continued from page 1

"One of the things people were concerned a lot

about during Gita was our power was out, and that is one of the many things that we're working on right now.

"Another thing was when communication lines also went down," she said. "We want the public to know that we are working on these issues right now — with our backup generator — so that our people will receive the right information they are looking for during the time of the storm."

When asked about the lack of a backup power supply for their office during the storm, Lutu-McMoore said their office does have a backup generator, which was working when the American Samoa Power Authority (ASPA) power went off on the morning of Friday, Feb. 9.

"Our backup generator was running well immediately when the ASPS power went off, unfortunately, the generator worked for about 50 minutes before complete failure — and

went off that morning", Lutu-McMoore said.

"I was told that some of the generator's parts needed to be repaired. We received help from an ASPA crew to try and fix and repair the parts for us, unfortunately the equipment could not be repaired at that time and it was identified that parts had to be shipped from off-island."

Lutu-McMoore said that she thankful to the Department of Homeland Security for providing a backup generator to help with their service.

The Meteorologist said that one of the lessons they have learned from Gita was that they need to do maintenance on their generator — parts included — to avoid anything like what happened during Gita to happen in the future.

When our local Weather Service Office lost power, Lutu-McMoore said the Honolulu Forecast Office took over issuing weather reports for American Samoa.

"I understand why some

of our people were frustrated when the power went off and there were no weather reports for them during the storm. As I mentioned before, we have learned a lot from Gita which gave us the green light on what we should work on to upgrade our service in the future," Lutu-McMoore.

"I urge the community to voice and share their feedback with the weather office, whether it's good or bad, because from there, we can build a good working relationship with the community in the future," she said.

Lutu-McMoore thanked the quick response and help from ASPA and ASTCA crews and also from many other ASG representatives who offered their help.

She assured the community that what they have learned from the lessons of Gita will help them fulfill their obligation in the future.

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► Update...

Continued from page 1

(PDA) carried out by the local government and its federal partners, including the US Federal Emergency Management (FEMA) is complete and data turned over to the Governor’s Office.

That story resulted in residents contacting Samoa News claiming that their homes — either damaged or destroyed — and weren’t even visited to be assessed. As in previous stories following the storm, residents were informed to contact EOC or their village pulenu’u to put their information on record.

However, some people told Samoa News over the weekend they have given up waiting or trying to contact the EOC or the pulenu’u and are now going directly to their faipule for help. They say they are scared they are being ‘overlooked’ and want to make sure they are ‘on record’ as being in need of assistance from FEMA.

The Governor’s Office confirmed over the weekend that the governor has received the PDA and other data, which is being reviewed.

Additionally, the Governor’s Office was also looking at reports from Manu’a if the island group suffered any damage, after the storm moved east of Tutuila and away from the territory. The PDA and other supporting data will then be submitted by the governor to the US government for a major disaster declaration by the US President resulting in more federal help for impacted residents as well as government property.

For homes that were damaged or destroyed by the storm, and assessed by local authorities, a mark or bunch of numbers is sprayed on part of the structure, according to observations made by Samoa News of several damaged homes.

Late last week tents as temporary shelters that were provided by FEMA to ASG as part of the federal direct assistance were distributed and installed on properties of families whose homes were damaged or destroyed by the storm.

According to EOC, the temporary shelters are provided to disaster survivors with homes that have been destroyed. Additionally, the Office of Samoan Affairs will contact families that will receive tents to set up on their property.

However, Samoa News observed over the weekend a family in Fagaima, whose two houses were severely damaged by the storm have yet to receive a tent, although the houses have already been assessed by local authorities. One house is completely uninhabitable, and occupants are living with friends further down the street. The second house still has occupants.

EOC says the American Red Cross will visit families receiving tents to provide ‘Welcome’ kits that will help make the tents livable. “Family homes must have been assessed as destroyed or having major or minor damage to receive this

assistance from the Red Cross,” EOC explained.

The Welcome kit, includes a cooler, clean up kit, mini-first aid kit, gloves, and small portable stove with canisters for gas.

Last week Thursday, EOC announced the PODs for Red Cross emergency supplies. Additional locations were announced later for Friday and Saturday with PODs set up in one village, and also serve nearby villages. The Red Cross is working closely with the local authorities and has left it up to EOC to announce the PODs.

For today, Monday, the PODs, according to EOC in its 6 p.m. special bulletin last Saturday are:

- Pago Pago, at Department of Youth & Women Affairs (DYWA) and also serving Fatumafuti, Fagaalu, Gatavai, Utulei, Fagatogo, Happy Valley, Fagasa, Aua, and Laulii
- Amouli, at Guest House Fuata - and also serving

Amaua, Sailele, Aoa, Alao, Tula, Aunuu.

EOC says that families in emergency shelters — currently set up at church halls — are encouraged to return home when able, especially after assistance has been received from the Red Cross or ASG.

Meanwhile, Lt. Gov. Lemanu Sialeaga Palepoi Mauga, who is also the Governor’s Authorized Representative (GAR), and other ASG officials will speak Thursday at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, regarding storm Gita relief and restoration efforts. The meeting, set to begin at 6 p.m. will be at the Tradewinds Hotel, where Human and Social Service director Muavefa’atasi John Suisala will speak on shelters and other issues; Public Works director, Faleosina Voigt, will discuss individual assessments; while Office of Disaster Assistance and Petroleum Management executive director Alfonso Pete Galeai will talk about public assessments.



Red Cross Volunteers hard at work at some of the Red Cross Point of distribution centers at the West side of the island over the weekend. At some PODs, frustrated residents, verbally abused volunteers, after standing in long lines only to find out that their names were not on the list. Residents were given phone numbers instead of supplies and told to contact the EOC to have their homes assessed and put on a list for emergency supplies.

[Photo: THA]



American Samoa Government
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Request for Public Comment on
Special Education Funding Application

The American Samoa Department of Education (ASDOE) Special Education Division (SPED) has for public review its application for funding under Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) with the US Department of Education.

These funds are used to provide special education services to all school age children, ages 3 - 21 years, in the territory of American Samoa who have a disability that adversely affects their classroom achievements. As a condition for granting the funds, each State or Territory proposing the application must submit the application for public review and comment. The public must be afforded reasonable opportunities for comment 30 days prior to the submission of the application on May 14, 2018. The public hearing is scheduled for April 12, 2018 at the Early Childhood Education (ECE) Conference Room in Utulei at 2:00pm. The Department of Education must review and give due consideration to all comments and suggestions prior to the submission of the application for funding.

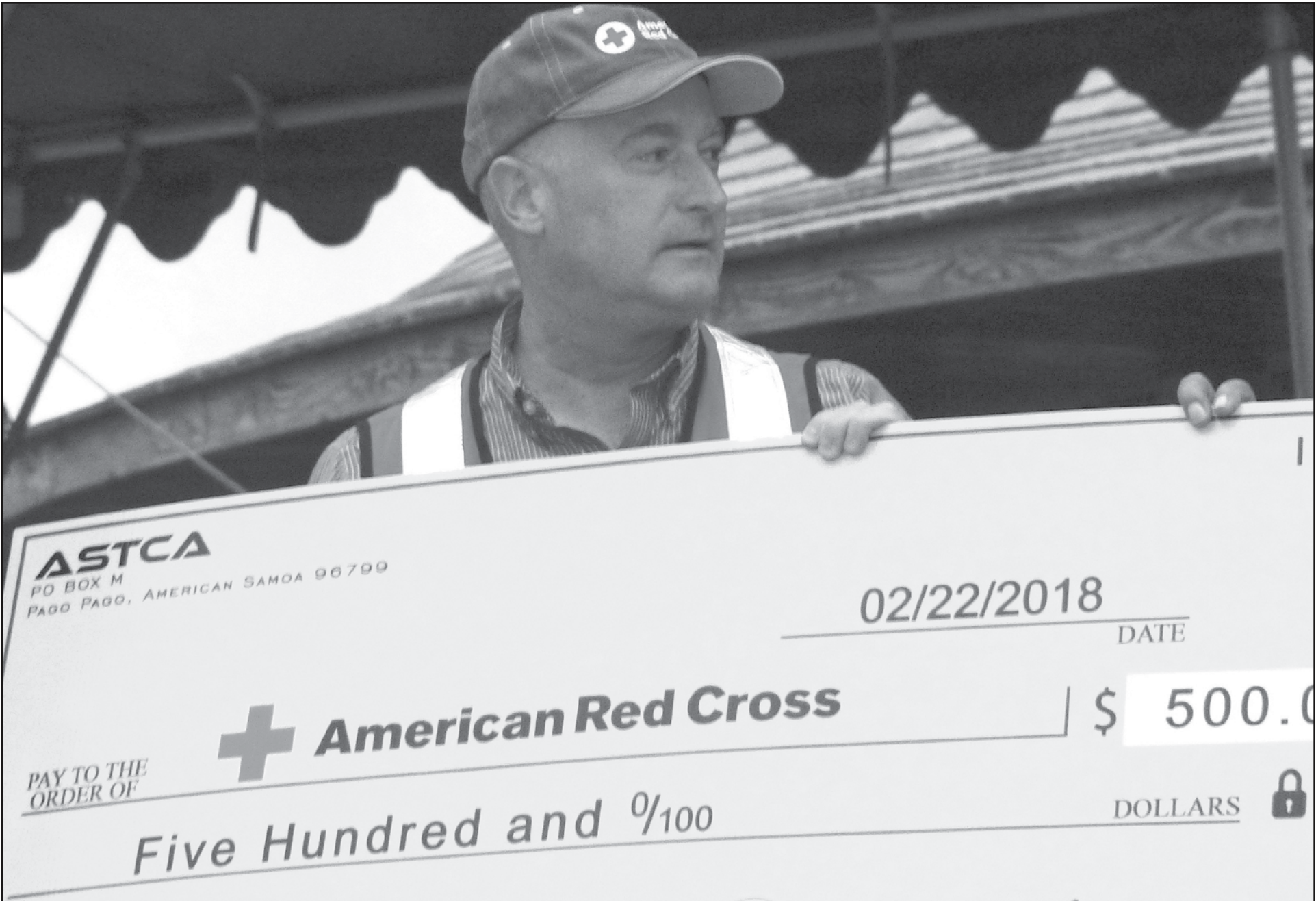
Copies of the application are available at the Special Education Office located in Faga’alu. All persons interested in the application are encouraged to pick up a copy between the hours of 8:00am and 4:00pm. Written comments will also be taken during these hours. Comments and suggestions may also be made via email to Faaufono Vaitautolu at faauitolu@yahoo.com or Dr. Teresa Le’iato Atuatasi at atuajjj_1999@yahoo.com or may be sent surface mail to Dr. Teresa Le’iato Atuatasi, Assistant Director Special Education Division, PO Box ASDOE-SPED, Pago Pago, AS 96799.

Talosagaina Finagalo Lautele mo le Tusi Talosaga mo
Alagatupe Fuafuaina o le Ofisa o A’oga Fa’apitoa

Ua tu’uina mai e le Matagaluega o A’oga Amerika Samoa (ASDOE) Ofisa o A’oga Fa’apitoa (SPED) se avanoa e fa’alia ai finagalo fa’alau’itele a le mamalu o le atunu’u mo le alagatupe talosaga i lalo o le Maga B Tulafono mo Tagata o iai Manaoga Fa’apitoa (IDEA) ofisa o A’oga Fa’apitoa (OSEP) o le Matagaluega o A’oga a le Malo Tele o Amerika (USDOE).

O ia alagatupe ua fuafuaina e fa’atino ai a’oa’oga fa’apitoa tu’uina atu mo tamaiti a’oga uma, e amata mai i le 3 - 21 tausaga, i totonu o le Teritori o Amerika Samoa o lo’o iai manaoga fa’apitoa ua fa’afaigata ai taumafaiga taua’oa’oga i totonu o potu a’oga. O se tasi aiaiga mo le taliaina o le talosaga, e tatau i Setete ma Teritori uma o lo’o talosagaina ia alagatupe ona fa’asalalau a latou tusi talosaga mo se finagalo fa’aalia o tagata lautele. E tatau ona lava se avanoa e silasila lelei ai le atunu’u mo le silafia ma tu’uina mai so latou finagalo fa’aalia e tusa e 30 aso ae le’i tu’uina atu le tusi talosaga ia Me 14, 2018. O le a faia se fono fa’alau’itele ia Aperila 12, 2018 i le potu fonotaga i le Ofisa ASDOE Early Childhood Education i Utulei i le itula e 2:00pm. O le a iloiloina e le Matagaluega a A’oga Amerika Samoa finagalo ma manatu fa’aalia a le lautele ma tu’uina atu ni fautuaga ae le’i o’o i le aso fa’atapula’aina o tusi talosaga.

O lo’o maua kopi o lenei tusi talosaga i le Ofisa o A’oga Fa’apitoa i Faga’alu. Mo i latou e mana’omia se kopi o le tusi talosaga, e avanoa le ofisa mai le itula 8:00am i le 4:00pm. O manatu fa’aalia e tauala mai i tusitusiga e mafai ona tu’uina mai i taimi ua fa’atulagaina. A iai nisi manatu ma fautuaga, e mafai ona imeli mai ia Fa’auifono Vaitautolu faauitolu@yahoo.com po’o Teresa Le’iato Atuatasi atuajjj_1999@yahoo.com pe tusi mai ia Teresa Le’iato Atuatasi, SPED Assistant Director, PO Box ASDOE-SPED, Pago



Chief executive officer Sean Mahoney, of the American Red Cross — San Diego and Imperial counties — which includes American Samoa, accepts a check \$500, a donation from ASTCA to help the Red Cross.

Mahoney, who is on island with Red Cross disaster workers from San Diego and volunteers from across the US responding to Tropical Cyclone Gita, was presented the check at Thursday night’s free Culture Crew and Island Rock concert at the Suigaula o le Atuvasa at Utulei beach. [photo: Leua Aiono Frost]



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Michelle...

Continued from page 8



FILE - In this May 12, 2017, file photo, former first lady Michelle Obama smiles while speaking at the Partnership for a Healthier American 2017 Healthier Future Summit in Washington. The former first lady tweeted Sunday, Feb. 25, 2018 that her memoir, one of the most highly anticipated books in recent years, is coming out Nov. 13, 2018, and is called ,‘‘Becoming.’’ (AP Photo/Pablo Martinez Monsivais, File)

Memoirs by former first ladies usually sell well, with notable works including Laura Bush’s “Spoken from the Heart” and Hillary Rodham Clinton’s “Living History.” Michelle Obama’s memoir is expected to be a major commercial and cultural event. She is admired around the world and has never told her story at length. Her only previous book was a 2012

work on gardening, “American Grown.” The book will be published simultaneously in 24 languages, from Swedish to Arabic, and Michelle Obama expects to promote “Becoming” in the U.S. and overseas. She will also narrate the audio version. According to Crown, Obama is working with a team of assistants, but that every word in the finished text will be hers. “As first lady of the United States of America — the first African-American to serve in that role — she helped create the most welcoming and inclusive White House in history, while also establishing herself as a powerful advocate for women and girls in the U.S. and around the world,” Crown said in a statement. “In her memoir, a work of deep reflection and mesmerizing storytelling, Michelle Obama invites readers into her world, chronicling the experiences that have shaped her from her childhood on the South Side of Chicago to her years as an executive balancing the demands of motherhood and work, to her time spent at the world’s most famous address.” Barack Obama, who has written the million-sellers “Dreams from My Father” and “The Audacity of Hope,” has not yet scheduled his memoir. He is expected to focus on his eight years in the White House.



Ground zero ceremony set to commemorate 1993 terror bombing

By JENNIFER PELTZ, Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Survivors and others are set to gather at ground zero for a solemn tribute to victims of the first terror attack on the World Trade Center, the deadly bombing 25 years ago.

Monday is the anniversary of the blast, which killed six people, one of them pregnant. The planned commemoration includes a Mass at a church near the trade center and a ceremony on the 9/11 memorial plaza, with the reading of victims' names and a moment of silence at 12:18 p.m., when the bomb exploded and became a harbinger of terror at the twin towers.

"While overshadowed by 9/11, the 1993 bombing represented a pivotal moment in the history of the World Trade Center, in the history of New York City, and, frankly, our own national reckoning with terrorism in a global age," said Sept. 11 museum president Alice Greenwald, whose institution has a permanent exhibition on the bombing and a special installation to commemo-

rate the anniversary. "It had so many of the elements that we would later come to associate with 9/11."

The bomb, in an underground parking garage, was set by Muslim extremists who sought to punish the U.S. for its Middle East policies, according to federal prosecutors. Six bombing suspects were convicted and are in prison, including accused ringleader Ramzi Yousef — a nephew of self-proclaimed 9/11 mastermind Khalid Sheikh Mohammed. A seventh suspect in the bombing remains at large.

An estimated 50,000 people fled the blacked-out twin towers, some groping their way down smoky stairs, others rescued from stalled elevators or plucked from rooftops by police helicopters. More than 1,000 were injured.

A memorial fountain dedicated to the 1993 bombing was crushed in the attacks that destroyed the towers on Sept. 11, 2001. But bombing victims' names are now inscribed on one of the memorial pools that bear the names of the nearly 3,000 people killed on 9/11.



FILE - In this Feb. 26, 1993 file photo, victims of a truck bombing at the World Trade Center in New York are treated at the scene. It was a terror attack that foreshadowed Sept. 11: the deadly World Trade Center bombing that happened 25 years ago Monday.

(AP Photo/Marty Lederhandler, File)

Winfrey praises Florida students as 'warriors of the light'



FILE - In this Jan. 7, 2018, file photo, Oprah Winfrey poses in the press room with the Cecil B. DeMille Award at the 75th annual Golden Globe Awards in Beverly Hills, Calif. Winfrey is praising the outspoken students of Parkland, Fla., calling them 'warriors of the light.' In an interview with The Associated Press on Saturday, Feb. 24, Winfrey drew parallels between the teens and the Freedom Riders of the 1960s, who rode buses into southern states in protest of racial segregation.

(Photo by Jordan Strauss/Invision/AP, File)

By NICOLE EVATT, Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Oprah Winfrey has nothing but praise for the Florida school shooting survivors who have channeled angst into activism, calling them "warriors of the light" and comparing them to civil rights pioneers.

In an interview with The Associated Press on Saturday, Winfrey drew parallels between the teens and the Freedom

Riders of the 1960s, who rode buses into southern states in protest of racial segregation. Winfrey called the Parkland students' protests for gun control "a proud moment."

"It's an evolving moment for our country. The same thing happened, as you know, back in the '50s and '60s for the civil rights movement," Winfrey said. "Young people said, 'We will not tolerate what our ancestors have tolerated. We have

had enough and we're willing to fight for it and willing to march in the streets for it and, if necessary, die for it."

Winfrey spoke while promoting the upcoming film "A Wrinkle in Time," directed by Ava DuVernay and featuring her, Reese Witherspoon and Mindy Kaling. The film is adapted from Madeleine L'Engle's science-fiction fantasy novel.

"These young people get to be literally warriors of the light," Winfrey said. "That's what they're trying to do. They're trying to — through their voices, through the March For Our Lives — say 'We will not let this happen again. We are going to do what we can to banish the darkness.'"

The former talk show host last week matched a \$500,000 donation by George and Amal Clooney to the students' planned marches, including one on March 24 in Washington, D.C.

The Feb. 14 mass shooting at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School that left 17 people dead has sparked calls for walk-outs, sit-ins and other actions on school campuses across the U.S.

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Violence drops in Syrian capital, its suburbs after UN vote



U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley, center, confers with members of the United Nations Security Council just outside the chamber before a scheduled vote on a resolution Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018, demanding a 30-day humanitarian cease-fire across Syria. (AP Photo/Craig Ruttle)

By BASSEM MROUE, Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — Despite a drop in intensity, shelling and bombardment in the Syrian capital and its embattled eastern suburbs killed at least six people Sunday following the U.N. Security Council’s unanimous approval of a resolution demanding a 30-day cease-fire across Syria, opposition activists and residents of Damascus said. Attacks on residential areas appear to have shifted to strikes on front lines where some of the most intense fighting took place throughout the day between government forces and their allies against insurgents. State media said that troops pushed into the eastern suburbs, reports that the opposition denied.

Opposition activists reported clashes on the southern edge of the rebel-held suburbs, known as eastern Ghouta, and two airstrikes late on Saturday night, shortly after the resolution was adopted. During the day Sunday, more shelling and airstrikes were reported in eastern Ghouta and Damascus.

The drop in violence came after a week of intense airstrikes and shelling that killed more than 500 people in eastern Ghouta and left dozens dead or wounded in the government-held Damascus, which rebels pelted with mortar shells.

“This has been the calmest night since last Sunday,” said Rami Abdurrahman who heads the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights, referring to the start of the bombing campaign on Feb. 19. He added that clashes between troops and rebels on Sunday were the most intense this month.

Syrian state TV said that the army captured several buildings in the rebel-held suburb of Harasta and pushed into several other areas on eastern Ghouta that is besieged by government forces from all sides. It also said that troops captured the small towns of Nashabiyeh, Hazrama and Housh al-Salihyah on the southeastern edge of eastern

Ghouta.

The Ghouta Media Center, an activist collective, said members of the Army of Islam insurgent group repelled the Syrian army’s attacks on several fronts adding that many soldiers were killed.

The push by the army, although still limited, appears to be similar to steps taken in rebel-held eastern neighborhoods of the northern city of Aleppo that government forces captured one after another until rebels eventually agreed to leave the city in December 2016, marking President Bashar Assad’s biggest victory since the conflict began in 2011.

“The Assad regime and his allies have shown no respect to the Security Council by launching their most intense offensive on Ghouta from several directions hours after the resolution was adopted,” said Ghouta-based activist Ahmad Khanshour. He added that government forces “did not succeed in advancing one meter.”

Asked whether people were able to leave their underground shelters where they have been hiding for days with little food and water, Khanshour said: “We are still underground and dying.” Khanshour added that he is hiding with 45 others in a shelter and they have been surviving on rice, crushed wheat and pasta.

The Observatory said Sunday’s airstrikes and shelling killed eight people and wounded dozens in several areas in eastern Ghouta. The opposition’s Syrian Civil Defense, also known as White Helmets, said the six were killed in the towns of Saqba, Beit Sawa, Arbeen and Hammouriyeh.

State news agency SANA said insurgents breached the truce by firing 15 shells Sunday on government-held areas on the edge of Ghouta.

Dr. Sakhr al-Dimashqi, a surgeon at a Ghouta clinic, told The Associated Press that several shells hit some towns in the suburbs, adding that they

received six wounded people at his clinic.

“The shelling today is not as intense as over the past week,” he said.

The two largest and most powerful rebel factions in Ghouta, Failaq al-Rahman and Army of Islam issued statements saying they will abide by the cease-fire unless they are forced to fire in self-defense. Both called for the “immediate delivery” of emergency aid.

The resolution excludes members of the Islamic State group and al-Qaida-linked fighters. Ghouta is also home to a few hundred members of the al-Qaida-linked Levant Liberation Committee.

Russia’s Foreign Ministry said Sunday that the fight against IS and al-Qaida’s affiliate will continue, despite what it described as attempts by certain external players to engage “international terrorists and groups of opposition militants joining them to implement plans that are still nurtured to overthrow the legitimate authorities of Syria and dismember the country.”

It added that “the terrorists won’t get any respite.”

Damascus residents said there’s more traffic in the streets, compared to previous days and most schools and universities were open on Sunday. They said some private schools were still closed, especially those close to the front lines with Ghouta.

Some residents of the capital said they were unhappy with the truce, adding that they believe the rebels will violate it and that the Syrian army should crush the gunmen outside the capital.

“The army has given them many truces, more than they deserve and the result was more shells,” said Damascus resident Abdul-Razzak Khaleifah, 37. “The army has the right to retaliate to defend the homeland and the civilians.”

Saturday’s vote at the United Nations came after the vote was delayed from Friday. Russia’s U.N. Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia had repeatedly called an immediate cease-fire unrealistic.

In a bid to get Russian support, sponsors Kuwait and Sweden amended the draft resolution late Friday to drop a demand that the cease-fire take effect 72 hours after the resolution’s adoption.

After two hours of additional negotiations on Saturday, the Security Council unanimously approved the resolution demanding a 30-day cease-fire across Syria “without delay” to deliver humanitarian aid to millions and evacuate the critically ill and wounded.

After the vote, many council members urged stepped-up efforts to ensure a cease-fire and get assistance to millions in need.



IN THE COMMUNITY

(Photos: Leua)





Meet A Spelling Champ!

The student at the right will represent Coleman (Pago) Elem. School in the American Samoa Territorial Spelling Bee to be held March 07, 2018. The winner of that Bee will represent American Samoa in the 90th annual Scripps Howard Spelling Bee to be held in Washington, D.C.



BIOGRAPHY OF A 2018 SPELLING BEE FINALIST

What is your name?
Faapaia Vili
What is your school name?
Uifaatali (Pago) Elementary School
What grade are you in?
Grade 8
Who is your English Teacher?
June Seiuli
Who are your parents?
Ierome & Fetu Vili
What village are you from?
Pago Pago
What was your winning word?
CINDERS

Spelling Bee Winners, if you've not filled out your biography and had your picture taken, please come in to Samoa News.

Territorial Spelling Bee
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Meet A Spelling Champ!

The student at the right will represent Manulele Tausala Elem. School in the American Samoa Territorial Spelling Bee to be held March 07, 2018. The winner of that Bee will represent American Samoa in the 90th annual Scripps Howard Spelling Bee to be held in Washington, D.C.



BIOGRAPHY OF A 2018 SPELLING BEE FINALIST

What is your name?
Dora Amber Malila
What is your school name?
Manulele Tausala Elem. School
What grade are you in?
Grade 8
Who is your English Teacher?
Shute Tautu
Who are your parents?
Omeka & Miriama Malila
What village are you from?
Nu'uuli
What was your winning word?
EVENTFUL

Spelling Bee Winners, if you've not filled out your biography and had your picture taken, please come in to Samoa News.

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5 dead after tornado, flooding from central US storms



High water floods the street from the Ohio River, Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018 in Cincinnati. Forecasters expected the Ohio River could reach levels not seen since the region's deadly 1997 floods. (Liz Dufour/The Cincinnati Enquirer via AP)

By JOHN RABY, Associated Press

CHARLESTON, W.Va. (AP) — The death toll rose to at least five on Sunday after severe thunderstorms swept through the central U.S., spawning a tornado that flattened homes, gale force winds and widespread flooding from the Upper Midwest to Appalachia.

The system that stretched from Texas to the Canadian Maritime provinces had prompted several emergency declarations even before the dangerous storms arrived.

In southwestern Michigan, the body of a 48-year-old man was found floating in floodwaters Sunday in Kalamazoo, city Public Safety Lt. David Thomas said. Police were withholding the release of his name until notifying relatives.

Thomas said the death didn't appear suspicious but the cause wasn't known. An autopsy was planned as early as Monday. Kalamazoo has hard hit by flooding from last week's heavy rains and melting snow.

In Kentucky, authorities said three people died. Two bodies were recovered from submerged vehicles in separate incidents Saturday.

A body was recovered from a vehicle that was in a ditch in in western Kentucky near Morganfield, the Henderson Fire Department said on its Facebook page. The body has been sent to a medical examiner for

an autopsy.

And a male's body was pulled from a vehicle in a creek near the south central Kentucky community of Franklin on Saturday, the Simpson County Sheriff's Office said in a statement. The victim's identify was being withheld pending notification of relatives.

About 20 miles (32 kilometers) away, Dallas Jane Combs, 79, died after a suspected tornado destroyed her Adairville home earlier Saturday, the Logan County Sheriff's Office told media outlets. Sheriff officials said Combs was inside the home when it collapsed on her. Combs was pronounced dead at the scene.

Authorities said Combs' husband was outside putting up plastic to keep rain out of the home when he was blown into the basement area. He sustained minor injuries.

The fifth death was in northeast Arkansas, where an 83-year-old man was killed after high winds toppled a trailer home. Clay County Sheriff Terry Miller told KAIT-TV that Albert Foster died Saturday night after the home was blown into a pond.

About 50 miles (80 kilometers) away, the National Weather Service said the roof was blown off a hotel in Osceola, about 160 miles (257 kilometers) north of Memphis, Tennessee.



Neighbors help collect clothing and look for pets at a destroyed home Sunday morning after a fierce storm hit Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018, in the Farmington subdivision in Clarksville, Tenn. A strong storm system that included possible tornadoes roared eastward through the central United States, leaving demolished homes, damaged vehicles and uprooted trees in its wake. (Lacy Atkins/The Tennessean via AP)