

## Candidates Finding Ways To Stay In Race

WASHINGTON (AP) — For months, Republican presidential candidates with dwindling bank accounts and negligible support in polls have been finding reasons to stay in the 2016 race.

Now, a few must weigh whether they can keep competing after being downgraded or excluded from Tuesday's fourth GOP debate. New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie and former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee have been bumped to the undercard debate because of low poll numbers, while South Carolina Sen. Lindsey Graham and former New York Gov. George Pataki didn't qualify for either event.

Each of the candidates has so far vowed to stay in the race, keeping the Republican contest crowded with just under three months until the Iowa caucuses kick off the nominating process. Fifteen Republicans are still running for president, while three Democrats are vying for their party's nomination.

"I'll go there, debate, and as soon as I leave the debate I'll go to Iowa and get back to work," Christie said Friday as he filed his paperwork to run in the New Hampshire primary.

Struggling candidates can see multiple reasons to keep their White House hopes alive. It's relatively inexpensive to campaign in Iowa and they can use television appearances as a way to get free publicity. Running for president can be a stepping stone to high-profile television jobs and other lucrative opportunities. And given that the field remains unsettled, there's always the possibility that an unlikely candidate can make a late surge in one of the early voting states.

## Hiring Surge Drives Unemployment Down

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. hiring swelled in October by the largest amount all year, and unemployment dropped another notch to 5 percent, increasing the likelihood that the Federal Reserve will raise interest rates next month for the first time in a decade.

With Americans spending more on everything from restaurant meals and clothing to new cars, employers added an impressive 271,000 jobs last month.

That was a strong rebound from August and September, when turmoil in China and other economies overseas proved a drag on the U.S. job market.

Unemployment declined from 5.1 percent in September and is now at its lowest point since April 2008, just a few months after the Great Recession began.

Even before Friday's report, expectations for a Fed rate increase in December were building. Fed chief Janet Yellen and other top officials said this week that the economy is generally healthy and a move at next month's meeting is a "live possibility."

## Church Rules Aimed At Gay Marriages

SALT LAKE CITY (AP) — Mormon church officials have issued a rule change that says members in same-sex marriages can be kicked out and their children must wait until they're 18 and disavow homosexual relationships to be baptized.

The revisions triggered a wave of anger, confusion and sadness for a growing faction of LGBT-supportive Mormons who were buoyed in recent years by church leaders' calls for more compassion and understanding for LGBT members.

"It feels like they are extending an olive branch and hitting you with it," said Wendy Montgomery, who is Mormon and has a 17-year-old gay son. "It's like this emotional whiplash."

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints disseminated the handbook changes this week to local church leaders around the world. The goal was to provide clarity to lay leaders who run congregations, church spokesman Eric Hawkins said. He noted the church has long been on record as opposing same-sex marriages.

"While it respects the law of the land, and acknowledges the right of others to think and act differently, it does not perform or accept same-sex marriage within its membership," Hawkins said in a statement.

## Project Aims To Save Brazil's Languages

PALMAS, Brazil (AP) — Guaricema Pataxo's indigenous roots are the cornerstone of her identity. The 53-year-old great-grandmother lives on her Pataxo people's reservation and makes a living by hawking their handicrafts, fully decked out in traditional regalia.

But ask her to speak Pataxo, and she can only stumble through a few basic words and phrases.

Her situation is not unusual.

Of the estimated 2,000 indigenous languages thought to have been spoken in pre-Columbian times in what is now Brazil, only around 160 survive today. Experts warn that as many as 40 percent of those remaining could be lost in the next few decades, as elders die off and young people get more access to television, the Internet and cellphones.

The pace of change has been accelerated by big agriculture's push into the hinterland, bringing roads, electricity and outsiders to areas with a high concentration of indigenous people.

## City Becomes First World Heritage in US

PHILADELPHIA (AP) — America's birthplace has been named the country's first World Heritage City, putting it on par with Jerusalem, Cairo, Paris and other places recognized for their impacts on the course of human events.

The Organization of World Heritage Cities added Philadelphia in a vote Friday at its biennial conference in Arequipa, Peru.

Philadelphia, the nation's fifth largest city, qualified because Independence Hall is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Declaration of Independence was signed at Independence Hall in 1776. Four years later, the Articles of Confederation, which united the 13 colonies, were ratified. The U.S. Constitution was debated and signed at Independence Hall in 1787, with George Washington presiding.

"The universal principles of freedom and democracy set forth in these documents are of fundamental importance to American history and have also had a profound impact on lawmakers around the world," according to UNESCO's website.

## Spruce Hoisted At Rockefeller Center

NEW YORK (AP) — A 78-foot Norway spruce from New York's Hudson Valley has been installed at Rockefeller Center for the Christmas season.

The 10-ton tree was hoisted into place Friday. It will be illuminated on Dec. 2.

The tree was cut down from the property of Albert Asendorf and Nancy Puchalski in Gardiner, New York. It was put on a trailer for the 80-mile trip to midtown Manhattan.

The annual tree-lighting ceremony at Rockefeller Center attracts tens of thousands of spectators and is watched by millions more on television.

After the holidays, the tree will be milled into lumber for Habitat for Humanity.

## Trump's Campaign Takes Twist On 'SNL'

NEW YORK (AP) — Donald Trump's unorthodox campaign for president will take another unusual step this weekend when he takes a break from typical campaigning to host "Saturday Night Live."

The appearance will put the billionaire businessman and reality TV star in rare company: Only eight politicians previously have hosted "Saturday Night Live" in its entire 40-year-old history.

And only one of those politicians-slash-guest hosts was an active presidential candidate — the Rev. Al Sharpton, who was seeking the Democratic nomination when he hosted in December 2003.

The appearance is the latest example of how Trump — who first guest hosted "SNL" in 2004 just weeks after the show he helped create, NBC's "The Apprentice," began airing — has been able to capitalize on his celebrity throughout his campaign, which has translated into record ratings for networks on each of the three Republican debates.

Trump has repeatedly bragged about the attention his appearances have been generating, predicting the show will have its highest ratings ever with him at the helm.

# In Shift, Russia Suspends Flights To Egypt, Citing Security

BY JIM HEINTZ

Associated Press

MOSCOW — In an abrupt turnaround, Russia on Friday suspended all passenger flights to Egypt after days of resisting U.S. and British suggestions that a bomb may have brought down a Russian plane in the Sinai Peninsula a week ago.

The move dealt a sharp blow to both countries' tourism sectors amid fears about security in Egypt.

Russia's federal aviation agency said airlines would be allowed to send empty planes to bring home travelers, but it was unclear when the Russians in Egypt, estimated to number at least 40,000, would be able to return home as planned from the Red Sea resorts including Sharm el-Sheikh.

Within hours of the Oct. 31 crash of the Metrojet Airbus 321-200 that killed all 224 aboard — mostly Russians — a faction of the Islamic State militant group claimed to have downed it in retaliation for Moscow's airstrikes that began a month earlier against fighters in Syria. The claim was initially dismissed on the grounds that the IS affiliate in Egypt's troubled Sinai region didn't have missiles capable of hitting high-flying planes.

British and U.S. officials, guided primarily by intelligence intercepts and satellite imagery, suggested a bomb might have been aboard the aircraft. The Russians and Egyptians called that premature, saying the investigation had not concluded.

France 2 TV, citing an investigator who had access to one of the Metrojet plane's flight recorders, reported that "the sound of an explosion can be distinctly heard during the flight." France's BEA accident investigation agency said it could not confirm the report.

After Britain suspended its flights to and from Sharm el-Sheikh, Prime Minister David Cameron said it was "more likely than not" that the cause was a bomb. President Barack Obama also said the U.S. was taking "very seriously" the possibility that a bomb brought down the plane in the Sinai, where Egyptian forces have been battling an Islamic insurgency for years.

As the suspicions grew, Russia ap-

peared unwilling to countenance the possibility, and Egyptian officials played down terrorism as a cause of the crash, with President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi calling the IS claim "propaganda" designed to embarrass his government.

But on Friday, the head of Russian intelligence, Alexander Bortnikov, recommended a suspension of all flights to Egypt "until we determine the real reasons of what happened," and President Vladimir Putin quickly agreed.

The flight suspension order would last until "a proper level of aviation security is in place," Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said, denying it will run until the investigation was finished. He added that it "definitely doesn't mean" Russia regards terrorism as the main theory.

Putin and el-Sissi spoke by telephone a few hours after the suspension was announced, and they agreed to cooperate further in order to "confirm the overall effectiveness of the security measures taken by Egyptian authorities at the airports of the country," the Kremlin said in a statement.

The U.S. Homeland Security Department announced new procedures that will include expanded security screening of items put on commercial jets, airport assessments and offers of security assistance for certain international airports. White House spokesman Josh Earnest said the new protocols apply to fewer than 10 overseas airports in "the region in which the Sinai Peninsula is located."

Wreckage from the Metrojet plane was brought to Moscow to be tested for any trace of explosives, according to Emergency Situations Minister Vladimir Puchkov. The samples came "from all parts where traces of explosives could be," he said in televised comments.

There was chaos, confusion and frustration at the Sharm el-Sheikh airport as Britain struggled to bring home some 20,000 of its nationals stranded since London halted its flights earlier in the week.

London approved the resumption of British flights to Sinai starting Friday and planned a wave of flights to retrieve its stranded nationals, but it banned passengers from checking luggage on the flights. Instead, any checked-in bags were to be brought later on cargo planes.

But the pileup of checked-in luggage overwhelmed the airport and disrupted flight operations, said Egyptian Civil Aviation Minister Hossam Kamal. So Egypt limited the number of incoming British flights to pick up the tourists, reducing them to eight Friday instead of the planned 29, he said.

Several flights that took off from London had to turn around or go elsewhere after Egyptian authorities told them they couldn't land at Sharm el-Sheikh.

Hundreds of British tourists were brought to the airport for flights out, only to be told they didn't have one. More confusion was caused by the checked baggage ban.

"When are we going home?" one irate tourist shouted at British Ambassador John Casson when he appeared in the departure hall trying to reassure beleaguered travelers.

In the morning, Egyptians carried out expanded security checks as dozens of buses ferrying British and Russian tourists waited outside the airport, the line stretching up to a kilometer (half mile) as police inspected each vehicle.

Standing in a crush of people waiting to go through security, British tourist Terrace Mathurian said hotel staff told him and his family in the morning to head to the airport despite the conflicting information.

Besides Britain, Ireland also suspended flights to Sharm el-Sheikh on Wednesday. Since then, countries including Belgium, the Netherlands and France have told citizens not to travel to the Red Sea resort. Several carriers have stopped flying to Sharm, including German airlines Edelweiss and Eurowings and Slovenia's Adria.

Dutch carrier KLM imposed a hand-luggage-only policy on flights out of Egypt, while Air France said it was reinforcing screening procedures in Cairo but still accepting checked-in luggage.

Russia's suspension of passenger flights was more sweeping than the others, covering all of Egypt.

Deputy Prime Minister Arkady Dvorkovich said Russia was making plans to ensure additional transportation "will be developed in the next several weeks."

## Defiant Carson: Questions About West Point Story Are Unfair

BY STEVE PEOPLES

Associated Press

PALM BEACH GARDENS, Fla. — A defiant Ben Carson on Friday rejected the idea his past descriptions of receiving a scholarship offer to attend West Point were inaccurate, and called questions about the veracity of the story irrelevant to his campaign for president.

"I think what it shows, and these kinds of things show, is there is a desperation on behalf of some to try to find a way to tarnish me," Carson told reporters at a news conference near West Palm Beach. "Because they have been looking through everything. They have been talking to everyone I have ever known and everybody I have ever seen. There has got to be a scandal."

Carson, a newcomer to na-

tional politics, has developed a passionate following based in part on his inspirational personal story and devotion to Christian values. The only African-American in the Republican 2016 class, Carson grew up in inner-city Detroit and often speaks about his brushes with violence and poverty during his early years.

Following a story published by Politico earlier on Friday, his campaign sought to clarify Carson's story about his interest in attending the U.S. Military Academy in his breakout book, "Gifted Hands," in which he outlines his participation with the Reserve Officers' Training Corps, commonly known as ROTC, while in high school.

"I was offered a full scholarship to West Point," Carson wrote in the 1996 book. "I didn't refuse the scholarship

outright, but I let them know that a military career wasn't where I saw myself going. As overjoyed as I felt to be offered such a scholarship, I wasn't really tempted."

Carson has repeated the story over the years, including in an interview in October with talk-show host Charlie Rose.

Campaign spokesman Doug Watts said Carson was "the top ROTC student in the city of Detroit" and "was introduced to folks from West Point by his ROTC supervisors."

"They told him they could help him get an appointment based on his grades and performance in ROTC. He considered it but in the end did not seek admission," Watts said.

Students granted admission to West Point are not awarded scholarships. Instead, they are said to earn

appointments to the military academy, which come with tuition, room and board and expenses paid, in exchange for five years of service in the Army after graduation.

A West Point spokesman on Friday said the academy "cannot confirm whether anyone during that time period was nominated to West Point if they chose not to pursue completion of the application process."

At his news conference on Friday night, Carson said, "it was an offer to me. It was specifically made." He said he could not recall specifically who made the offer, but he pushed back against the idea that he should be able to do so.

"I don't remember the names of the people," Carson said. "It's almost 50 years ago. I bet you don't remember all the people you talked to 50 years ago."

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