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Don't expect a different result coming out of the Electoral College.



# THE HAWK EYE



Freezing rain 29° 23° details, 8B

BURLINGTON, IOWA

FRIDAY

DECEMBER 16, 2016

180th year — No. 160 75¢



John Lovretta/The Hawk Eye

Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad is served a piece of a muffaletta sandwich by Danielle Scheetz, 17, a senior from Holy Trinity High School as Elliott Test Kitchen founder Kumar Wickramasingha watches Thursday in downtown Fort Madison. Founded in October 2015, Wickramasingha opened Elliot Test Kitchen so Fort Madison, Holy Trinity and Central Lee's junior- and senior-high school students could work on homework after school and learn how to cook.

## Good food helps boost ACT scores

Branstad makes what could be his last trip to southeast Iowa as governor.

By ELIZABETH MEYER  
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FORT MADISON — As Gov. Terry Branstad walked through the door of Elliott Test Kitchen Thursday, he reminded well-wishers his time in the Iowa Capitol isn't done yet, and he's the state's chief executive until sworn in to his new post in China. "I'm still the governor," Branstad told the crowd as they applauded the nation's longest serving governor, "and I will be until I'm sworn in."

Shaking hands and mingling with constituents, locals eagerly approached the governor to congratulate him on his appointment as U.S. ambassador to China.

"I still have to go before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee," the governor reminded them as they chatted briefly about the confirmation process.

Branstad was in Fort Madison to visit the Elliott Test Kitchen, a nonprofit organization founded last year by Kumar Wickramasingha.

Born and raised in the island nation of Sri Lanka, Wickramasingha came to southeast Iowa in 1986 as an exchange student, where he met Fort Madison teachers George and Jean Alton who invited the young man to stay in their home and take classes at Southeastern Community College.

"We celebrate education and great food," Wickramasingha told the crowd as he explained the kitchen's mission. "I really wanted a community place in downtown Fort Madison where kids can come, teachers can come and help kids with homework. In many small rural counties, when kids come home there's no one to help with their homework, so I wanted to provide a place for that."

The organization recently began offering test preparation for the ACT, a college entrance exam, in addition to its cooking lessons, homework help, and



John Lovretta/The Hawk Eye

Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad talks with Neal Dodd and Mayor Brad Randolph during a visit Thursday to the Elliott Test Kitchen in Fort Madison. Branstad, who has been nominated as President-elect Donald Trump's ambassador to China, was making perhaps his final visit to Lee County as governor.

college application support.

From 6 to 8 p.m. every Tuesday, students are encouraged to attend free tutoring sessions at Elliott Test Kitchen. The classes will continue until the next ACT exam is offered Feb. 11.

Beginning in April, the Downtown Ivy in Burlington will serve as an additional location for students across the area to receive help studying for the exam.

Thirty-five students studied with educators at Elliott Test Kitchen and took the ACT in October. The group's average exam score was 25.4, compared to the statewide average of 22.1, according to an ACT report compiled about Iowa students.

The highest ACT score achievable is 36.

This month they had to contain the number of students participating to 40, due to space constraints.

Of the 173 students who graduated in 2016 from

Fort Madison High School, only 47 took the ACT, Wickramasingha said.

"That is a staggering number," he said. "So now I knew I had something to go after."

The seven-member board of directors guide the Test Kitchen Education Foundation's mission, with Fort Madison High School teachers Brent Zirkel and Andrew Troxel at the helm.

Troxel, who has taught social studies at the high school since 2010, was a top five finalist for the 2017 Teacher of the Year award in Iowa.

Neal Dodd, owner of Dodd Printing and Stationary downtown, said the ACT-prep is important to students who may struggle to find that kind of help elsewhere.

"Homework's a little out of style right now, so

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## IPIB OKs Beavers settlement

Agreement does not affect open records complaint against Burlington police, state investigative agency.

By ANDY HOFFMAN  
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DES MOINES — The Iowa Public Information Board unanimously agreed Thursday to approve a settlement in which Des Moines County Attorney Amy Beavers was fined \$200 for violating the Iowa open records law involving the fatal police shooting of Autumn Steele.

As part of the agreement, Beavers agreed to pay the fine, but did not have to admit any wrongdoing for failing to turnover records into the investigation.

Margaret Johnson, interim executive director of the IPIB, told the board Beavers' agreement ends her involvement in the open records dispute, but does not affect pending cases before the board involving the Burlington Police Department and the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation.

As part of the settlement, Beavers agreed to develop a policy regarding how her office handles requests for open records, Johnson told the board.

"There wasn't any malicious intent on the part of the county attorney (to withhold the records) and she has cooperated fully with us," said Johnson, who was named interim director of the board after Charlie Smithson resigned earlier this month to become the secretary of the Iowa Senate. "The basic problem was she didn't have a policy in place (in her office) to handle requests. She has since instituted a policy regarding open records requests."

Beavers' attorney, Eric Updegraff of the Des Moines law firm Hopkins & Huebner told the board the agreement represented a compromise. He said Beavers continues to maintain she did nothing wrong, indicating his client did not believe her office had the Steele records when Adam Klein, an attorney representing the Steele family, asked for them.

He said Beavers thought the records already had been returned to the DCI after she completed a review of the case, which led her to decide Burlington police officer Jesse Hill acted within the law when he accidentally shot Steele after slipping on ice Jan. 6, 2015, outside Steele's Burlington home.

However, Johnson told the board her investigation determined the records involving the DCI's investigation were still in the county attorney's office when the open records requests were made.

Steele was shot after Hill had been dispatched to the Steele home because she was involved in a domestic disturbance with her husband, Gabe. As Hill attempted to break up the fight, the Steeles' family dog jumped on him. Hill tried to shoot the dog, but inadvertently fatally shot

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## Don't look to the Electoral College to upend Trump

Porn star tries changing one Republican's mind.

By CALVIN WOODWARD  
and RACHEL LA CORTE  
Associated Press

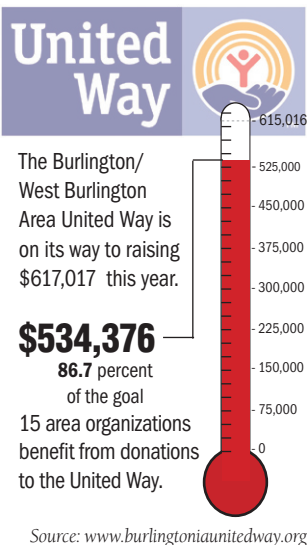
WASHINGTON — There's more hustle than hope behind an effort to derail Donald Trump's presidency in the Electoral College.

Republican electors are being swamped with pleas to buck tradition and cast ballots for someone else at meetings across the country Monday to

ratify Trump as the winner. AP interviews with more than 330 electors from both parties found little appetite for a revolt.

Whether they like Trump, and some plainly don't, scores of the Republicans chosen to cast votes said they feel bound by history, duty, party loyalty or the law to rubber-stamp their state's results and make him president. Appeals numbering in the tens of thousands — drowning inboxes, ringing cell phones, stuffing home and office mailboxes with actual

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## Dylann Roof convicted of all counts in SC church slaughter

Associated Press

CHARLESTON, S.C. — Dylann Roof was convicted Thursday in the chilling slaughter of nine black church members who welcomed him to their Bible study.

The same federal jury that found Roof guilty of all 33 counts will reconvene next month to hear more testimony and weigh whether to sentence him to death. As the verdict was read, Roof stared ahead, much as he did the entire trial. Family members of victims held hands and squeezed one another's arms.

Roof, 22, told FBI agents he wanted to

bring back segregation or perhaps start a race war with the slayings. Instead, the single biggest change to emerge from the June 17, 2015, killings was the removal of the Confederate flag from the South Carolina Statehouse, where it had flown for 50 years over the Capitol or on the grounds. Roof appeared with the flag in several photos in a racist manifesto.

In Roof's confession to the FBI, the gunman said he carried out the killings after researching "black on white crime" on the internet. He said he chose a church because the setting posed little danger to him.



FROM THE FRONT PAGE

Electors

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handwritten letters — have not swayed them.

Interviews found widespread Democratic aggravation with the process but little expectation the anti-Trump maneuvering can stop him. For that to happen, Republican-appointed electors would have to stage an unprecedented defection.

Still, people going to the typically ho-hum electoral gatherings have been drawn into the rough and tumble of campaign-season politics. Republicans are being beseeched to revolt, centered on the arguments Clinton won the popular vote and Trump is unsuited to the presidency. Most is falling on deaf ears, but it has led to some acquaintances being made across the great political divide.

“Let me give you the total as of right now: 48,324 emails about my role as an elector,” said Brian Westrate, a small-business owner and GOP district chairman in Fall Creek, Wis. “I have a Twitter debate with a former porn star from California asking me to change my vote. It’s been fascinating.”

Even a leader of the anti-Trump effort, Bret Chiafalo of Everett, Wash. calls it a “losing bet” — but one he said the republic’s founders would want him to make.

“I believe that Donald Trump is a unique danger to our country and the Founding Fathers put the Electoral College in place to, among other things, stop that from happening,” said Chiafalo, 38, an Xbox network engineer who backed Bernie Sanders in the Democratic primaries.

It takes 270 electoral votes to make a president. Despite losing the national popular vote, Trump won enough states to total 306 electoral votes. He would need to see three dozen fall away for him to lose his majority. Only one Republican elector told the AP he won’t vote for Trump.

Over the sweep of history, so-called faithless electors — those who vote for someone other than their state’s popular-vote winner — have been exceptionally rare.

Nashville attorney Tom Lawless, who chose Marco Rubio in the primaries, described his vow to cast his electoral vote for Trump in blunt terms: “Hell will freeze and we will be skating on the lava before I change,” he said.

Key dates left in process

WASHINGTON — The Nov. 8 election set in motion a timeline and process by which the 538 members of the Electoral College select the president. Here’s a look at key dates left before a new president is sworn in:

**Dec. 19:** Electors meet in each state to vote for president and vice president on separate ballots. Generally, they vote in state capitals. Most states have a “winner-take-all” system that awards all electors to the winning presidential candidate in that state. Maine and Nebraska have a more proportional system. Each elector records his or her vote on six original “certificates of vote,” which are paired with six “certificates of attainment.” The electors sign, seal and certify packages of electoral votes and send them to federal and state officials.

**Dec. 28:** The president of the Senate, the archivist of the United States and other federal and state officials must have the “certificates of vote” in hand.

**Jan. 6:** Congress meets in joint session to count the electoral votes. This time, Vice President Joe Biden, as president of the Senate, will preside. Votes from the states are opened and recorded in alphabetical order. Biden will announce the results and declare who is elected president and vice president.

**Jan. 20:** Inauguration Day. The president-elect is sworn into office.

“He won the state and I’ve pledged and gave my word that that’s what I would do. And I won’t break it.”

As much as they don’t want Trump in office, some Democrats are as reluctant as Republicans to go rogue.

“We lost the election,” said John Padilla of Albuquerque, N.M., a Democratic ward chairman. “That’s how elections are and you shake hands with your opponent and you get on with what you have to do and support your candidate.”

Branstad

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they’re not getting a ton,” Dodd explained. “But Kumar figured out we weren’t putting many kids into the ACT test locally — less than we should — and our scores weren’t good.

“If you go to areas that are more affluent, they have counselors that work with the students and encourage them and so on,” he said. “We just can’t do that. So we’ve kind of shifted a little bit toward that, and we’ve had some terrific success.”

Dodd’s introduction to ACT-prep came when his oldest son was touring colleges and people asked how he was preparing for the exam.

“My wife and I looked at each other like, ‘what?’ So we dug in and helped with that. I’ve always believed we don’t get going early enough in terms of looking for schools.

“We just thought, well, let’s do a little bit extra for kids locally. Let’s help them with homework if they’re stymied. Let’s do something to drag them



John Lovretta/The Hawk Eye

Iowa Gov. Terry Branstad speaks while visiting the Elliott Test Kitchen Thursday in downtown Fort Madison. Kumar Wickramasingha opened Elliot Test Kitchen a year ago so Fort Madison, Holy Trinity and Central Lee students could work on homework after school and learn how to cook in the process.

in, like cooking. And now we’re doing the ACT here.”

Danielle Scheetz and Ali Randolph, seniors at Holy Trinity Catholic Schools in Fort Madison, were part of the inaugural

group of students this semester to take a culinary class at Elliott Test Kitchen.

“We come here every other day and Kumar has something for us to prepare,” said Ran-

dolph, 17. “It’s really fun and enjoyable.”

Although the meal served Thursday was prepared by Wickramasingha, he said the students have all learned how to make the meal, which included lemon-glazed pork loin, wild rice casserole, brussel sprouts, a pumpkin crunch dessert and cupcakes.

“He’s a really fun teacher for us and he makes the class fun,” Randolph said. “It’s something that our school hasn’t been able to do before, so it’s nice to be able to have this opportunity.”

Before leaving Fort Madison for his next stop at Keokuk Memorial Hospital, Branstad was asked about his appointment by President-elect Donald Trump to serve as U.S. ambassador to China, a position the governor likely will not assume for several months.

“It’s not going to be an easy assignment, obviously, because there’s some significant differences in policy matters and things like that,” Branstad said. “But I hope that I can be an effective go-between and communicator.”

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