

Groton Daily Independent

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No School today at Groton Area due to the weather

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Chicken Soup
for the Soul

“EVERYONE HAS
UNTOLD STORIES OF
PAIN AND SADNESS
THAT MAKE THEM
LOVE AND LIVE A
LITTLE DIFFERENTLY
THAN YOU DO.
STOP JUDGING;
INSTEAD, TRY TO
UNDERSTAND.”

-AUTHOR UNKNOWN

C team girls beat Roncalli

The Groton Area girls pulled out a 21-19 win in the C game. It was part of three games played Tuesday at Aberdeen Roncalli. The junior varsity and varsity teams both lost.

In the C game, the game was tied four times and there were five lead changes. The Tigers took a 20-17 lead and hug on for the win. According to reports, it was the first girls win in a long time against Roncalli. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Olson Development.

Anna Fjeldheim led the Tigers with seven points while Sydney Leicht had six, and Lydia Meier and Emma Schinkel each had four points.

Ava Hanson led the Cavaliers with nine points.

Roncalli won the junior varsity game, 31-9. Maddie Bjerke had six points while Trista Keith had two points and Marlee Tollifson one. The game was broadcast live on GDILIVE.COM, sponsored by Larry and Kathy Harry.

Jeci Ewart led the Cavaliers with 10 points while Olivia Hanson had eight.

Roncalli won the varsity game, 65-22. That game was broadcast live on GDLIVE.COM, sponsored by Locke Electric and the South Dakota Army National Guard.

Brooke Gengerke led the Tigers with eight points while Kaycie Hawkins had six, Alyssa Thaler five, Trista Keith two and Allyssa Locke had one free throw.

Morgan Fiedler and Mariah Winegar each had 15 points for Roncalli.

OPEN: Recycling Trailer in Groton

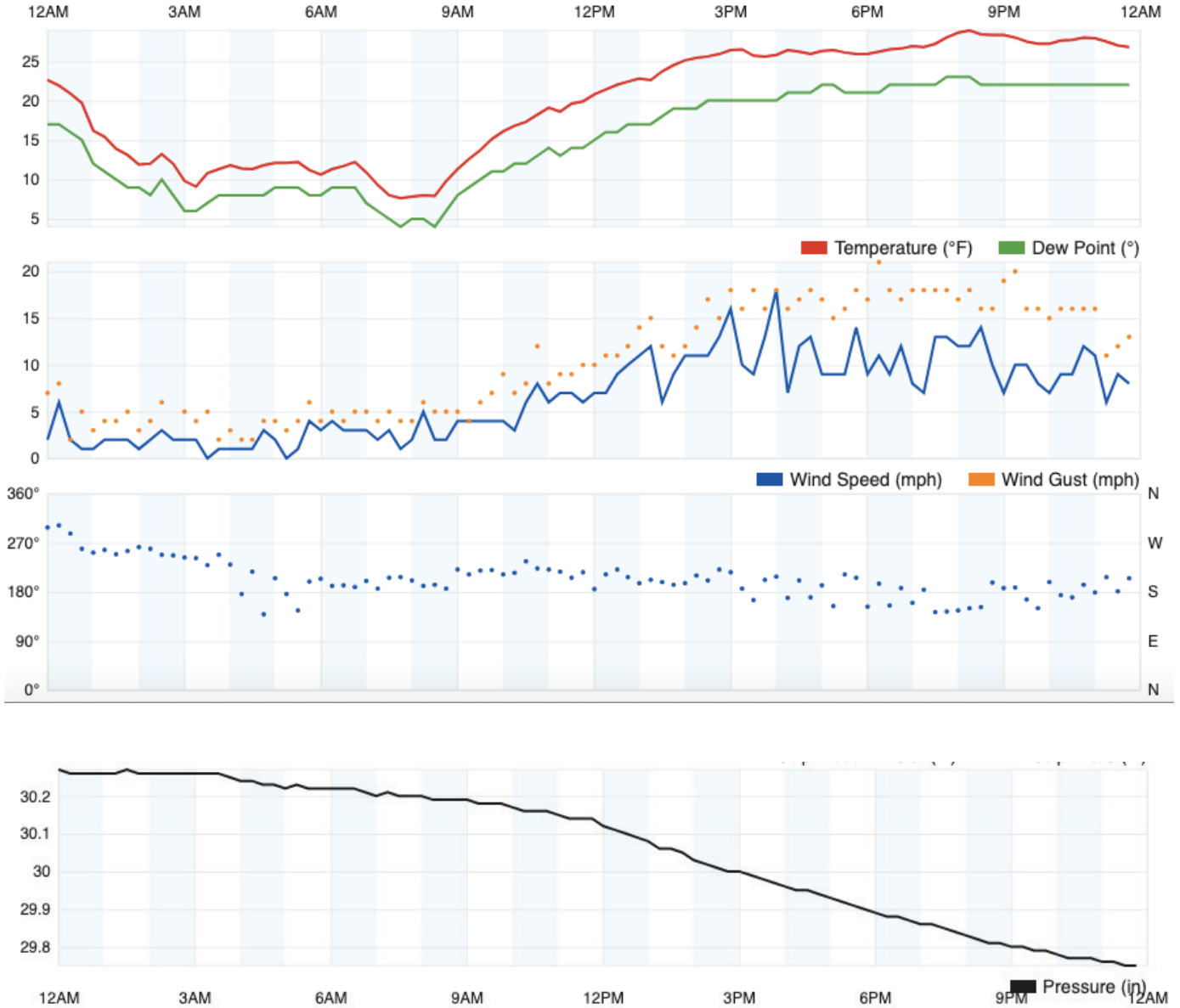
The recycling trailer is located at 10 East Railroad Ave. It takes cardboard, papers and aluminum cans.

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Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



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Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 13, 2020

1:30pm- 8:30pm Parent/Teacher Conferences at GHS Gymnasium, Groton Area Elementary School

Friday, February 14, 2020

Rushmore Challenge Debate at Harrisburg High School

NO SCHOOL - Faculty Inservice

Basketball Double Header at Warner. Girls JV at 4 p.m., Boys JV at 5:15 p.m., Girls Varsity at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Boys Varsity Game.

Saturday, February 15, 2020

Rushmore Challenge Debate at Harrisburg High School

10:00 a.m.: Junior High State Wrestling Tournament at Pierre High School

Basketball Doubleheader with Mobridge-Pollock coming to Groton Area. Girls JV at 2 p.m., Boys JV at 3 p.m., Girls Varsity at 4:30 p.m. followed by the Boys Varsity Game.

Sunday, February 16, 2020

2:00pm- 6:00pm: Open Gym at GHS Arena

2:00-4:00 PM Grades JK-8 (Students must be accompanied by an adult) 4:00-6:00 PM Grades 6-12

Monday, February 17, 2020

President's Day - NO SCHOOL

Boys Basketball hosts Aberdeen Roncalli. C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV then Varsity.

Tuesday, February 18, 2020

Girls Varsity at Webster Area. JV game at 6:30 p.m. followed by Varsity Game.

7 pm.: City Council Meeting at Groton Community Center

Thursday, February 20, 2020

Girls Basketball hosts Milbank. C game at 5 p.m. followed by JV then Varsity

Friday, February 21, 2020

Boys Basketball at Milbank. C game at 5 p.m., followed by JV then Varsity.

6:30pm: Elementary PAC Science Night at Groton Area Elementary School

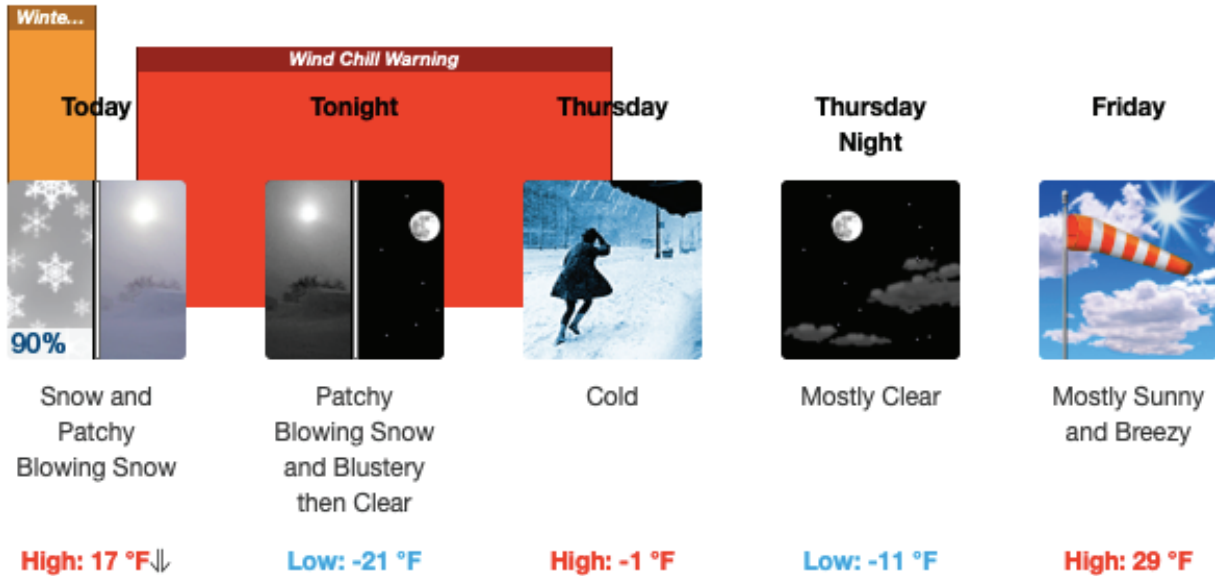
Saturday, February 22, 2020

Basketball: Boys 7th/8th Jamboree at Britton-Hecla High School

10:00am: Wrestling: Varsity Regions at Sisseton

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Winter Weather Storm Wednesday

A fast moving winter storm is expected to pass through the region Wednesday. Light snow, generally under an inch is expected. The larger concern will be the accompanied gusty winds behind the cold front. Gusts up to 55 mph and blowing snow are possible, especially in northeast SD.

	Midnight Wed	3am Wed	6am Wed	9am Wed	Noon Wed	3pm Wed	6pm Wed	9pm Wed
Mobridge & surrounding area	Light Snow		Blowing Snow					
			Near Blizzard Conditions					
Pierre & surrounding area		Light Snow		Blowing Snow				
				Near Blizzard Conditions				
Miller & surrounding area		Light Snow		Blowing Snow				
				Near Blizzard Conditions				
Aberdeen & surrounding area		Light Snow		Blowing Snow				
				Near Blizzard Conditions				
Sisseton & surrounding area		Light Snow		Blowing Snow				
				Possible Blizzard Conditions				
Watertown & surrounding area		Light Snow		Blowing Snow				
				Near Blizzard Conditions				

Visit www.weather.gov/abr for a detailed local forecast

Updated: 2/11/2020 10:21 PM CT

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE
OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

A fast moving blizzard is moving into the region bringing light snow and gusty winds Wednesday morning/afternoon. Conditions will deteriorate quickly and travel may become hazardous with blowing/drifting snow and reduced visibilities. Following the storm, temperatures plummet with wind chill temps of -25 to -40 expected.

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Today in Weather History

February 12, 1905: On this date in weather history, record low temperatures occurred across northeast South Dakota and west central Minnesota with lows in the 30s below zero. Sisseton, Aberdeen, and Watertown all had record lows. Sisseton fell to 31 degrees below zero, Watertown saw 35 degrees below zero, and Aberdeen dropped to 36 degrees below zero in 1905. In central South Dakota, Kennebec fell to 34 degrees below zero.

1784: Ice floes were spotted in the Gulf of Mexico after passing out of the Mississippi River in February 1784. Ice blocked the river at New Orleans, Louisiana. The ice in New Orleans is one of two times that this occurred, the other during the Great Arctic Outbreak of 1899. The eruption of Laki in Iceland from June 8, 1783, through February 7, 1784, is the likely cause for the severe winter of 1783 to 1784.

1899: More from the bitter cold outbreak of 1899. Texas and the Eastern Plains experienced their coldest morning of modern record. The mercury dipped to 8 degrees below zero at Fort Worth, Texas and 22 degrees below zero at Kansas City, Missouri. The temperature at Camp Clarke, Nebraska plunged to 47 degrees below zero to establish a record for the state. The all-time record low for Oklahoma City was set. The mercury fell to a frigid 17 degrees below zero and broke the previous record low of 12 below zero, which was set on the previous day. In the eastern U.S., Washington D.C. hit 15 degrees below zero, while Charleston SC received a record four inches of snow. Snow was reported in Fort Myers, Tampa, and Tallahassee in Florida.

1958: Snow blanketed northern Florida, with Tallahassee reporting a record 2.8 inches. A ship in the Gulf of Mexico, 25 miles south of Fort Morgan Alabama, reported zero visibility in heavy snow on the afternoon of the 12th.

1960 - A snowstorm in the Deep South produced more than a foot of snow in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama. (David Ludlum)

1987 - A storm in the eastern U.S. produced high winds from North Carolina to Maine. A storm in the western U.S. produced up to thirty inches of snow in the Sierra Nevada Range of California. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A classic "nor'easter" formed off the Carolina coast and intensified as it moved up the Atlantic coast bringing heavy snow to the northeastern U.S. Totals ranged up to 26 inches at Camden NY and Chester MA. Arctic cold gripped the north central U.S. Duluth MN was the cold spot in the nation with a low of 32 degrees below zero. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1989 - Unseasonably mild weather prevailed across Alaska. Morning lows of 29 degrees at Anchorage and 31 degrees at Fairbanks were actually warmer than those in northern Florida. (The National Weather Summary)

1990 - Strong southerly winds ahead of an arctic cold front pushed temperatures into the 70s as far north as Iowa and Nebraska. Twenty-one cities in the central U.S., seven in Iowa, reported record high temperatures for the date. Lincoln NE reported a record high of 73 degrees, and the afternoon high of 59 degrees at Minneapolis MN smashed their previous record for the date by twelve degrees. Springfield IL reported a record forty-eight consecutive days with above normal temperatures. (The National Weather Summary)

2006 - An intense snow squall off of Lake Michigan cuts visibility to zero along a section of US 31. The resulting whiteout causes 96 cars to pile up. 25 were injured.

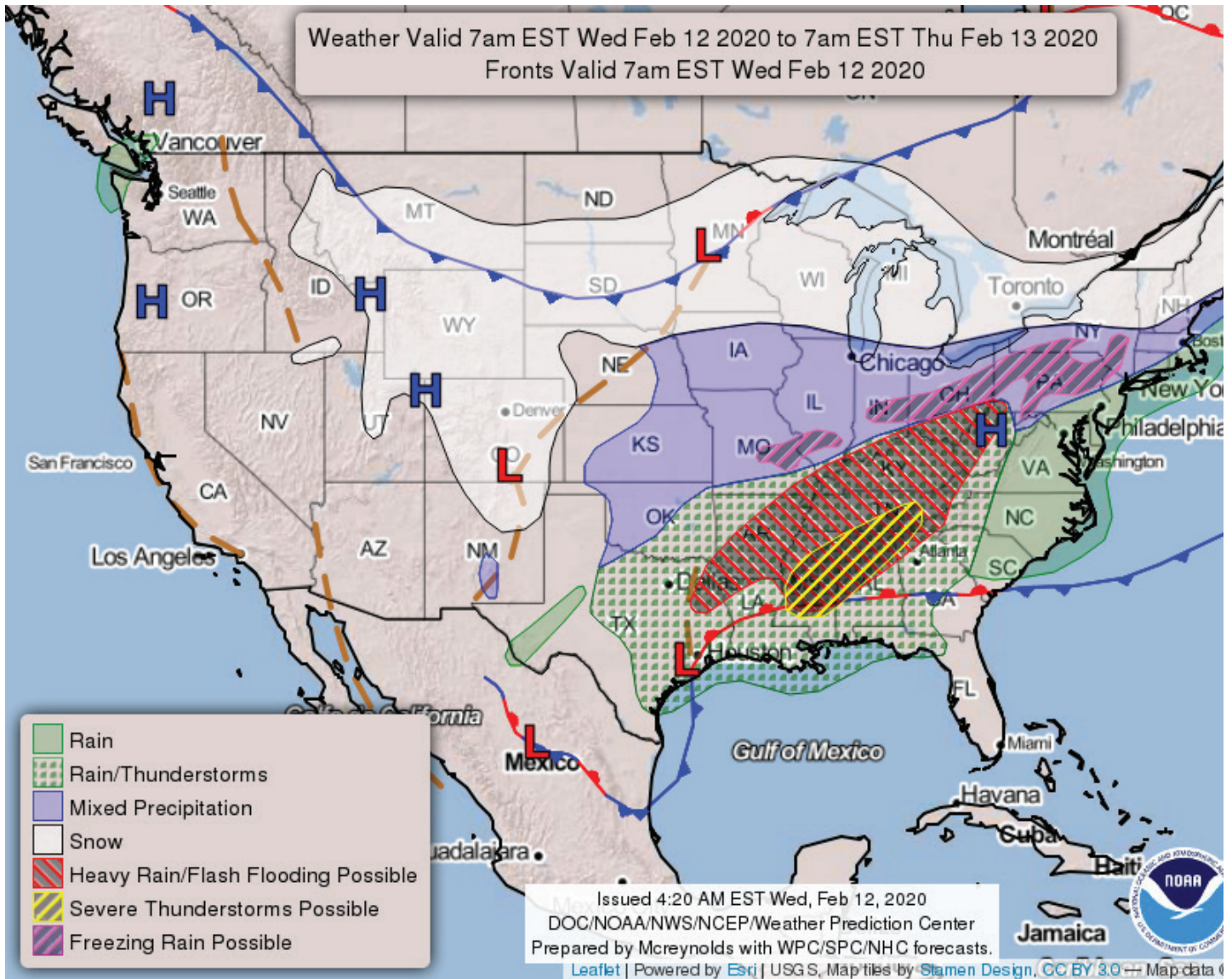
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Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 29 °F at 8:17 PM
Low Temp: 7 °F at 7:53 AM
Wind: 21 mph at 6:11 PM
Snow

Record High: 62° in 1921
Record Low: -36° in 1905
Average High: 27°F
Average Low: 6°F
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.17
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 0.64
Precip Year to Date: 0.35
Sunset Tonight: 5:56 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:39 a.m.



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KNOWING AND DOING

Two men were enjoying the annual church golf tournament. While waiting for their turn, one said to the other, "There are times when I would like to ask God why He allows hunger and poverty to exist. If He is all-powerful, why doesn't He do something about it?"

"Well," asked his friend, "why don't you ask Him?"

"Because," he answered, "I'm afraid He might ask me the same question."

Many believe that we only sin when we do what we know is wrong: by not obeying the Word of God, its commands, and teachings. Not so, writes James. Listen carefully...

"Sin," said James, "is also not doing what we know to be the right thing to do." We would all agree that it is a sin to disregard and break the Ten Commandments. But it is also a sin if someone speaks evil of a brother or sister and remain silent. We sin if we do not speak up on behalf of others when they are being harmed by gossip and greed. God also expects us to do kind acts, serve those in need, be good stewards of His gifts, and protect others the way He protects us. Someday we will be judged by our standard of giving not our standard of living.

Prayer: Help us, Lord, to do what we know is right, to avoid what we know is wrong, and always honor You as Your son honored us. May we follow His example each day. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: James 4:17 If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them.

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2020 Groton SD Community Events

- 03/14/2020 Youth Girls/Boys Basketball Tourney Grades 4th-6th (Baseball/Softball Foundation Fundraiser)
 - 04/04/2020 Groton Lions Club Easter Egg Hunt - City Park (Saturday a week before Easter Weekend)
 - 04/04/2020 Dueling Piano's Baseball Fundraiser at the American Legion
 - 04/25/2020 Fireman's Stag (Same Saturday as GHS Prom)
 - 04/25-26/2020 Front Porch 605 Rural Route Road Trip
 - 04/26/2020 Father/Daughter dance.
 - 05/02/2020 Spring City-Wide Rummage Sales, (1st Saturday in May)
 - 05/25/2020 Groton American Legion Post #39 Memorial Day Services
 - 06/05/2020 Athletic Fundraiser at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 06/8-10/2020 St. John's VBS
 - 06/19/2020 SDSU Golf at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 06/22/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ladies Invitational
 - 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney (4th of July)
 - 07/12/2020 Summer Fest/Car Show
 - 07/16/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Pro Am Golf Tourney
 - 07/31-08/04/2020 State American Legion Baseball Tournament in Groton
 - 09/12/2020 Fall City-Wide Rummage Sales (1st Sat. after Labor Day)
 - 09/13/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Couples Sunflower Classic
 - 10/09/2020 Lake Region Marching Band Festival (2nd Friday in October)
 - 10/10/2020 Pumpkin Fest (Saturday before Columbus Day)
 - 10/31/2020 Downtown Trick or Treat
 - 10/31/2020 Groton United Methodist Trunk or Treat
 - 11/14/2020 Groton Legion Annual Turkey Party (Saturday closest to Veteran's Day)
 - 11/26/2020 Community Thanksgiving at the Community Center
 - 12/05/2020 Santa Claus Day at Professional Management Services
 - 01/--/2021 83rd Annual Carnival of Silver Skates
-
- Bingo every Wednesday 6:30pm at the American Legion Post #39
 - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Meat, American Legion Post #39 7pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
 - Groton Lions Club Wheel of Pizza, Jungle Lanes 8pm (Saturday nights November 30th thru April 11th)
-
- All dates are subject to change, check for updates here

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News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) _ These South Dakota lotteries were drawn Tuesday:

Mega Millions

04-06-32-52-64, Mega Ball: 6, Megaplier: 2

(four, six, thirty-two, fifty-two, sixty-four; Mega Ball: six; Megaplier: two)

Estimated jackpot: \$202 million

Powerball

Estimated jackpot: \$70 million

Tuesday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS BASKETBALL=

Belle Fourche 62, Rapid City Christian 55

Beresford 59, Garretson 54

Burke 54, Bon Homme 36

Canistota 63, Menno 23

Crow Creek 66, Chamberlain 54

Dakota Valley 51, Vermillion 48

DeSmet 61, Flandreau 29

Dell Rapids 85, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 56

Douglas 62, Hot Springs 31

Elk Point-Jefferson 53, Kingsley-Pierson, Iowa 46

Elkton-Lake Benton 64, Great Plains Lutheran 54

Florence/Henry 58, Castlewood 47

Freeman Academy/Marion 58, Gayville-Volin 47

Hamlin 62, Deubrook 50

Herreid/Selby Area 53, Sully Buttes 46

Highmore-Harrold 68, Hitchcock-Tulare 47

Howard 52, Baltic 38

Huron 63, Pierre 42

James Valley Christian 48, Mitchell Christian 31

Kadoka Area 57, New Underwood 27

Leola/Frederick 60, Wilmot 47

Lyman 62, Kimball/White Lake 43

Madison 64, West Central 52

McCook Central/Montrose 64, Crofton, Neb. 52

McLaughlin 69, Cheyenne-Eagle Butte 67

Milbank 64, Britton-Hecla 59

North Central, Neb. 48, Colome 38

Northwestern 62, Webster 57

Oldham-Ramona/Rutland 47, Chester 45

Parkston 54, Scotland 20

Pine Ridge 92, Bennett County 31

Platte-Geddes 57, Todd County 44

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Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 68, Iroquois 52
Sioux Falls O'Gorman 64, Aberdeen Central 59
Sioux Valley 75, Deuel 45
St. Thomas More 83, Red Cloud 62
Tea Area 65, Canton 48
Tripp-Delmont/Armour 57, Wagner 37
Viborg-Hurley 81, Avon 20
Warner 48, Redfield 32
Waubay/Summit 71, Estelline/Hendricks 56
Waverly-South Shore 60, Lake Preston 50
Winner 74, St. Francis Indian 49
Wynot, Neb. 42, Irene-Wakonda 40
GIRLS BASKETBALL=
Aberdeen Roncalli 65, Groton Area 22
Andes Central/Dakota Christian 57, Marty Indian 46
Beresford 50, Garretson 49
Bridgewater-Emery 60, Alcester-Hudson 19
Burke 53, Bon Homme 27
Corsica/Stickney 76, Kimball/White Lake 50
Dakota Valley 51, Vermillion 37
Douglas 52, Hill City 48
Dupree 49, Harding County 48
Elk Point-Jefferson 67, Kingsley-Pierson, Iowa 48
Faulkton 73, Potter County 41
Flandreau 46, DeSmet 37
Freeman 72, Hanson 51
Gayville-Volin 55, Freeman Academy/Marion 25
Hamlin 64, Deubrook 36
Herreid/Selby Area 41, Sully Buttes 36
Howard 57, Baltic 39
Huron 61, Pierre 59
Ipswich 48, Aberdeen Christian 46
Irene-Wakonda 52, Wynot, Neb. 43
Jones County 41, Philip 38
Langford 56, North Central Co-Op 35
Lennox 65, Pipestone, Minn. 28
Miller 45, Stanley County 17
Mitchell Christian 39, James Valley Christian 38
Mobridge-Pollock 61, Timber Lake 47
Mott-Regent, N.D. 48, Bison 39
Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 61, Dell Rapids 43
Newell 68, Oelrichs 44
North Central, Neb. 68, Colome 22
Northwestern 52, Webster 34
Parkston 49, Scotland 36
Rapid City Christian 45, Belle Fourche 39
Redfield 52, Warner 33
Sanborn Central/Woonsocket 75, Iroquois 27
Tea Area 67, Canton 21
Tri-Valley 35, Sioux Falls Christian 33

Tripp-Delmont/Armour 55, Wagner 34
Wall 51, Lower Brule 46
Waverly-South Shore 51, Lake Preston 28
West Central 62, McCook Central/Montrose 59

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

House votes to legalize industrial hemp in South Dakota

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota House passed a proposal Tuesday to legalize and regulate the growth, processing and transportation of industrial hemp in the state.

Legislators didn't even debate the bill as it passed with a two-thirds majority. It will next be considered by the Senate. If that body also passes it with a two-thirds majority and Gov. Kristi Noem signs it into law, an emergency clause would allow it to go into effect immediately, possibly allowing South Dakota farmers to grow hemp this year.

The Republican governor has made it clear that she doesn't think hemp is a "good idea" and would prefer that South Dakota remain one of three states to not allow industrial hemp. But she relented shortly before the session began and her office helped craft the bill to ensure it meets her desired "guardrails" that provide for its enforcement, regulation, transportation permitting, and funding.

The bill would ensure that hemp crops are tested for THC levels. THC is the compound in marijuana that produces a high. The Department of Agriculture allows hemp that contains below 0.3% THC.

But funding may still become a sticking point. Noem's office estimates it would cost about \$3.5 million to get the program up and running. She wants legislators to figure out how to make room in the budget for it.

Rep. Lee Qualm, the Platte Republican who introduced the bill, said there were a few lawmakers who wanted to settle the funding issue before voting on it, but he wanted to give the initiative momentum with a strong vote.

"We just need to keep moving this forward," he said.

Some lawmakers have taken issue with the governor's budget estimations for the program. They said the state would need to pay for testing and regulating hemp anyway because hemp will be transported through South Dakota from other states. Several Indian tribes in the state are also planning to grow hemp.

The state would still need to have its hemp program approved by the USDA, but Qualm said he was hopeful farmers could harvest hemp this year.

Lawmakers consider requiring businesses to accept tribal IDs

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — A Senate committee gave full support Tuesday to a proposed law that would require South Dakota businesses to accept tribal IDs as proof of identity and age.

State law already requires banks and financial institutions to accept tribal IDs, but Sen. Troy Heinert, a Democrat from Mission, said he introduced the bill after hearing from tribal members that some businesses were not accepting their IDs for transactions such as cashing checks or purchasing tobacco and alcohol. Proponents said the proposed law would make it clear that tribal IDs are acceptable for all business transactions.

Jason Cooke, the vice chairman of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, said the measure would be one more step for Native American tribal members to get full recognition by the state.

"The odds are against us all the time," he said, noting that business owners could refuse to accept tribal IDs to discriminate against tribal members.

Tribes in South Dakota have enhanced the security and information on IDs in recent years, adding dates of birth, addresses, and holographics. To get an ID, tribal members must provide a copy of their birth

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certificate to tribal enrollment officers, according to Heinert. The IDs can be used to go through security at airports and to verify identity at voting booths.

The House last week shot down an effort by Democrats to tack tribal IDs onto the list of documents people could use to register to vote in the state.

Heinert said voter registration was a separate issue to his bill, but that he was looking into other legislation that would allow tribal members to use the IDs for voter registration. The South Dakota Secretary of State would need to be able to verify voters' social security numbers with the tribal ID databases, said Heinert.

Lester Thompson, the chairman of the Crow Creek Sioux Tribe, told the committee that tribal members who live in rural areas could find it difficult to get to county offices that administer state-issued IDs.

Representatives from several tribes said tribal members make significant contributions to the economies of many towns, and that they should be able to conduct business with confidence.

The South Dakota Retailers Association supported the bill after language was added to protect retailers who accept tribal IDs as proof of age for age-restricted purchases.

The bill will next be considered by the full Senate.

This story has been corrected to show Jason Cooke is the vice chairman of the Yankton Sioux Tribe, not the Flandreau Santee Sioux Tribe.

Senate approves sports betting item on November ballot

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota's Senate passed a measure on Tuesday that would let voters decide whether to allow sports betting in the state.

The measure goes next to the House. If they approve, the November ballot will include a question on whether to allow sports betting in Deadwood.

A similar proposal died last year in the House. Gov. Kristi Noem also opposed it last year.

The proposal requires a change to the state constitution, which would require passage in the general election. In 2014, 57 percent of voters passed an amendment that made it possible for keno, craps, and roulette to be played in Deadwood.

Several Native American tribes also operate casinos on tribal land. Those casinos could also offer sports betting if the measure passed.

Sen. Bob Ewing, a Spearfish Republican, introduced the measure and said sports betting benefits the state by bringing in tax and tourism revenue. He pointed out that neighboring states like Iowa are now allowing sports betting after the Supreme Court cleared the way for its legalization.

Ewing argued that many people already bet on sports, so it makes sense to legalize it and profit off it.

Lawmakers weigh mental health treatment in jails and homes

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The Department of Social Services is asking South Dakota lawmakers to allow criminal defendants who have been found mentally unfit for trial to be treated in jails or their homes.

The state agency said courts are increasingly finding that criminal defendants are incapable of understanding the proceedings or defending themselves due to mental illness. But many of those defendants have to wait months for treatment because the state's only public psychiatric hospital — the 277-bed Human Services Center — is understaffed and two of its four units are closed.

A Senate committee approved a bill to allow the changes on Tuesday, and it will next be considered by the full Senate. The legislation comes amid a series of bills this year that look to overhaul the state's mental health care services and how the criminal justice system handles people with mental illnesses.

Laura Ringling, the director of legal services at the department, said the proposal would free up beds at the hospital for people with the most severe mental illnesses. Defendants could also receive treatment in jail while they wait for a bed. Criminal defendants who were not found to be dangerous could be treated

in their homes. Patients with severe mental illnesses would still be treated at the hospital.

Sen. Craig Kennedy, a Yankton Democrat, pointed out that part of the problem is that the psychiatric hospital has closed two of its four units because it does not have enough staff. Kennedy said the hospital's wages were not competitive enough to attract the staff they need.

Ringling insisted their wages are competitive but that there's a shortage of people qualified for mental health work.

The Department of Social Services would contract with mental health providers to administer the treatments in jails or in defendants' homes.

The South Dakota Criminal Defense Lawyers Association agreed with the parts of the bill allowing treatment in homes but attempted to amend the bill to get rid of the treatments in jail. That attempt failed.

Kennedy said he was concerned that people would not get the mental health care they need in jail.

Staci Ackerman, the director of the South Dakota Sheriff's Association, supported the proposal but said it should be a "stop gap" until the psychiatric hospital is able to hire more staff.

Senate passes bill to offer driver's test in Spanish

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Senate has approved a bill that would allow the state to offer a written driver's license test in Spanish.

The legislation passed Monday now goes to the House for its consideration. The driving skills portion of the test would still be done in English.

The Argus Leader reports the bill's sponsor, Republican Sen. V.J. Smith, says the main argument from opponents is that test takers should know English. But, Smith says they can already use an interpreter at the exam, so they already don't need to know English.

Sen. Maggie Sutton opposed the bill.

"Driving is a privilege, not a right," the Sioux Falls Republican said.

Sutton said her grandmother spoke only Spanish when she arrived in the United States, learned English and became a U.S. citizen.

Sutton said she's also concerned that workers who don't learn English can be taken advantage of in the workplace.

Trial team quits Roger Stone case in dispute over sentence

By MICHAEL BALSAMO and ERIC TUCKER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The four lawyers who prosecuted Roger Stone quit the case after the Justice Department overruled them and said it would take the extraordinary step of lowering the amount of prison time it would seek for President Donald Trump's longtime ally and confidant.

The departures on Tuesday raised immediate questions over whether Trump, who earlier in the day had blasted the original sentencing recommendation as "very horrible and unfair," had at least indirectly exerted his will on a Justice Department that he often views as an arm of the White House.

The department insisted the decision to undo the sentencing recommendation was made Monday night — before Trump's tweet — and prosecutors had not spoken to the White House about it. Even so, the departures of the entire trial team broke open a simmering dispute over the punishment of a Trump ally whose case has long captured the Republican president's attention. The episode was the latest to entangle the Justice Department, meant to operate free from White House sway in criminal investigations and prosecutions, in presidential politics.

The four attorneys, including two who were early members of special counsel Robert Mueller's Russia team, comprised the entire Justice Department trial team that won convictions against Stone last fall.

Each had signed onto a Monday sentencing memo that recommended between seven and nine years in prison for Stone, who was convicted of lying to Congress, witness tampering and obstructing the House investigation into whether the Trump campaign coordinated with Russia to tip the 2016 election. None lent

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their names to a Tuesday memo that called the original recommendation excessive.

The departures leave in limbo the resolution of a case that was one of the signature prosecutions of Mueller's team and that cut to the heart of his mission — to determine whether the Trump team had access to nonpublic information about Democratic emails hacked by Russian operatives and provided to WikiLeaks.

Trump was back on the attack late Tuesday, slamming the original sentencing recommendation and questioning the judge overseeing the Stone case. And by early Wednesday, he had tweeted a congratulations to Attorney General William Barr "for taking charge of a case that was totally out of control and perhaps should not have been brought," suggesting the prosecutors had gone rogue.

Barr, the Justice Department's leader, has been a steady ally of the president's since taking the position. Barr last year cleared the president of obstruction of justice even when Mueller had pointedly declined to do so, and has declared that the FBI's Russia investigation, which resulted in charges against Stone, had been based on a "bogus narrative."

It's unclear what sentence the department will ultimately seek — a new sentencing memo filed Tuesday evening indicated that the original recommendation was too harsh but proposed no specific punishment of its own.

A Justice Department official said authorities decided to step in and seek a shorter sentence because they had been taken by surprise by the initial recommendation. The person, who was not authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on the condition of anonymity, said prosecutors had told the department to expect a recommendation for a shorter sentence.

In their revised sentencing memo, Justice Department officials argued the initial recommendation could be "considered excessive and unwarranted under the circumstances" but also said they would defer to the court.

It is extremely rare for Justice Department leaders to reverse the decision of its own prosecutors on a sentencing recommendation, particularly after that recommendation has been submitted to the court. A mass exodus from a case is also rare, though the tumult did conjure an episode from last summer when Justice Department lawyers abruptly left a lawsuit over whether a citizenship question could be added to the census.

The day of upheaval began with a morning tweet from Trump that the Stone case was a "miscarriage of justice." He later told reporters he didn't speak to Justice Department officials, though he said he could if he wanted.

"I have the absolute right to do it. I stay out of things to a degree that people wouldn't believe, but I didn't speak to them," Trump said.

Hours after Trump's tweet, a Justice Department official called the original recommendation "extreme" and "grossly disproportionate" to Stone's crimes and said it would file a new sentencing memo.

The departures began soon after. Aaron Zelinsky, a Mueller team member, quit the case and his job in Washington, with plans to return to his position as a federal prosecutor in Baltimore.

Another early Mueller team member, Adam Jed, also withdrew from the case. His status at the Justice Department was unclear.

Another federal prosecutor in Washington, Michael Marando, withdrew from the case, and a fourth trial team member, Jonathan Kravis, resigned his position as an assistant U.S. attorney.

Sentencing decisions are ultimately up to the judge, who in this case may side with the original recommendation.

U.S. District Judge Amy Berman Jackson has repeatedly scolded Stone for his out-of-court behavior, which included a social media post he made of the judge with what appeared to be crosshairs of a gun.

Meanwhile, Democrats decried the decision, with Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer calling for an investigation by the Justice Department's inspector general.

House Intelligence Committee Chairman Adam Schiff said it would be a blatant abuse of power if Justice Department leadership intervened on Trump's behalf.

"Doing so would send an unmistakable message that President Trump will protect those who lie to Congress to cover up his own misconduct, and that the Attorney General will join him in that effort," the

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California Democrat said.

Federal prosecutors also recently softened their sentencing position on Flynn, saying they would not oppose probation after earlier saying he deserved up to six months in prison for lying to the FBI. That prosecution is also being handled by the U.S. attorney's office in Washington.

In the initial memorandum Monday evening, prosecutors asked for Stone to serve between 87 and 108 months in federal prison, which they said was consistent with federal guidelines. Such a sentence would send a message to deter others who might consider lying or obstructing a congressional probe or tampering with witnesses, they said.

The prosecutors wrote that "Stone's actions were not a one-off mistake in judgement" and that he "decided to double — and triple — down on his criminal conduct by tampering with a witness for months in order to make sure his obstruction would be successful."

Stone has denied wrongdoing and criticized the case against him as politically motivated. He did not testify, and his lawyers did not call any witnesses in his defense.

Witnesses testified that Trump's campaign viewed Stone as an "access point" to the anti-secrecy site WikiLeaks, which was in possession of more than 19,000 emails hacked from the servers of the Democratic National Committee, and tried to use Stone to get advance word about hacked emails damaging to Hillary Clinton.

Associated Press writers Jill Colvin and Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

Fall in new cases raises hope in virus outbreak in China

By **KEN MORITSUGU** Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — The number of new cases in China dropped for a second straight day in a virus outbreak that has infected about 45,000 people and killed more than 1,100, health officials said Wednesday.

The outbreak has become the latest political challenge for China's ruling Communist Party and its leader, Xi Jinping.

While most of the infections have been in China, it has gradually rippled overseas. In Japan, 39 new cases were confirmed on a cruise ship quarantined at Yokohama, bringing the total to 174 on the Diamond Princess.

China is struggling to restart its economy after the annual Lunar New Year holiday was extended to try to curb the spread of the virus. Traffic remained light in Beijing and many people were still working at home.

The latest developments in the outbreak, which started in December in the city of Wuhan:

NEW CASES DECLINE

The number of new cases has trended down in the past week, raising hopes that the epidemic may be peaking.

The National Health Commission said 2,015 new cases had been tallied on Tuesday, the second straight daily decline and down from nearly 3,900 a week ago. Commission spokesman Mi Feng said the situation is still grim but "we have seen some positive changes."

Leading Chinese epidemiologist Zhong Nanshan told doctors in Wuhan that while the rest of China may have turned the corner, more efforts are still needed to stop the spread of the virus in the city and the rest of Hubei province, the hardest-hit area.

The total number of cases in mainland China reached 44,653 and the death toll hit 1,113. Two people have died elsewhere, one in Hong Kong and one in the Philippines.

SINGAPORE BANK CLEARS OFFICE

DBS told 300 employees to work from home after it learned that an employee had been infected by the virus. The Singapore bank said all staff on the same floor should do so as a precautionary measure. The city-state has 50 confirmed cases.

In China, state media said a large cluster of cases in a district of Tianjin, a port city southeast of Beijing, has been traced to a department store. One third of Tianjin's 104 confirmed cases are in Baodi district,

where the store is located, the Xinhua News Agency reported.

A salesperson in the store's home appliance section was the first diagnosed on Jan. 31, Xinhua said, and a series of cases followed. None of the infected had visited Wuhan recently, and with the exception of one married couple, they worked in different sections of the store and did not know one another.

TWO RUSSIANS FLEE QUARANTINE

Two Russian women who were kept in isolation for possible infection by the virus say they fled from their hospitals this month because of uncooperative doctors, poor conditions and fear they would become infected.

Both women said their hospital ordeals began after returning from Hainan, a tropical island in southern China popular with Russian tourists.

Many of those quarantined in Russian hospitals have complained about conditions in the isolation rooms and lack of cooperation from doctors who are uncertain about quarantine protocols.

EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENT

A Chinese drug manufacturer announced it has begun producing a drug developed by U.S. company Gilead Sciences Ltd. for possible use against the new virus.

BrightGene Bio-Medical Technology Co. said in a statement issued through the Shanghai Stock Exchange that it had successfully synthesized the active ingredients in remdesivir.

A government laboratory said last week it was applying for a patent on the drug for treatment of the virus.

Gilead said earlier it was working with U.S. and Chinese authorities to test remdesivir as a treatment for the virus. Xinhua reported last week that clinical trials were starting.

Associated Press writers Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo, Elaine Kurtenbach in Singapore, James Heintz in Moscow and Joe McDonald, Yanan Wang and researcher Yu Bing in Beijing contributed to this report.

2 Russians flee virus quarantine, in dismay at hospitals

By **JAMES HEINTZ and DARIA LITVINOVA** Associated Press

MOSCOW (AP) — One patient jumped out of a hospital window to escape her quarantine and another managed to break out by disabling an electronic lock.

Two Russian women who were kept in isolation for possible infection by a new virus say they fled from their hospitals this month because of uncooperative doctors, poor conditions and fear they would become infected. Russian health authorities haven't commented on their complaints.

The incidents occurred amid the outbreak of the virus in China that has already infected more than 40,000 people worldwide. In Russia, only two cases of COVID-19 have been reported. Nevertheless, the authorities took vast measures to prevent the new disease from spreading and hospitalized hundreds of people who returned from China as a precaution.

Many of those quarantined in different Russian hospitals complained about dire conditions of isolation rooms and lack of cooperation from doctors, uncertain about quarantine protocols.

Both women said their hospital ordeals began after returning from Hainan, a tropical region of China popular with Russian tourists.

In a lengthy account on Instagram published Friday, a woman with the screen name of GuzelNeder said her son came down with a cough and a fever of 37.3 C (99.2 F) four days after the family's return to their home in the city of Samara. She called emergency services, who diagnosed the boy as having a viral respiratory infection and who said the mother and the son must go to a hospital for coronavirus tests.

The hospital promised test results within three days, then extended it to five, she said, and meanwhile the boy responded to treatment with medication and an inhalator, she wrote. When she tried to press for results, hospital personnel obstructed her, she said.

Meanwhile, she had become concerned about lax procedures in the hospital, saying that some medical personnel came to the isolation area without masks or threw their protective clothing on the floor.

Her anxiety soared on the fifth day, when she began to feel badly. She asked her husband to bring

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her a home pregnancy test, and “after two minutes of wringing my hands in anticipation, it came on the screen — PREGNANT,” she wrote.

Her husband argued with the doctor that she and their son should be released because of her condition and concern of infection. The doctor said they had to be held for 14 days even if the virus test came back negative.

“My son was hysterical,” she wrote. “There was no exit for us other than to leave the hospital without authorization, through the window,” Guzel said.

Police later questioned her at home, but no charges have been reported. “Everyone in my family is alive and healthy, thank god,” she wrote.

The other woman, Alla Ilyina, said in an Instagram post she came down with a sore throat several days after returning to St. Petersburg, Russia’s second largest city, from Hainan.

Ilyina called emergency services, and medics brought her to a hospital for coronavirus testing, promising to let her go after 24 hours. The next day she was told she tested negative for the virus, but had to remain quarantined for two weeks.

“Wild,” Ilyina wrote. “All three tests showed I was completely healthy, so why the hell the quarantine?”

Her isolation room was dire, she told the Fontanka newspaper — no books, no shampoo, no Wi-Fi a wastebasket that was never emptied, the door secured by an electronic lock.

Frustrated, she figured out how to short-circuit the electronic lock and escaped from the hospital on Friday.

Neither the hospital nor police have followed up on her escape, which leads her to believe her health is OK.

“If I were sick, they would have swamped me with phone calls,” Fontanka quoted her as saying.

On Tuesday evening, Russian media reported that the hospital reported Ilyina’s escape to the police, and that a criminal investigation could be launched into the incident.

Both women offered no immediate comment to The Associated Press.

Quarantine protocols in relation to the outbreak vary throughout Russia. In some regions, health officials isolate Chinese nationals who have recently returned from China, and in others everyone who reports symptoms resembling those of the new virus are subject to a 14-day quarantine.

Rospotrebnadzor, Russia’s public health watchdog, hasn’t responded to a request for comment on whether the women were allowed to leave the hospitals.

On Wednesday, the Fontanka newspaper published a video reportedly recorded by other patients quarantined in the same hospital Ilyina fled from. The footage shows two young women in what appears to be a patient room singing “I want to be like Alla (Ilyina)” and a handwritten note saying “Let us out of here, please.”

Irina Sidorova, another woman who returned from Hainan on the same flight with Ilyina and was quarantined in the same hospital, confirmed to The Associated Press that isolation rooms there were locked, and patients weren’t able to get out on their own.

Sidorova said in a phone interview she was hospitalized only a week after she returned to St. Petersburg. She reiterated Ilyina’s complaints about uncooperative doctors and said she wasn’t allowed to leave the hospital until Feb. 15, despite showing no symptoms and testing negative for the virus.

Read all the AP stories about the coronavirus outbreak that emerged from China at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak>

10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

Your daily look at late-breaking news, upcoming events and the stories that will be talked about today:

1. SANDERS EDGES BUTTIGIEG IN NEW HAMPSHIRE The self-described democratic socialist edges his moderate rival and scores the first clear victory in the Democratic Party’s chaotic 2020 nomination fight.

2. CONCERNS GROW OVER NEVADA'S CAUCUS Volunteers say key information had yet to be shared, there has been no hands-on training with iPads being deployed to caucus sites nor opportunities to try out a new "tool."

3. POPE FRANCIS DEFLECTS MARRIED PRIESTS ISSUE The pontiff declines to approve the ordination of married men to address the priest shortage in the Amazon, sidestepping a fraught issue.

4. CHINA'S COMMUNIST PARTY FACES DILEMMA Xi Jinping's government can either admit a viral outbreak isn't under control or bring 3,000 legislators to Beijing next month and risk fueling public anger at its handling of the disease.

5. ROGER STONE CASE TAKES UNEXPECTED TURN The lawyers who prosecuted Trump's longtime ally and confidant quit the case after the Justice Department overrules them and says it will take the extraordinary step of lowering the amount of prison time it is seeking.

6. WHAT MATERIAL IS ON THE RISE Incidents of white supremacist propaganda distributed across the nation jumps by more than 120% between 2018 and last year, an anti-bias group says.

7. WHERE ASIAN CARP BATTLE HAS OPENED In Kentucky, where the invasive species threatens to upend aquatic ecosystems, starve out native fish and wipe out endangered mussel and snail populations along the Mississippi River and dozens of tributaries.

8. GREATER SCRUTINY OF VINDMAN URGED Trump suggests that the Pentagon review the conduct of a former White House national security aide who played a central role in the Democrats' impeachment case.

9. DON'T GET ANGRY AND KEEP SMILING That's Chitetsu Watanabe secret to longevity as the Japanese man became the world's oldest male at 112 years and 344 days old, according to Guinness World Records.

10. BLUES GET A SCARE WHEN PLAYER STRICKEN St. Louis defenseman Jay Bouwmeester is hospitalized and undergoing tests after suffering a cardiac episode and collapsing on the bench during a game in Anaheim.

Pope avoids question of married priests in Amazon document

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

VATICAN CITY (AP) — Pope Francis declined Wednesday to approve the ordination of married men to address the priest shortage in the Amazon, sidestepping a fraught issue that has dominated debate in the Catholic Church and even involved retired Pope Benedict XVI.

In an eagerly-awaited document, Francis didn't even refer to recommendations by Amazonian bishops to consider the ordination of married men and women deacons. Rather, he urged bishops to pray for more priestly vocations and send missionaries to the region, where the faithful living in remote communities can go months or even years without Mass.

Francis' dodging of the issue disappointed progressives, who had hoped he would at the very least put it to further study. And it relieved conservatives who have used the debate over priestly celibacy to heighten opposition to the pope, whom some have accused of heresy.

The document, "Beloved Amazon," is instead a love letter to the Amazonian rain forest and its indigenous peoples, penned by history's first Latin American pope. Francis has long been concerned about the violent exploitation of the Amazon's land, its crucial importance to the global ecosystem and the injustices committed against its peoples.

He addressed the document to all peoples of the world "to help awaken their affection and concern for that land which is also ours and to invite them to value it and acknowledge it as a sacred mystery."

"Beloved Amazon" is in many ways a synthesized and focused version of Francis' 2015 landmark environmental encyclical, "Praised Be," in which he blasted wealthy countries and multinational corporations for destroying the world's natural resources and impoverishing the poor for their own profit.

Francis said he has four dreams for the Amazon: that the rights of the poor are respected, that their cultural riches are celebrated, that the Amazon's natural beauty and life are preserved, and that its Christian communities show Amazonian features.

Francis had convened bishops from the Amazon's nine countries for a three-week meeting in October

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to debate the ways the church can help preserve the delicate ecosystem from global warming and better minister to the region's people, many of whom live in isolated communities or in poverty in cities.

The Argentine Jesuit has long been sensitive to the plight of the Amazon, where Protestant and Pentecostal churches are wooing away Catholic souls in the absence of vibrant Catholic communities where the Eucharist can be regularly celebrated.

In their final document at the end of the October synod, the majority of bishops called for the establishment of criteria so that "respected" married men in their communities who have already served as permanent deacons be ordained as priests.

In addition, the bishops called for the Vatican to reopen a study commission on ordaining women as deacons, a type of ministry in the church that allows for preaching, celebrating weddings and baptisms, but not consecrating the Eucharist. Francis had created such a commission in 2016 at the insistence of religious sisters who want more say and roles in church governance and ministry, but the group ended its work without reaching consensus.

Francis didn't mention either proposal in "Beloved Amazon" and didn't cite the synod's final document in his text or in a single footnote. But he did say in his introduction that he wanted to "officially present" the synod's work and urged the faithful to read it in full, suggesting that he at least valued the input.

Francis did echo many of the synod's recommendations, calling for greater lay participation in the life of the church and saying the training of priests in the Amazon must be overhauled so they are more able to minister to indigenous peoples. He said "every effort should be made" to give the faithful access to the Eucharist.

"This urgent need leads me to urge all bishops, especially those in Latin America, not only to promote prayer for priestly vocations, but also to be more generous in encouraging those who display a missionary vocation to opt for the Amazon region," he wrote.

Francis dismissed suggestions that ordaining women to any ministry would serve them or the church. While agreeing that women should have greater decision-making and governance roles, Francis argued that they must find "other forms of service and charisms that are proper to women."

The Catholic Church retains the priesthood for men, arguing that Christ and his apostles were male. While Eastern rite branches have married priests, and Anglican and Protestant priest converts can be married, the Roman rite church has had a tradition of priestly celibacy since the 11th century, imposed in part for financial reasons to ensure that priests' assets pass to the church, not to heirs.

In the weeks leading up to the document's release, the question of a celibate priesthood made headlines after the publication of a book penned by the retired pope, Benedict, and a conservative Vatican official, Cardinal Robert Sarah, reaffirmed the "necessity" of a celibate priesthood.

Benedict's participation in the book sparked controversy, since it appeared the retired pope was trying to influence the thinking of the current one, despite his promises to remain "hidden from the world" when he resigned seven years ago.

Francis dodged the issue altogether, dedicating instead the entire first half of the document to the "injustice and crime" committed against the Amazonian peoples and its environment by local governments and foreign corporate interests, illegal mining and extraction industries.

"We cannot allow globalization to become a new version of colonialism," he wrote.

He said the church in the Amazon must have social justice at the forefront of its spirituality, saying ministry that focuses excessively on discipline and rules will turn people away when in fact they need "understanding, comfort and acceptance."

The traditionalist blog *Rorate Caeli*, which has been highly critical of Francis, said that by closing the door to a married priesthood and female deacons, the document was "the best possible document we could have hoped for in the current pontificate and in the current age."

Clare Dixon, Latin America chief for the British Catholic aid agency CAFOD, focused on the environmental good it might do in the global debate about how to fight climate change.

"But Francis is also imploring us to listen to the wisdom of the people of the Amazon, insisting that we

learn from the way they live with the environment rather than in competition with it," she said.

Francis called for the church to incorporate indigenous traditions and cultures into its ministry, including song and dance, myth and festivals, and urged patience when confronted with apparently pagan practices and symbols.

It was a reference to the controversy that punctuated the synod over the appearance in the Vatican of wooden statues of a pregnant woman that critics said were pagan idols. At one point, a conservative activist stole the statues from a Vatican-area church and threw them in the Tiber River in a videotaped stunt that galvanized traditionalist opposition to Francis and the synod itself.

In his document, Francis said indigenous practices and symbols should not be written off immediately as superstition, paganism or idolatry.

"A missionary of souls will try to discover the legitimate needs and concerns that seek an outlet in at times imperfect, partial or mistaken religious expressions, and will attempt to respond to them with an inculturated spirituality," Francis wrote.

Sanders edges Buttigieg in NH, giving Dems 2 front-runners

By STEVE PEOPLES, KATHLEEN RONAYNE and HUNTER WOODALL Associated Press

MANCHESTER, N.H. (AP) — Bernie Sanders won New Hampshire's presidential primary, edging moderate rival Pete Buttigieg and scoring the first clear victory in the Democratic Party's chaotic 2020 nomination fight.

In his Tuesday night win, the 78-year-old Sanders, a self-described democratic socialist, beat back a strong challenge from the 38-year-old former mayor of South Bend, Indiana. The dueling Democrats represent different generations, see divergent paths to the nomination and embrace conflicting visions of America's future.

As Sanders and Buttigieg celebrated, Amy Klobuchar scored an unexpected third-place finish that gives her a road out of New Hampshire as the primary season moves on to the string of state-by-state contests that lie ahead.

Elizabeth Warren and Joe Biden posted disappointing fourth and fifth place finishes respectively and were on track to finish with zero delegates from the state.

The New Hampshire vote gives new clarity to a Democratic contest shaping up to be a battle between two men separated by four decades in age and clashing political ideologies. Sanders is a leading progressive voice, having spent decades demanding substantial government intervention in health care and other sectors of the economy. Buttigieg has pressed for more incremental change, preferring to give Americans the option of retaining their private health insurance while appealing to Republicans and independents who may be dissatisfied with Trump.

Their disparate temperaments were on display Tuesday as they spoke before cheering supporters.

"We are gonna win because we have the agenda that speaks to the needs of working people across this country," Sanders declared. "This victory here is the beginning of the end for Donald Trump."

Buttigieg struck an optimistic tone: "Thanks to you, a campaign that some said shouldn't be here at all has shown that we are here to stay."

Both men have strength heading into the next phase of the campaign, yet they face very different political challenges.

While Warren made clear she will remain in the race, Sanders, well-financed and with an ardent army of supporters, has cemented his status as the clear leader of the progressive wing of the party.

Meanwhile, Buttigieg must prove he can attract support from voters of color who are critical to winning the nomination. And unlike Sanders, he still has multiple rivals in his own ideological wing of the party to contend with. They include Klobuchar, whose standout debate performance led to a late surge in New Hampshire and a growing national following. While deeply wounded, Biden promises strength in upcoming South Carolina. And though former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg was not on Tuesday's ballot, he looms next month when the contest reaches states offering hundreds of delegates.

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After a chaotic beginning to primary voting last week in Iowa, Democrats hoped New Hampshire would help give shape to their urgent quest to pick someone to take on Trump in November. At least two candidates dropped out in the wake of weak finishes Tuesday night: moderate Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet and political newcomer Andrew Yang, who attracted a small but loyal following over the past year and was one of just three candidates of color left in the race.

The struggling candidates still in the race sought to minimize the latest results.

Warren, who spent months as a Democratic front-runner, offered an optimistic outlook as she faced cheering supporters: "Our campaign is built for the long haul, and we are just getting started."

Having already predicted he would "take a hit" in New Hampshire after a distant fourth-place finish in Iowa, Biden essentially ceded the state. He traveled to South Carolina Tuesday as he bet his candidacy on a strong showing there later this month boosted by support from black voters.

Still, history suggests that the first-in-the-nation primary will have enormous influence shaping the 2020 race. In the modern era, no Democrat has ever become the party's general election nominee without finishing first or second in New Hampshire.

Sanders and Buttigieg were on track to win the same number of New Hampshire delegates with most of the vote tallied, with Klobuchar a few behind. Warren, Biden and the rest of the field were shut out, failing to reach the 15% threshold needed for delegates.

The AP allocated nine delegates each to Sanders and Buttigieg and six to Klobuchar.

The action was on the Democratic side, but Trump easily won New Hampshire's Republican primary. He was facing token opposition from former Massachusetts Gov. Bill Weld.

With most of the vote in, Trump already had amassed more votes in the New Hampshire primary than any incumbent president in history. His vote share was approaching the modern historical high for an incumbent president, 86.43% set by Ronald Reagan in 1984. Weld received about 9% of the vote of New Hampshire Republicans.

The political spotlight quickly shifts to Nevada, where Democrats will hold caucuses on Feb. 22. But several candidates, including Warren and Sanders, plan to visit other states in the coming days that vote on Super Tuesday, signaling they are in the race for the long haul.

Peoples reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Seth Borenstein and Zeke Miller in Washington, Will Weissert, Holly Ramer and Thomas Beaumont contributed from New Hampshire.

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

After Iowa caucus problems, concerns grow over Nevada's plan

By **CHRISTINA A. CASSIDY** and **MICHELLE L. PRICE** Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — Concerns have been growing that next week's Nevada caucuses could offer a repeat of the chaos that ensnared the Iowa vote, with Nevada facing many of the same organizational and technical challenges that crippled Iowa's process.

Volunteers who will be leading the Feb. 22 caucuses said key information had yet to be shared. There has been no hands-on training with iPads being deployed to caucus sites on Election Day nor opportunities to try out a new "tool" that will be loaded onto the iPads and used during the caucus process.

Adding to the mix is that Nevada also plans to offer early voting, a complicated step that Iowa did not attempt. That has prompted some confusion about how early voters would be included in the multi-stage caucus process.

"This sounds just dangerous, like people are still improvising and making up the rules as they go," said Doug Jones, a University of Iowa computer scientist and expert on voting technology. "How do they expect to get training done for all the people doing these caucuses?"

Nevada, the third state to cast votes on the Democratic presidential field, is seen as the first test of a candidate's strength before a diverse population and strong labor unions. Nevada Republicans are not

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holding caucuses this year.

Molly Forgey, a spokeswoman for the Nevada State Democratic Party, declined to respond to questions about how the reporting process will work and the security measures in place.

"We'll train our volunteers as soon as the process is rolled out," Forgey said Tuesday night. She added: "I think our confidence level is the same -- still high."

Concerns over elections and voting in general come as the nation prepares for the first presidential election since Russia interfered in the 2016 vote. But Iowa's problems demonstrated that it doesn't take a foreign government to cause chaos in an election. Technical glitches and shaky election administration can also create confusion and delay results.

As in Iowa, Nevada's caucuses are run by the state party and not state and local election officials, who will administer the November election and statewide primaries, including Tuesday's contest in New Hampshire.

In training sessions in recent days, Nevada Democrats told precinct leaders they will be using an iPad they will receive the day of the caucuses. Seth Morrison, a site leader who will oversee multiple precincts at a caucus site in the metro Las Vegas area, said he was told he would be trained on the iPads when he picks them up a few days before the caucuses and would be responsible for showing precinct leaders how to use them.

Nevada Democrats were initially working with the same app developer used in Iowa but scrapped those plans after the company's app failed there. Instead, loaded on the iPads will be what's been referred to in training materials as a "Caucus Tool" used to enter results. Party officials emphasized during the training sessions that it was not an app, but they have yet to explain how it's different.

Caucus organizers said they thought the tool would be used to ultimately submit results electronically to the state party, but some were not certain. It also appeared the tool would contain information on early voting selections, but it was not known whether there would also be a paper record of the early votes at each precinct in case the iPad or tool failed.

Morrison said he was told by party officials the tool had been "professionally developed" but they would not tell him by whom, citing concerns the developer would be targeted by hackers. That was the same argument made by Iowa Democrats ahead of their caucuses, a deference to secrecy that experts say prevented scrutiny of the developer's qualifications and security experience.

"They've been saying basically, 'Don't worry. Trust us,'" said Morrison. "I've been hyperventilating for the last five days."

Two other caucus organizers expressed similar concerns over the lack of information and training but requested anonymity so they could discuss the issue candidly.

Other organizers acknowledged they had limited information but said they were not concerned.

"I have full trust and faith in our state party," said Alex Goff, a DNC committee member who will be a site leader and precinct chair.

Clark County Democratic Party Chair Donna West, who will oversee 10 precincts, said party leaders "understand what's at stake and what they have to deliver."

The party is expected to hold more training for volunteers this week.

In Iowa, the inability of some caucus organizers to download and use the app triggered a flood of calls to the party's hotline and dramatically slowed the process of reporting unofficial results. And a "coding issue" within the mobile app muddled the data that was sent in, creating discrepancies that halted the reporting of initial results for nearly 24 hours.

Iowa Democrats relied on paper records of each voter's candidate preferences along with a worksheet completed by caucus organizers to verify results. It appears Nevada will be using a similar paper-based backup system and will also have a hotline available.

"The party should be thinking about setting up expectations now that they may be getting the results out more slowly than what is typical," said Lawrence Norden, an expert in voting systems with the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU's School of Law.

On Tuesday, Nevada Democrats released a memo offering some details on early voting. The party, having abandoned plans to have early votes cast via an iPad app, is instead planning to have early voters fill

out paper ballots that will be scanned electronically and tabulated.

To check in early voters, volunteers will use a PDF of the voter roll loaded onto iPads and have voters then enter information onto an online check-in form on an iPad.

"From the beginning, NV Dems' priority has been to execute the most accessible, expansive, and transparent caucus yet," executive director Alana Mounce said in the early voting memo, adding the party had "simplified the voting process and built in additional redundancies to streamline information and to ensure we minimize errors."

Staffers with three Democratic presidential campaigns in Nevada who were not authorized to speak publicly said the campaigns had received little information from the party, leaving them concerned about the rollout of a new process. The party has held phone calls with the campaigns but didn't provide much information, keeping the communication limited and scripted, the staffers said.

Another staffer, Terrence Clark, spokesman for the campaign of Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren in Nevada, said: "We're focusing on what we can control — turning out our supporters and reaching people where they are."

Democratic National Committee spokesman David Bergstein said the national party has already deployed staff to Nevada.

"The DNC is working with the Nevada Democratic Party, and we are confident that they are doing everything they can to implement the lessons that have been learned from this process," Bergstein said.

Cassidy reported from Atlanta. Associated Press writer Will Weissert in Manchester, New Hampshire, contributed to this report.

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

Guinness: Japanese, who believes in smiling, is oldest man

By YURI KAGEYAMA Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — A Japanese man with a sweet tooth who believes in smiles has become the world's oldest male at 112 years and 344 days old, according to Guinness World Records.

Chitetsu Watanabe, who was born in Niigata in northern Japan in 1907, received a certificate for his accomplishment on Wednesday at a nursing home in the city.

The previous record holder, Masazo Nonaka, another Japanese, died last month. The oldest living person is also Japanese, Kane Tanaka, a 117-year-old woman.

Until about a decade ago, Watanabe used to do bonsai, the Japanese traditional art of raising small sculpted trees, and had his work exhibited.

These days, he loves desserts such as custards and cream puffs, Guinness said.

Watanabe graduated from agricultural school and then moved to Taiwan to work at Dai-Nippon Meiji Sugar on sugar cane plantation contracts.

He lived in Taiwan for 18 years. He married Mitsue and they had five children, Guinness said in a statement.

After the end of World War II, Watanabe returned to Niigata and worked for the prefectural government until retirement. He also grew fruit and vegetables on the family farm.

Asked about the secret to longevity, Watanabe has this advice: Don't get angry and keep smiling.

Yuri Kageyama is on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/yurikageyama>

US, Taliban close to 'reduction in violence' agreement

By KATHY GANNON and DEB RIECHMANN Associated Press

ISLAMABAD (AP) — The Taliban have issued an ultimatum to Washington after weeks of talks with a U.S. peace envoy, demanding a reply on their offer of a seven-day reduction of violence in Afghanistan, or they would walk away from the negotiating table, two Taliban officials said Wednesday.

A reduction in violence deal for a very short period is sought by the Taliban because they don't want to commit to a formal cease-fire until other components of a final deal are in place. They have previously said a cease-fire could blunt their battlefield momentum if the U.S. or Kabul renege on their promises.

The development comes as Washington said late Tuesday that an agreement on the insurgents' "reduction of violence" offer was days away. Also, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani tweeted that he had received a phone call from U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo telling him of "notable progress" in the talks with the Taliban.

The ultimatum came from the chief Taliban negotiator Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who met earlier this week with White House envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and the Qatari foreign minister, Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, according to two Taliban officials familiar with the negotiations. They spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not authorized to speak to the media.

There was no immediate response from Washington on the ultimatum, which appeared designed to focus the negotiations on Taliban demands. The Taliban maintain a political office in Doha, the capital of the Gulf Arab state of Qatar, where Khalilzad often meets their representatives in the talks that are seeking to find a resolution to Afghanistan's 18-year war, America's longest conflict.

President Donald Trump's national security adviser, Robert O'Brien, said Tuesday that he is cautiously optimistic there could be a U.S. agreement with the Taliban over the next days or weeks, but that a withdrawal of American forces is not "imminent."

The agreement, which Trump would still have to sign off on, calls for both Taliban and U.S. forces to pledge to adhere to a week's "reduction of violence" that would lead to an agreement signing between the United States and the Taliban. That would be followed, within 10 days, by all-Afghan negotiations to set the road map for the political future of a post-war Afghanistan.

The details emerging from Washington on the agreement are similar to details released weeks earlier by Taliban spokesman in Doha, Suhail Shaheen, and would appear to give the Taliban all they have asked for.

Another Taliban demand is that in any all-Afghan negotiations, representatives of Afghan President Ghani's government cannot come to the table in an official capacity but only as ordinary Afghan citizens. The Taliban do not recognize the Afghan government and have refused to negotiate directly with Ghani, effectively sidelining Kabul from the process.

Ghani, whose political future remains uncertain following last September's presidential election, which still has no official winner, has previously demanded that the Taliban negotiate with his government. His political opponents and his partner in the so-called Unity Government, Abdullah Abdullah, have sharply criticized Ghani's intransigence and accused him of trying to sideline their involvement in the peace process. Ghani has also blasted the "reduction of violence" offer, demanding a permanent cease-fire and a halt in the near-daily attacks by the Taliban.

The Taliban have refused, saying they first want agreements in place that would be guaranteed by international powers such as Gulf Arab states, Russia, China and the U.N., before agreeing to a permanent cease-fire.

The "reduction of violence" deal would call for the Taliban and U.S. to refrain from conducting attacks or combat operations for seven days, according to a person familiar with the ongoing discussions who was not authorized to discuss the proposal and spoke only on condition of anonymity.

Asked about whether Trump would sign off on such an agreement, O'Brien said there has been "significant progress" in the months-long on-again, off-again talks with the Taliban and that the U.S. is "cautiously optimistic that some good news could be forthcoming."

"The president had made it very clear that there will have to be a reduction in violence and there will

have to be meaningful intra-Afghan talks for things to move forward," O'Brien also said, speaking at an event hosted by the Atlantic Council in Washington.

Other conditions in the deal would include a Taliban pledge not to associate with al-Qaida, the Islamic State group or other militant groups.

"We have contributed a tremendous amount of blood and treasure to Afghanistan, but it's time for America to come home," O'Brien also said. "We want to make sure that Afghanistan doesn't become a safe haven for terrorism again."

The Taliban, who ruled Afghanistan with a harsh version of Islamic law from 1996 to 2001 and hosted al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden as he masterminded the 9/11 attacks, say they no longer seek a monopoly on power. But the militant group now controls or holds sway over roughly half of the country.

There are fears that a full withdrawal of some 20,000 NATO troops, including about 12,000 U.S. forces, would leave the Afghan government vulnerable, or unleash another round of fighting in a war that has killed tens of thousand of Afghans and also claimed the lives of 2,400 U.S. service men and women.

Afghan civilians have paid the heaviest price — the United Nations says that between 2009, when it first began documenting civilian casualties, and October 2019, a total of 34,677 Afghan civilians have been killed, either in insurgent attacks or being caught in the crossfire of battles between militants and Afghan security forces and their U.S.-led coalition allies.

The State Department declined to comment on negotiations beyond saying that the "U.S. talks with the Taliban in Doha continue around the specifics of a reduction in violence." Ghani, Pompeo and Defense Secretary Mark Esper will all be in Munich, Germany, this week for the annual Munich Security Conference, which is also expected to discuss Afghanistan.

Riechmann reported from Washington.

Blues' D Bouwmeester undergoing tests after cardiac episode

By JOE REEDY AP Sports Writer

ANAHEIM, Calif. (AP) — St. Louis defenseman Jay Bouwmeester was hospitalized and undergoing tests early Wednesday after suffering a cardiac episode and collapsing on the bench during the first period of the Blues' game against the Ducks.

The team said in a statement late Tuesday night that the 36-year-old Bouwmeester was conscious and alert. Blues general manager Doug Armstrong said Bouwmeester was awake, alert and moving his arms and legs as he was transported from the arena.

The Blues were supposed to fly to Las Vegas, where they are scheduled to play Thursday, but remained in Southern California over night. The team is expected to provide an update on Bouwmeester's condition Wednesday morning.

"Thankfully, with the quick response of our medical trainers, Anaheim medical trainers and their team physicians, they were able to stabilize Jay," Armstrong said.

The hockey community sent tweets of support as word of the episode spread throughout the NHL.

Washington Capitals forward and former teammate T.J. Oshie wrote "Praying for Bo!" while teams around the league sent out best wishes.

Teammates Vince Dunn and Alex Pietrangelo immediately called for help after Bouwmeester slumped over with 7:50 left in the first period. After a couple of minutes, Bouwmeester was taken out on a stretcher through a tunnel next to the Blues bench and transported to an Orange County hospital.

Bouwmeester appeared to be grabbing a drink of water when he began to slowly fall. Emergency medical personnel rushed to the Blues bench. Bouwmeester was skating in his 57th game this season and the 1,241st of his NHL career. He skated 1:20 in his last shift before collapsing and logged 5:34 of ice time in the game.

St. Louis' radio announcer Chris Kerber said during an interview with the team's flagship station that a defibrillator was used.

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Bouwmeester's father was at the game as part of the team's annual Dads Trip. He went with his son to the hospital while teammates and their fathers remained at the arena awaiting updates.

Ducks and Blues players gathered to see what was wrong before Bouwmeester was taken away. The teams then went to their dressing rooms, and the game was called off a few minutes later tied at 1.

Players from both teams met for hugs and well-wishes after changing out of their gear. The game will be made up at a later date.

The last player to collapse on an NHL bench was Dallas forward Rich Peverley in 2014. Peverley had an irregular heartbeat, and the quick response of emergency officials made sure he was OK.

The NHL has pages of emergency medical standards that spell out in specific detail that at least two doctors must be in attendance for every game and one must be within 50 feet of the bench. A defibrillator, which was used when Detroit's Jiri Fischer collapsed in 2005, must be available, along with a triage room and ambulances.

Bouwmeester is in his 17th NHL season and has for that time been known for his strong skating and conditioning. He helped the Blues win the Stanley Cup last season and won an Olympic gold medal with Canada in 2014.

The Blues signed the veteran defenseman to a \$3.25 million, one-year deal for this season.

Bouwmeester held one of the longest ironman streaks in NHL history with 737 consecutive regular-season games played until a lower-body injury in 2014. He missed time in 2015-16 with a concussion, and a hip injury ended his 2017-18 season.

He played all but four games last year and hadn't missed a game this season.

AP Hockey Writer Stephen Whyno contributed.

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

White supremacist propaganda spreading, anti-bias group says

By ELANA SCHOR Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Incidents of white supremacist propaganda distributed across the nation jumped by more than 120% between 2018 and last year, according to the Anti-Defamation League, making 2019 the second straight year that the circulation of propaganda material has more than doubled.

The Anti-Defamation League's Center on Extremism reported 2,713 cases of circulated propaganda by white supremacist groups, including fliers, posters and banners, compared with 1,214 cases in 2018. The printed propaganda distributed by white supremacist organizations includes material that directly spreads messages of discrimination against Jews, LGBTQ people and other minority communities -- but also items with their prejudice obscured by a focus on gauzier pro-America imagery.

The sharp rise in cases of white supremacist propaganda distribution last year follows a jump of more than 180% between 2017, the first year that the Anti-Defamation League tracked material distribution, and 2018. While 2019 saw cases of propaganda circulated on college campuses nearly double, encompassing 433 separate campuses in all but seven states, researchers who compiled the data found that 90% of campuses only saw one or two rounds of distribution.

Oren Segal, director of the League's Center on Extremism, pointed to the prominence of more subtly biased rhetoric in some of the white supremacist material, emphasizing "patriotism," as a sign that the groups are attempting "to make their hate more palatable for a 2020 audience."

By emphasizing language "about empowerment, without some of the blatant racism and hatred," Segal said, white supremacists are employing "a tactic to try to get eyes onto their ideas in a way that's cheap, and that brings it to a new generation of people who are learning how to even make sense out of these messages."

The propaganda incidents tracked for the Anti-Defamation League's report, set for release on Wednesday, encompass 49 states and occurred most often in 10 states: California, Texas, New York, Massachusetts,

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New Jersey, Ohio, Virginia, Kentucky, Washington and Florida.

Last year's soaring cases of distributed propaganda also came as the Anti-Defamation League found white supremacist groups holding 20% fewer events than in 2018, "preferring not to risk the exposure of pre-publicized events," according to its report. That marks a shift from the notably visible public presence that white supremacist organizations mounted in 2017, culminating in that summer's Charlottesville, Va., rally where a self-described white supremacist drove into a crowd of counterprotesters.

About two-thirds of the total propaganda incidents in the new report were traced back to a single white supremacist group, Patriot Front, which the Anti-Defamation League describes as "formed by disaffected members" of the white supremacist organization Vanguard America after the Charlottesville rally.

The Anti-Defamation League, founded in 1913 to combat anti-Semitism as well as other biases, has tracked Patriot Front propaganda using messages such as "One nation against invasion" and "America First." The report to be released Wednesday found that Patriot Front played a major role last year in boosting circulation of white supremacist propaganda on campuses through a push that targeted colleges in the fall.

Segal said that his group's research can equip community leaders with education that helps them push back against white supremacist groups' messaging efforts, including distribution aimed at students.

University administrators, Segal said, should speak out against white supremacist messaging drives, taking the opportunity "to demonstrate their values and to reject messages of hate that may be appearing on their campus."

Several educational institutions where reports of white supremacist propaganda were reported in recent months did just that. After white supremacist material was reported on campus at Brigham Young University in November, the school tweeted that it "stands firmly against racism in any form and is committed to promoting a culture of safety, kindness, respect and love."

The school went on to tweet a specific rejection of white supremacist sentiment as "sinful" by its owner, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, without naming the identity of the group behind the propaganda.

While some of the propaganda cataloged in the Anti-Defamation League's report uses indirect messaging in service of a bigoted agenda, other groups' activity is more openly threatening toward Jews and minority groups. The New Jersey European Heritage Association, a smaller white supremacist group founded in 2018, "contains numerous anti-Semitic tropes and refers to Jews as 'destroyers'" in its most recent distributed flier, according to the report.

The Anti-Defamation League's online monitoring of propaganda distribution is distinct from its tracking of white supremacist events and attacks, and that tracking does not include undistributed material such as graffiti, Segal explained.

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

A victory, a caution: Takeaways from New Hampshire's primary

By HUNTER WOODALL and NICHOLAS RICCARDI Associated Press

New Hampshire Democrats gave Bernie Sanders a win, but also a warning.

Sanders' durability, based both on his 2016 campaign and the first two contests this year, cannot be questioned. What remains unanswered is how moderates will now come at him and whether Sen. Elizabeth Warren will be able to compete credibly for the progressive wing. Her disappointing fourth-place showing gives supporters little confidence.

But Sanders' liabilities are also clear, at least among a large segment of voters in the party who are wary of the 78-year-old self-identified democratic socialist, and how that label could be demonized by President Donald Trump. As he goes forward, Sanders will have to convince voters that he can pay for his plans to fundamentally reorder the American economy in the name of economic fairness.

New Hampshire voters acknowledged a nominee with strongly liberal views might have difficulty against

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Trump in November, with about 6 in 10 saying it would be harder, according to an AP VoteCast survey of more than 3,000 Democratic primary voters. And more than 7 in 10 voters chose someone else.

Other takeaways from the New Hampshire primary:

MODERATE LANE WIDE BUT FULL OF OBSTACLES

A majority of its voters clearly wanted a moderate alternative. And Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, again made a case to be that choice with another impressive performance, winning votes across broad demographic groups, by running close to Sanders, who defeated Hillary Clinton by 22 percentage points in 2016.

But Buttigieg now has new competition from Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who used a strong debate performance to vault to third place and a legitimate claim of momentum.

Both seem in sync with most Democrats' desires. Moderates and conservatives made up a majority of voters Tuesday, according to AP VoteCast.

But things get murkier now that the contest heads to more diverse states. Polling shows that former Vice President Joe Biden has the strongest following among African American voters in South Carolina, where non-white voters comprised about two-thirds of the 2016 Democratic primary electorate, state data show. But Biden's anemic showing in New Hampshire may test that.

Next up is Nevada, and then South Carolina and then 14 states on Super Tuesday, March 3, including mega-states California and Texas. Both Buttigieg and Klobuchar have limited support from minority voters, polls show, but Buttigieg now has demonstrated top-tier appeal and benefited from his outside-the-Beltway pitch.

Another test awaits for the muddled moderate lane — billionaire and former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg has been spending hundreds of millions to convince Super Tuesday voters that he, not those who campaigned in the early states, is the best alternative to Sanders.

NEW HAMPSHIRE CAN STILL SURPRISE

Klobuchar was a clear expectations winner, a finish that will guarantee she gets another look from voters. New Hampshire revels in hoisting up underdog candidates and this time, it was the Minnesota senator.

She limped into New Hampshire. Then she turned in a strong debate performance Friday in Manchester, saw crowds flood her events, reported raising more than \$3 million in three days and on Tuesday crushed a former vice president and the once-top-tier senator from neighboring Massachusetts.

The problem for Klobuchar is almost no infrastructure in the huge map unfurling before Democratic presidential hopefuls. She announced a seven-figure ad buy in Nevada, the next state to vote. But she has only 30 staffers in a state where her rivals have had at least twice as many and that, because it uses a caucus, rewards advance preparation. She's not even begun to move into the Super Tuesday states.

But Klobuchar demonstrates in New Hampshire that, even in a race that's been static for months and drowned out by Trump, debates, local quirks and voters matter.

CAN BIDEN SURVIVE IN SOUTH CAROLINA?

There was not a trace of good news for Biden in the New Hampshire results. As in Iowa, he was eclipsed by the 38-year-old former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, whom he had tried to diminish as far too inexperienced, and surprisingly by Klobuchar, whom voters saw as a better bet.

Biden's campaign has struggled repeatedly for lack of a rationale and lack of energy that could be seen in the small crowds that attended his events, his dismal fundraising, and his own uneven campaigning.

He has said he welcomes the chance to compete in a state with a more diverse electorate, and even left New Hampshire for South Carolina on Tuesday. But no candidate has failed so badly in the first two nominating contests and gone on to win.

In New Hampshire, roughly half of the state's Democrats would be dissatisfied with him as the presidential nominee, according to AP VoteCast.

His fall has been swift and dramatic.

WARREN HITS A WALL

Only a few months ago, Warren looked unstoppable in New Hampshire. She represented neighboring

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Massachusetts, her detail-oriented liberalism seemed a perfect match with the Granite State's no-nonsense progressives, and she led in state polls.

Now, the trajectory of her campaign is decidedly downward, and she has limited time for a reset. Warren spoke quickly Tuesday night, vowing to fight on, but it's unclear where she goes next.

Warren has a strong organization and ties in Nevada, but if she can't win on her neighboring turf it may be tough to score a surprise three time zones away. Unlike Biden, she doesn't have a demographic bulwark of African American voters to fall back on. And her small-dollar-only fundraising was already being eclipsed by Sanders, even before the Vermont senator began wracking up wins.

The candidate of plans has no clear plan to win now.

DEMOCRATS NOT THE YOUNG AND RESTLESS

Democratic primary voters are old. Nearly two-thirds in New Hampshire were above the age of 45.

These are voters who could have bought first pressings of Michael Jackson's "Thriller," danced to the Chicago Bears' "Super Bowl Shuffle" and sipped New Coke if not also Crystal Pepsi. They have memories of the Cold War with what was then the Soviet Union. And when it comes to choosing a nominee, this group was split between Buttigieg, Sanders and Klobuchar.

Nationwide, less than 56% of eligible voters are older than 45, according to the Census Bureau.

Sanders had an advantage with younger voters in New Hampshire.

Slightly more than 9 in 10 of New Hampshire voters are white. By way of comparison, just 68% of eligible voters are white.

Lone door led out as fire burned Indian factory of US denim

By SHEIKH SAALIQ and MARTHA MENDOZA Associated Press Writers

NEW DELHI (AP) — Shouting and crying, workers in an Indian denim factory struggled to claw their way up a ladder to a door, their only exit as a fire blazed through fabric and machinery, officials say. Seven people died in the weekend blaze, and families were still waiting on Wednesday to recover loved ones' bodies.

"Smoke kept billowing from the building as workers trapped inside screamed for help," said one eyewitness who spoke on condition of anonymity because he was worried he'd lose his job.

The factory where the fire occurred, Nandan Denim, has ties to major U.S. retailers, according to its website. Nandan says it supplies jeans, denim and other garments to more than 20 global brands including popular U.S. companies like Target, Ann Taylor, Mango and Wrangler, and its sister company supplies Walmart and H&M.

Some of the U.S. and multinational companies listed on the website said they were not actually customers, and many issued statements that strongly condemned dangerous work sites. Nandan Denim is one of the largest denim suppliers in the world.

The fire broke out Saturday in its two-story factory on the outskirts of Ahmedabad, a fast-growing city of 8.6 million in western Gujarat state. The city's industrial area, once covered with mountains of garbage, has slowly shifted into a hub for factories that make clothes sold to brands across the world.

Rajesh Bhatt, a senior fire official at the scene, told The Associated Press that the factory had just one door that could only be reached by climbing a steep ladder. The workers, Bhatt said, were resting after long shifts when the fire started.

"There were hardly any means of escape from the blaze," said Bhatt.

Police investigators said the factory had violated multiple regulations and the owner, a manager and a fire safety officer have been arrested.

Local safety and health authorities have asked the company to close until further notice. Its licenses have been suspended, and Nandan Denim has agreed to pay the families of those killed a reported \$14,000 each.

Purvee, a factory spokeswoman who goes by only her first name, did not explain how it started but called the fire "unfortunate." Factory officials would not comment on whether they had undergone required audits and reviews.

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Surviving workers, who are paid about 35 cents per hour, said conditions had been dangerous.

"We work almost 14 hours a day. But do we have an option?" said Vimalbhai, a textile worker, who goes by only one name. "Every once a while there is a fire in some factory or the other. Nobody cares and we keep on working."

Some workers said they were given impossible assignments, stitching more than 400 pieces of garments a day. This forced many of them, mostly women, to work at a frantic pace, often forgoing meal breaks or using the toilet, said survivors.

One victim, Dayabhai Makwana, 43, made it out alive, but went back in to rescue co-workers and perished.

"I wish he hadn't gone back to save his colleagues," said his grieving brother Dhanabai Makwana. He said more than 30 workers were in the factory at the time of the blaze.

Sobbing families were still waiting Wednesday outside one of the city's hospital mortuaries to identify bodies charred beyond recognition. They were told DNA confirmation would not come before Friday.

"We can't even mourn our dead because we don't know which one is ours," said Mahesh Patel, whose nephew lost his life in the blaze.

Amar Barot of the Textile Labour Association said working conditions in the textile factories across the city are grim, with rare inspections and few safety norms.

"These incidents are irreversible and only strict monitoring by the government and its agencies can help prevent such disasters," said Barot.

He also said labor unions across the region have been declining over the last few decades, making it difficult for the voices of workers to be heard.

Some of the major brands contacted, including Ann Taylor, Target, Zara and Pull&Bear, said they are not customers and don't have a relationship with Nandan Denim. Target said it is working to get its name off their website and out of their annual reports.

Because thread, fabric cutting, weaving and sewing can be done in different locations, apparel supply chains can be complicated and it becomes nearly impossible to track a specific item to a specific factory.

Joe Fresh, the fashion brand created for Canada's Loblaw Companies Ltd., said Nandan is not a supplier and doesn't make their goods. But company officials said they believe one of their approved suppliers has purchased bulk quantities of denim from Nandan, and they are further investigating. Target and others did not respond to queries about whether their authorized suppliers may have purchased denim from Nandan.

Zara's parent company Inditex said Nandan Denim has produced 10,000 pairs of jeans for another of its brands, Lefties.

And Nandan Denim's sister company Nandan Terry supplies towels and linens to many U.S. stores including Walmart and H&M, according to ImportGenius shipping records. Those corporations said they would also look into the situation.

Kontoor Brands, maker of Wrangler jeans, said they last worked with the factory in 2014.

"Our thoughts are with the workers and their families impacted by the tragic situation," said Kontoor in a statement.

Nandan Denim reported revenues of \$218 million last year, and says it exports to more than 20 countries and has more than 4,500 employees. Shares of the firm were tumbling after news of the fire.

Scott Nova, executive director of Washington-based Workers Rights Consortium, said: "It does not cost much to put fire exits in a textile factory."

"Brands and retailers are well aware of the safety risks in the garment and textile industry in India, yet they choose to do business with unsafe suppliers," he said. "The result is that workers are losing their lives in factory disasters that could easily have been prevented."

Forty-three people died in a December fire at a factory which produced handbags, caps and other garments in New Delhi.

Mendoza reported from Santa Cruz, California.

Joe Biden looks to South Carolina to resurrect his campaign

By **BILL BARROW** Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Joe Biden brought his wounded presidential campaign to South Carolina on Tuesday, staking his hopes for a comeback on the loyalty of black voters in the state after a dismal finish in the New Hampshire primary magnified his disappointing finish in Iowa.

"I know this is going to be the fight of my life," Biden told about 200 enthusiastic supporters gathered near the South Carolina Capitol to hear the 77-year-old former vice president deliver an emotional appeal. Biden eagerly looked ahead as the nomination fight moves beyond the overwhelmingly white opening states to Nevada, South Carolina and a Super Tuesday slate where African Americans and Latinos will hold considerable sway.

"We just heard from the first two of 50 states. Two of them," Biden said. "That's the opening bell, not the closing bell."

The candidate argued that no Democratic nominee has succeeded without significant support from African Americans, the core of his base in a fractured primary field. The electorate in South Carolina's Feb. 29 primary, the first in the South, is expected to be more than 60% black and could approach 70%, according to state party leaders.

Still, there is no Democratic precedent for the kind of comeback Biden is trying to pull off. No Democrat has claimed the nomination in the modern primary system without winning either Iowa or New Hampshire.

Biden's campaign had said for months they didn't have to win either state, but that strategy didn't necessarily consider finishing so far off the pace. In recent days, Biden's donor base has since grown nervous, raising questions about his financial viability if he doesn't rebound quickly.

Biden boarded a private jet in Manchester on Tuesday evening — even before New Hampshire primary polls closed — ending an eight-day whirlwind that saw the former vice president go from a national front-runner for the nomination to a battered underdog.

He finished fourth in the Iowa caucuses, and with votes still being tabulated in New Hampshire, Biden was vying for fourth alongside Sen. Elizabeth Warren. Each was at risk of finishing without winning any delegates out of the nation's first primary.

In his remarks Tuesday night, Biden praised Iowa's and New Hampshire's opening roles, but argued that 99.9% of African Americans and 99.8% of Latinos haven't yet had the opportunity to cast Democratic primary ballots.

"Do not let anyone take this election away from you," he said in a speech that touted his deep political ties to South Carolina and to the black community.

Biden mentioned his relationship with South Carolina's lone Democratic congressman, Jim Clyburn, the highest ranking black lawmaker on Capitol Hill. He noted his service as President Barack Obama's top lieutenant. He recalled meeting South African leader Nelson Mandela. And he promised black Americans a seat at the table in the Oval Office.

"Too often your loyalty, your commitment, your support for this party has been taken for granted," he said. "I give you my word as a Biden that I never, ever, ever will."

Biden was introduced by his campaign co-chairman, Cedric Richmond, a Louisiana congressman and former chairman of the Congressional Black Caucus. Richmond recalled for the crowd the first question he asked himself when deciding who to support: "Who do I trust?"

South Carolina has been a springboard for the nominee before. Four years ago, Hillary Clinton and Sanders battled to a draw in Iowa and Sanders beat her in New Hampshire, prompting a round of hand-wringing from some party leaders and national media. Clinton went on to crush Sanders in South Carolina and the diverse states that immediately followed, building a delegate lead he could never overcome. Eight years earlier, it was Obama, the nation's first black president, who used the black vote to put distance between his campaign and Clinton.

This isn't a two-person race, though, and Biden is looking merely to return to contender status. But 2020 already has proven unusual, with no candidate having demonstrated the ability to build a broad coalition

across the party's racial, ethnic and ideological factions. Bernie Sanders and Pete Buttigieg achieved a split decision in Iowa and Sanders barely edged out Buttigieg in New Hampshire.

Sanders, a Vermont senator and democratic socialist, has paltry support among the party's establishment core, and for months he has trailed Biden in support among non-white Democrats. Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, has struggled to corral meaningful support from black or Latino voters.

The same is true for Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who finished just behind Biden in Iowa but finished third in New Hampshire.

Biden does have competition for the black vote in South Carolina. Billionaire businessman Tom Steyer has spent large sums on advertising, while Biden's financial struggles have left him largely absent from the state's airwaves. The former vice president will depend on voters like Tina Herbert, a Columbia attorney who was eager to see him Tuesday night.

"I thought it was important that I showed my face and showed my support for him tonight," she said. "I've been with him since Day One."

Herbert said she wasn't concerned about Biden's finishes in any other early states.

"We are not really receptive to outsiders, so we don't listen to their opinions, even when we should, good or bad," she said.

— Associated Press reporter Meg Kinnard contributed to this report.

Inside Mike Bloomberg's big play for black voters

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — A meeting with nearly 80 black pastors in Detroit. A speech before a black Democratic organization in Montgomery. A rally at a historically black university. A tour of Martin Luther King Jr.'s church. An early voting kickoff at an African American museum. All in the past two weeks.

While Mike Bloomberg's rivals battled it out in majority-white Iowa and New Hampshire, the billionaire presidential candidate aggressively courted the black voters critical to any Democrat's chance of winning of the nomination. The effort, backed by millions in ads, has taken him across Southern states that vote on March 3, from Montgomery, Alabama, and this week Raleigh, North Carolina, and Chattanooga, Tennessee, states where African American voters can decide a Democratic primary.

His pitch is one of electability and competence — hoping to capitalize on black Democrats' hunger to oust President Donald Trump. But as he courts black voters he'll also have to reconcile his own record as mayor of New York and past remarks on criminal justice.

Bloomberg's outreach aims squarely at former Vice President Joe Biden, who is banking on loyal black voters to resuscitate his bid after poor showings in Iowa and New Hampshire.

"Who can beat Donald Trump? That's what people care about," said former Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, who is among the black leaders endorsing Bloomberg. Nutter says Bloomberg's record of accomplishments outweighs the damage of flawed policing.

Bloomberg has no doubt been helped by his limitless financial resources and his strategy to focus on states conducting primaries on Super Tuesday. One of the world's richest men thanks to a net worth of roughly \$60 billion, Bloomberg has spent more than \$300 million of his own money on advertising, including spots on black radio stations, a Super Bowl ad that featured an African American mother who lost her son to gun violence and a national ad touting his work with President Barack Obama on gun legislation and a teen jobs program.

He's also racked up endorsements from African American mayors and held an events with key figures in the black community, including a meeting with black pastors in Detroit and a speech at an Alabama Democratic luncheon. Much of the outreach has been aimed at middle-age and older voters, who turn out more reliably, and appeals to a sense of pragmatism. Bloomberg may not be the candidate you know best, the campaign argues, but he's the best poised to beat Trump.

A recent poll shows signs of success for Bloomberg. The Quinnipiac University poll conducted after the Iowa caucuses found Bloomberg with 15% support nationally, up from 8% in a late-January poll. That

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put him about even with Biden and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren and slightly ahead of Pete Buttigieg, who essentially tied with Sanders in last week's Iowa caucuses. The poll showed Sanders leading, with 25% nationally.

During a recent rally at historically black Alabama State University, Bloomberg drew several hundred people, who chanted "I like Mike!" and prompted a dry response from the understated candidate.

"Better they do that than they don't do that," he said.

Louretta Wimberly, a retired educator from Selma, Alabama, watched the rally and reconsidered her support for Biden. She's felt a longtime connection with the former vice president, but she likes what she's hearing from Bloomberg.

"I've been following him because he is speaking to the things that we black women in Selma and in the Black Belt want — public education, health care and infrastructure," Wimberly said.

Voters like Wimberly don't often raise Bloomberg's record in New York, but his critics do. For them, his criminal justice policies in New York — specifically his embrace of a practice known as "stop-and-frisk" that disproportionately affected people of color — remain a mark on his civil rights record that cannot be erased by his recent apologies. The issue flared up again this week when comments he made in a 2015 Aspen Institute speech resurfaced. In the audio, Bloomberg says the way to bring down murder rates is to "put a lot of cops" in minority neighborhoods because that's where "all the crime is."

Bloomberg apologized for supporting the practice just days before he launched his 2020 bid in November, and repeated that apology on Tuesday, saying the remarks "do not reflect my commitment to criminal justice reform and racial equity." But the timing of his apologies strikes some as political expediency.

"He should have done it when it mattered. Now he just looks like someone who's willing to say anything to get elected president," said Hawk Newsome, president of Black Lives Matter New York, who said younger black voters in particular will not be willing to give Bloomberg a pass on his record on policing. "What he's selling we already bought, paid for and returned."

The prominent activist Rev. Al Sharpton, who fought with the mayor over stop-and-frisk, said Tuesday he told Bloomberg in a phone call moments after his November apology that "it's going to take more than one speech, but it's a step in the right direction."

Sharpton said Bloomberg had "an upside and a downside" as mayor but that his biggest strength as a presidential candidate is his argument that he's the best one to take on Trump. That's especially true if Biden — his pitch to black Americans has been that he's most electable in November — continues to slip, leaving voters thinking Bloomberg "may have a better shot" in November, Sharpton said.

But Bloomberg also is viewed skeptically by some younger and progressive voters weary of putting another rich man in the White House. And it's far from clear that his cool, business-like approach to campaigning will connect with voters.

A tour guide at King's church asked the people gathered around them to join in song. While others followed her lead, singing and clapping to "This Little Light of Mine," Bloomberg simply ignored the request and carried on with introducing himself to people and shaking their hands, until the singing stopped.

On the stump, Bloomberg appeals more to the pragmatism of voters who want to beat Trump and get things done.

James May, the former mayor of Uniontown, Alabama, said before a Bloomberg speech at a Democratic Party leader luncheon that Bloomberg's accomplishments as mayor were enough to earn his support. "If he does that when he becomes president he's my kind of guy," May said. As for Biden? "He's good, too, but not quite good enough."

Bloomberg has so far been shut out of debates, allowing him to largely avoid tough public questioning of his record. That could change next week when Democrats hold their next debate. Bloomberg needs to meet a polling threshold in two more polls to make the stage for the first time.

Maurice Hawkins, an Air Force veteran from Virginia Beach, Virginia, plans to vote for Biden on Super Tuesday, but he said Bloomberg's history with stop-and-frisk wouldn't stop him from supporting the former mayor.

Hawkins said Democratic voters can be too rigid about a candidate's history, particularly on issues where

the country has evolved, such as criminal justice. Biden has had to answer for his own record, including helping craft the 1994 crime bill, which critics blame for the mass incarceration of minorities over two decades. Biden has proposed a plan that would reverse parts of that bill.

Hawkins, who is black, said he attended a Bloomberg speech in Norfolk, Virginia, last week because he's considering backing Bloomberg if Biden isn't in the race when Virginia votes.

"I wanted to hear what he has to say," Hawkins said, "because I think because we're in a really turbulent primary, we don't know who's gonna come out of it."

China's Communist Party faces its biggest crisis since SARS

By JOE McDONALD Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's ruling Communist Party needs to make a politically fraught decision: Admit a viral outbreak isn't under control and cancel this year's highest-profile official event. Or bring 3,000 legislators to Beijing next month and risk fueling public anger at the government's handling of the disease.

The party was already facing criticism of its heavy-handed censorship, on display during the outbreak, and other social controls under President Xi Jinping, who took power in 2012 and has accrued more political power than any Chinese leader since Mao Zedong.

Now, the new disease named COVID-19 has become the party's biggest crisis since China's last outbreak of a mystery disease in 2002-2003. SARS, or severe acute respiratory syndrome, killed nearly 800 people and led to accusations Beijing had endangered the public by hiding the disease to avoid disrupting a party leadership transition.

There is no indication Xi faces any serious challenge to his position, but public anger could give opponents in the ruling party ammunition to push back against his autocratic rule.

"In the long term, I think it will damage him," said Steve Tsang, director of the China Institute at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

But for now, even party figures who might be quite happy to see Xi weakened feel obligated to rally around him, Tsang said. "They will not risk allowing a crisis like this to destroy the credibility of the Communist Party itself," he said.

Prominent but powerless, the National People's Congress, due to open on March 5, endorses the ruling party's economic and social welfare plans. The premier and Cabinet ministers hold their only news conferences of the year, while delegates mingle at group meetings and talk to foreign reporters — a potentially explosive mix.

Party leaders worry delegates "might vent their anger and frustration," said Willy Lam, a political scientist at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

He said there would likely be "heavy censorship" to make sure angry delegates can't talk to reporters if the meeting isn't postponed for the first time since the ultra-radical Cultural Revolution of 1966-1976.

The party could postpone holding the gathering to May or later in hopes the outbreak might have abated and the event could be held "without presenting an image that they don't care how it affects people," Tsang said.

Going ahead with it would contradict Beijing's intensive anti-disease controls. They have isolated cities with a total of 60 million people and discouraged travel and public gatherings nationwide, disrupting business and imposing mounting economic losses.

China has reported more than 1,100 deaths and over 44,600 confirmed cases, most of them in the central city of Wuhan and the surrounding province of Hubei.

The party has used its monopoly control of media and pervasive censorship controls to stifle criticism online, over the popular WeChat messaging service and through other social media. But it faces grumbling, including in its own ranks, about Xi's autocratic rule and assertiveness over the South China Sea and other foreign issues that have strained relations with China's neighbors.

In an essay titled "angry people are no longer afraid," a law professor at elite Tsinghua University in Beijing criticized "ruling through 'big data totalitarianism' and WeChat terrorism."

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"Politics is corrupt and the regime is ethically exhausted," wrote Xu Zhangrun in the essay published on China Digital Times, a website in California.

Last year, Xu was suspended from his post and investigated by Tsinghua for criticizing the party's decision in 2018 to remove presidential term limits from China's constitution, allowing Xi to stay in office indefinitely.

The party has also faced an outburst of public anger following the death this month of Li Wenliang, a physician in Wuhan who was reprimanded in December for warning about the virus. Local authorities were accused of discouraging doctors from talking about the outbreak to avoid overshadowing Hubei province's major political event, a legislative meeting in preparation for the National People's Congress.

Comments left on Li's microblog account accused Wuhan authorities of valuing politics over public safety.

Party leaders have tried to divert anger by allowing state media and social media users to criticize local Wuhan officials.

The party faced similar criticism over SARS.

The first cases were reported in November 2002, but the party said the disease was under control. It didn't declare an emergency until after then-President Jiang Zemin handed over power to Hu Jintao in March 2003 in a once-a-decade transition.

Xi has amassed vast authority after being named party general secretary in 2012, effectively becoming leader for life. He took over as leader of the military and sidelined rivals including the No. 2 party figure, Premier Li Keqiang. Xi appointed himself to head party bodies that oversee economic reform and other important issues.

It was a break with two previous generations of leadership, which were based on consensus among members of the ruling party's inner circle of power, the Standing Committee.

That has allowed Xi to push through ambitious plans, including the multi-billion-dollar Belt and Road Initiative, to expand trade by building ports, railways and other trade-related infrastructure across Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

But it also makes it harder for Xi to deflect blame. This week, he broke a lengthy public silence about the disease by visiting a neighborhood of Beijing that has had about 340 cases of the virus.

Xi is personally identified with a slew of thorny issues, from Beijing's tariff war with Washington and prickly relations with Taiwan, the self-ruled island the Communist Party claims as its territory, to anti-government protests in Hong Kong and the mass detention of ethnic Muslim minorities in the Xinjiang region in the northwest.

Xi has appeared to try to distance himself from the latest virus outbreak by naming the premier, Li Keqiang, on Jan. 26 to head the party group in charge of anti-disease work.

The next day, Li flew to Wuhan, met with doctors and nurses and visited a supermarket.

"This looks like an attempt to shift blame to Li Keqiang if progress in fighting the disease is unsatisfactory," Lam said.

Klobuchar surged in New Hampshire. Can she make it count?

By SARA BURNETT, HOLLY RAMER and MICHAEL CASEY Associated Press

CONCORD, N.H. (AP) — It took a year of campaigning, countless stump speeches and an especially strong night on the debate stage for little-known Democratic presidential hopeful Amy Klobuchar to break into the top tier of the 2020 campaign in New Hampshire.

Now she has less than two weeks to make it count.

The Minnesota senator on Tuesday immediately worked to turn her better-than-expected night into enough momentum to be competitive in next-up Nevada and beyond. For Klobuchar, that means consolidating establishment and moderate voters, picking up traction with black and Latino Democrats and introducing herself to most everyone else.

"Hello, America!" she yelled over a cheering crowd at a campaign party in Concord as she was on track to finish in third place. "I'm Amy Klobuchar, and I will beat Donald Trump."

A third-place finish counted as a victory for a candidate who spent much of the campaign boasting

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about being in the "top five" of the crowded field. Klobuchar used the moment to put her no-nonsense appeal in the spotlight. She spoke of growing up the granddaughter of an iron ore miner, becoming the first female senator from Minnesota and defying expectations in the 2020 race. She pledged to bring her green campaign bus to Nevada and around the country, and to win the nomination.

The senator appeared to benefit Tuesday from former Vice President Joe Biden's sliding support, picking up moderate and conservative voters looking for an alternative to liberal Sen. Bernie Sanders, the New Hampshire winner, and rejecting political newcomer and second-place finisher Pete Buttigieg.

But Klobuchar's quest is still an uphill climb. The senator has focused almost all her time and campaign resources in Iowa and New Hampshire, building only spare operations in the states that follow on the primary calendar. She has polled poorly among minority voters, a big obstacle in more diverse states like Nevada and South Carolina. Although she will likely see a bump in support, a surge of donations and new media attention, Klobuchar's challenge is to set up the infrastructure to capitalize on her moment.

She's starting from behind. Klobuchar's Nevada team wasn't hired until last fall and numbered fewer than a dozen until the campaign redeployed staff from Iowa last week, giving her about 30 people on the ground. Sanders, who essentially tied Buttigieg in Iowa, has been organizing in Nevada since April 2019 and has over 250 staff in the state. Biden has over 80, Buttigieg has over 65 and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren has over 50.

Klobuchar is now hoping the appeal that worked for her in New Hampshire will have a similar impact in Nevada on Feb. 22. The three-term senator campaigned as someone who has won even in conservative areas and who could draw support from Democrats, independents and disaffected Republicans to beat Trump. She also points to her record of getting things done in Washington and argues that proposals like "Medicare for All," backed by Sanders and Warren, are nonstarters in the Senate.

But it was Klobuchar's debate performance that appeared to have the biggest impact on her showing Tuesday. More than half of Klobuchar's supporters made up their minds in the last few days, according to AP VoteCast, a survey of more than 3,000 Democratic primary voters in New Hampshire conducted for The Associated Press by NORC at the University of Chicago.

Klobuchar went on the attack against Buttigieg and delivered a passionate closing promise to fight for the voters who don't feel seen or heard by politicians in Washington.

Those selling points helped convince voters like Linda Muchemore, a retiree from Greenland, New Hampshire, who settled on Klobuchar last week after leaning toward Warren.

Klobuchar's record in the Senate "spoke to me of somebody who could maybe heal the animosity we have," Muchemore said. "I found out that I'm not as liberal as I thought I was. Those moderate plans that Amy has speak more to me than Elizabeth's more radical, Bernie plans."

Klobuchar's late surge over Warren was a surprise twist in the race. Warren, from neighboring Massachusetts, has been leading in the polling, but both women have struggled to convince voters that a woman can win. On Tuesday night, Warren congratulated Klobuchar — "my friend and colleague" — and noted how wrong pundits are "when they count us out."

Klobuchar responded to "my friend Elizabeth" soon after.

"People told me just like they told her that they didn't think a woman could be elected," she said. "In my case it was elected to the U.S. Senate. No woman had ever done it before. But I came back, I defied expectations, and I won."

For much of the race, Klobuchar has lagged toward the back of the pack in fundraising and had just under \$5 million in reserve at the end of 2019 — far less than all other leading contenders. Her goal coming out of Friday's debate was to raise \$1 million, a lifeline that would allow her to forge on in contests ahead. She quickly reached that amount and, to her own surprise, she doubled it within 24 hours. By Tuesday, her campaign said that sum had climbed to \$4 million — and was still going up.

That post-debate haul is in line with the \$4 million Buttigieg raised in the days after landing at the top, along with Sanders, in the Iowa caucuses last week. The money will help pay for ads in Nevada and South Carolina, which holds its primary the week after Nevada, and to beef up the campaign in the March 3

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“Super Tuesday” contests, when the largest number of delegates are up for grabs of any date on Democrats’ calendar.

Unlike the other leading contenders in the race, Klobuchar is the only candidate who is not getting extra help from a super PAC or outside group, which can raise and spend unlimited sums so long as they do not coordinate advertising spending decisions with the candidate they support.

In contrast, a super PAC called Unite the County has spent over \$6 million on advertising amplifying Biden’s message. The group VoteVets has spent a minimum of \$1.6 million on ads backing Buttigieg, according to the Federal Election Commission. Sanders, too, has drawn support from a network of “dark money” nonprofit groups, which don’t have to reveal their donors and won’t have to disclose full spending figures until after the election. And Warren is backed by the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, which is not operating a super PAC to support her but serves as a surrogate voice and routinely attacks Buttigieg and Biden.

Much of Klobuchar’s support, meanwhile, comes from donors in her home state of Minnesota, who account for the lion share of her presidential fundraising, according to campaign finance disclosures, which only provide information about donors who give over \$200. She also supplemented her presidential run with a \$3.5 million transfer from her Senate campaign account, records show.

Klobuchar is scheduled to be in Nevada starting Thursday, when she will participate in a town hall sponsored by the League of United Latin American Citizens.

Burnett reported from Chicago. Associated Press reporters Brian Slodysko and Hannah Fingerhut in Washington and Michelle Price in Las Vegas contributed to this report.

Yang, who created buzz with freedom dividend, ends 2020 bid

By SARA BURNETT Associated Press

Democrat Andrew Yang, an entrepreneur who created buzz for his presidential campaign by talking about his love of math and championing a universal basic income that would give every American adult \$1,000 per month, suspended his 2020 bid on Tuesday.

“I am the math guy, and it is clear to me from the numbers that we are not going to win this race,” Yang said in front of a crowd of supporters as votes in New Hampshire’s first-in-the-nation primary were being counted.

“This is not an easy decision, or something I made lightly with the team. Endings are hard and I’ve always had the intention to stay in the race until the very end,” he added. “But I have been persuaded that the message of this campaign will not be strengthened by my staying in the race any longer.”

The 45-year-old was one of the breakout stars of the Democratic primary race, building a following that started largely online but expanded to give him enough donors and polling numbers to qualify for the first six debates. Yang announced his departure from the race shortly before Colorado Sen. Michael Bennet did Tuesday night, bringing the Democratic field to single digits.

He outlasted senators and governors, and after initially self-funding his campaign, he raised more money than most of his rivals, bringing in over \$16 million in the final quarter of last year. It was a bigger haul than all but the top four candidates: Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, former Vice President Joe Biden and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren.

“We went from a mailing list that started with just my Gmail contact list to receiving donations from over 400,000 people around the country and millions more who supported this campaign,” Yang said before pledging to support whoever becomes the Democratic nominee.

Yang grew his outsider candidacy by campaigning as a non-politician, someone who mixed unconventional campaign events — from bowling to ax throwing — with serious talk about the millions of jobs lost to automation and artificial intelligence and the dark outlook for American jobs and communities.

The graduate of Brown University and Columbia Law School gave campaign speeches full of statistics and studies that often resembled an economics seminar. His supporters, known as the Yang Gang, donned

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blue hats and pins with the word MATH — short for his slogan Make America Think Harder.

Yang promoted his signature issue of universal basic income, which he dubbed the “freedom dividend,” by announcing during a debate that he would choose individuals to receive the monthly \$1,000 checks. The statement prompted questions about whether he was trying to buy votes, but also generated a buzz online and helped the campaign build a list of possible supporters.

His backers said they were ready to carry on Yang’s message for a basic universal income.

“This is the beginning. It’s the beginning,” said Hellen Suh, a 47-year-old supporter from New York. “The Yang Gang isn’t going to stop. It’s a movement. People realize that UBI is going to be necessary no matter what because of technology. It’s inevitable. Not only that, his humanity first message is very powerful. We need to take care of everybody.”

Steve Marchand, the former mayor of Portsmouth who was a senior adviser for the Yang campaign, was disappointed his candidate pulled out but was encouraged by how far he had come in such a short time.

“On one level, you can’t help but feel a little disappointed because you want to keep going,” Marchand said. “I truly believe he gives us the best chance to defeat Donald Trump and to do it in a way that will transform the economy in a way we need. But I am also unbelievably proud.”

Yang’s poll numbers were high enough, combined with his fundraising strength, to qualify him for all of the 2019 debates, though he fell short of Democratic National Committee’s qualifications to participate in the January debate in Iowa. He was, however, one of seven candidates who participated in Friday’s debate in New Hampshire. His departure from the race almost guarantees that the Democrats, who once had the most diverse presidential field in history, will have no candidates of color on the debate stage again this cycle.

Yang spent most of January in the leadoff caucus state, including a 17-day bus tour during which he told voters his finish in Iowa would “shock the world.”

Associated Press writer Michael Casey in Manchester, N.H., contributed to this report.

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

Bloomberg embraces stop and frisk in resurfaced 2015 audio **By ALEXANDRA JAFFE and JONATHAN LEMIRE Associated Press**

WASHINGTON (AP) — Michael Bloomberg is under fire for resurfaced comments in which the Democratic presidential candidate says the way to bring down murder rates is to “put a lot of cops” in minority neighborhoods because that’s where “all the crime is.”

The billionaire and former New York City mayor made the comments at a 2015 appearance at the Aspen Institute, as part of an overall defense of his support for the controversial “stop and frisk” policing tactic that has been found to disproportionately affect minorities.

Bloomberg launched his presidential bid late last year with an apology for his support for the policy. He’s taking an unconventional approach to the campaign, bypassing the traditional early states and gaining attention by flooding the airwaves with hundreds of millions of dollars in ads. He’s spent recent days courting black voters whose support will be crucial to winning the Democratic nomination and will begin a campaign swing through the South on Wednesday.

Seeking to blunt any political fallout from the comments, Bloomberg said Tuesday the remarks “do not reflect my commitment to criminal justice reform and racial equity.”

But the audio of his Aspen speech highlights his embrace of the policy just a few years ago and suggests he was aware of the disproportionate impact of stop and frisk on minorities. Bloomberg says that “95%” of murders and murder victims are young male minorities and that “you can just take the description, Xerox it and pass it out to all the cops.” To combat crime, he says, “put a lot of cops where the crime is, which means in minority neighborhoods.”

In the audio, he acknowledges that focusing police forces in minority neighborhoods means minorities

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are disproportionately arrested for marijuana possession but dismisses that as a necessary consequence. "Why do we do it? Because that's where all the crime is," Bloomberg said.

And to "get the guns out of the kids' hands," Bloomberg says, police must "throw 'em against the wall and frisk 'em."

"And they say, 'Oh, I don't want that. I don't wanna get caught.' So they don't bring the gun," he says.

According to a report in the Aspen Times that year, Bloomberg blocked the release of video of the Aspen Institute appearance. But the Aspen Times reporter uploaded what appears to be the full audio online, and it drew renewed attention Monday after podcaster Benjamin Dixon circulated it on Twitter.

In his Tuesday statement, Bloomberg notes that he "inherited the practice of stop and frisk" from Rudy Giuliani's administration and noted that by the time he left office at the end of 2013, he had significantly reduced its use. He said, "I should have done it faster and sooner."

But stop and frisk expanded dramatically on Bloomberg's watch, reaching a peak in 2011 when over 685,000 people were stopped, according to data from the American Civil Liberties Union. While its use declined significantly after that, Bloomberg stood by the program even in the face of widespread criticism and legal challenges.

Bloomberg has since distanced himself from the policy since launching his presidential campaign as part of a broader strategy aimed at appealing to minority voters. He's also acknowledged his own white privilege and released policies focused on issues central to some African American communities, like black homeownership and maternal mortality rates.

But the comments gave Bloomberg's political rivals an opportunity to pounce. Activist Tom Steyer, who is working aggressively to attract black voters in South Carolina ahead of that state's Feb. 29 primary, called the comments "extremely disturbing."

"The racist stereotypes he uses have no place today, and anyone running for the presidential nomination should disavow them," Steyer said.

Former Vice President Joe Biden is also staking his campaign on a strong showing in South Carolina. His top adviser, Symone Sanders, called the comments "sad and despicable," and said he "will have to answer for these comments."

And President Donald Trump, who himself has supported stop-and-frisk policies, sent out a tweet with a clip of the audio, declaring, "Bloomberg's a racist."

Trump later deleted the tweet, but in impromptu remarks to reporters in the Oval Office later Tuesday, he dismissed Bloomberg's apology for supporting stop and frisk as "disingenuous."

But Trump himself has long defended the tactic.

In an October 2018 speech to the International Association of Police Chiefs, Trump touted its use in New York under then-Mayor Giuliani, now his personal attorney, and urged Chicago to adopt it.

And in 2013, he defended both the tactic and Bloomberg's police commissioner, tweeting, "Stop and frisk works. Instead of criticizing @NY_POLICE Chief Ray Kelly, New Yorkers should be thanking him for keeping NY safe."

The attacks on Bloomberg reflect a growing concern about the billionaire's candidacy. Indeed, Bloomberg focused the bulk of his statement on Trump, arguing that the president's attack "reflects his fear over the growing strength of my campaign."

The president and his campaign team have been warily watching Bloomberg's spending spree since the former mayor's entry into the race.

Trump's campaign manager, Brad Parscale, had previously told staffers he would not worry about Bloomberg until he cracked double digits, which the former mayor has now done in some recent national polls. Parscale told aides recently that the campaign would soon be doing more Bloomberg-centric polling, according to a campaign aide not authorized to speak publicly about private conversations.

Trump has delivered frequent broadsides against Bloomberg, ignoring counsel from some aides, including senior adviser and son-in-law Jared Kushner, to avoid elevating him in a Democratic field that remains unsettled.

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Annoyed by Bloomberg's superior wealth, favorable press and easy entrée into the upper realm of the New York elite that long ago rejected him, Trump has repeatedly attacked the former mayor, including recent digs about his height and golf game. And on Tuesday, he hinted at how much Bloomberg's wealth remains on his mind when he said in the Oval Office that the former mayor is a "lightweight" and insisted he'd rather run against Bernie Sanders in the general election because the Vermont senator "has real followers."

Bloomberg, Trump said, is just "buying his way in."

The Trump campaign also believes that uncertainty in the Democratic field could help chip away at the other party's advantage with black voters. The campaign has made its own pitch, touting economic growth for minorities since 2016 and highlighting the president's advocacy for criminal justice reform, including in a highly watched Super Bowl ad.

Though Trump fares unfavorably with African Americans in most polls, the campaign is simultaneously aiming to win over more black voters and to discourage African Americans from turning out for Democrats by convincing them there is little difference between the two parties' agendas.

Black voters turned out overwhelmingly for Hillary Clinton in 2016 but at a lesser rate than for Barack Obama, contributing to Trump's slim margin of victory in several battleground states.

Lemire reported from Manchester, N.H.

Virus puts Hong Kong protests on ice. Will they return?

By EILEEN NG Associated Press

The crowd lining up recently on a cold, dark Hong Kong street wasn't part of the anti-government protest movement that rocked the semi-autonomous Chinese territory for months.

Their demand: surgical masks, now in short supply as fears grow over a new virus that has claimed more than 1,000 lives across the border in mainland China and one in Hong Kong.

The city's often-tumultuous street protests had already slowed over the past two months. Now they have ground to an almost complete halt as attention focuses on how to avoid a recurrence of the SARS pandemic, which killed about 300 people in Hong Kong in 2002-03.

But with most of the protest demands unmet, it's too early to declare the movement dead.

RALLIES SHRINK

The frequency and ferocity of street protests eased after a landslide victory by the pro-democracy bloc in November's district council elections. The vote was a sharp rebuke of Chief Executive Carrie Lam's rule and ushered in a period of relative calm.

Hundreds of thousands of people packed streets on Dec. 8 for a peaceful march as they sought to press the government on demands for full democracy and an independent inquiry into alleged police brutality in suppressing earlier protests.

The protesters returned on Jan. 1 as they sought to maintain their momentum into 2020. The march degenerated into familiar violence, with police firing tear gas and a water cannon and black-clad protesters throwing gasoline bombs. More than 400 people were detained.

Occasional, smaller demonstrations have taken place since then, including lunch-time rallies by slogan-chanting office workers and vigils for a student who died during a protest.

FRUSTRATIONS LINGER

Anger still simmers against the government, and the wrath has been channeled against what is perceived as government mishandling of the virus outbreak.

Residents in several areas have staged angry protests against government plans to quarantine possibly infected people nearby. Thousands of hospital staff who are part of a newly formed medical union went on strike last week with calls for five demands, including full closure of the border with the mainland, and better protection for health care workers against the virus. A flight attendants' union at Cathay Dragon, a sister company of Hong Kong's main carrier, Cathay Pacific, has also threatened to strike unless all flights

to mainland China are halted

Dixon Sing Ming, a political science professor at Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, said the protest movement has morphed into an engine for broader activism through new labor unions and the use of social media to boycott pro-government businesses. Reports say Labor Department records show 27 unions were formed in the month up to Feb. 6, compared with 23 in all of 2019.

After calls rose to close the border, the government suspended rail links and halved flights and later sealed all border checkpoints except for three. It then imposed a 14-day home quarantine for all arrivals from mainland China. Many in Hong Kong feel the measures came too late and weren't strong enough.

TRIGGER POINTS

Protest organizer Ventus Lau said anger has only grown over Lam's handling of the crisis, especially her refusal to block all mainland visitors. Many believe Lam was responding to pressure from the central Chinese government, and even some government supporters have joined the chorus of criticism.

The current crisis will press home the protest movement's goal of political reforms and will "add fuel to the whole movement in the long term," Lau said.

On the horizon lie potential trigger points that could stir people to return to the streets. The release of a report by a watchdog probe on police behavior during the protests due in January, but since delayed, could spark anger among those who say the body has limited powers.

A poster circulating on private Telegram internet messaging groups describes the current sentiment: "Fight the virus, but don't forget our cause."

Actor Jussie Smollett faces 6 new charges in Chicago

By DON BABWIN and HERB McCANN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Actor Jussie Smollett was indicted Tuesday for a second time on charges of lying to police about a racist and anti-gay attack he allegedly staged on himself in downtown Chicago, renewing a divisive criminal case that drew worldwide attention last year.

The indictment came from a special prosecutor who was appointed after Cook County prosecutors dropped the same charges last March.

The new charges were sure to reignite many of the tensions that surrounded Smollett a year ago. When his claims first emerged, he drew a groundswell of support from fans and celebrities and gave an emotional television interview about the attack.

The case came to reflect the polarized state of political discourse in America. Many Democrats initially called it a shocking instance of Trump-era racism and hate, while Republicans depicted it as yet another example of liberals rushing to judgment and disparaging the president's supporters as bigots.

Special prosecutor Dan Webb said in a statement that Smollett faces six felony counts of disorderly conduct, charges that stem from four separate false reports that he gave to police in which he contended he was a victim of a hate crime "knowing that he was not the victim of a crime."

The statement immediately raised questions about county prosecutors' decision to drop the charges and made it clear that those prosecutors had not adequately explained to special prosecutors why they did so. But Webb stressed that he had reached no conclusions about whether anyone involved in the case had engaged in any wrongdoing.

Smollett, who is black and gay, was originally charged with disorderly conduct in February 2019 for allegedly staging the attack and lying about it to investigators. The allegations were dropped the following month with little explanation, angering police officials and then-Mayor Rahm Emanuel.

Tina Glandian, Smollett's attorney, questioned Webb's decision to file new charges.

The indictment "raises serious questions about the integrity of the investigation that led to the renewed charges" Glandian said, citing the use of the same detectives who were part of the original investigation into the attack to conduct the latest probe, despite Smollett's pending civil claims against the city and police officers for malicious prosecution.

He is scheduled to appear in court for arraignment on Feb. 24.

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Smollett told police he was walking home early on Jan. 29, 2019, when two masked men approached him, made racist and homophobic insults, beat him and looped a noose around his neck before fleeing. He said his assailants, at least one of whom he described as white, told him he was in "MAGA country" — a reference to President Donald Trump's campaign slogan, "Make America Great Again."

Several weeks later, authorities alleged that Smollett had paid two black friends \$3,500 to help him stage the attack because he was unhappy with his salary as an actor on "Empire," a Fox series about that follows a black family as they navigate the ups and downs of the recording industry. Smollett was accused of using the scheme to drum up publicity for his career.

A judge in August appointed Webb, a former U.S. attorney, to look into why the original charges were dropped. Webb also was investigating whether phone calls that Cook County State's Attorney Kim Foxx had with a Smollett relative and a former aide of former first lady Michelle Obama unduly influenced the decision to drop charges. Foxx recused herself from the case but continued to weigh in.

At the time, Judge Michael Toomin, who assigned the case to Webb, raised the possibility that Smollett could be charged again. According to the judge and attorneys, double jeopardy does not apply because Smollett was never prosecuted.

In his news release, Webb said he concluded that prosecuting Smollett was "in the interest of justice" for a number of reasons, including the extensive details of Smollett's false account as well as the resources that the police department threw at the investigation.

When the first indictment against Smollett was returned, Webb wrote, the state's attorney's office had concluded that the evidence in the case was "strong." But the office failed to offer any new evidence to explain why authorities dropped the charges just a few weeks later, Webb said.

Further, Webb took issue with an assertion in a news release issued when the charges were dropped that Smollett had not received special treatment and that the case was resolved "under the same criteria that would be available for any defendant with similar circumstances." Webb asked for but never received any examples of other such cases, he wrote.

The city has sued Smollett, seeking reimbursement of more than \$130,000 for overtime paid to officers who were involved in investigating Smollett's report. Smollett's attorneys have said the city should not be allowed to recover costs from Smollett because it accepted \$10,000 from the actor "as payment in full in connection with the dismissal of the charges against him."

It was not immediately clear what sentence Smollett faces if convicted. When he was originally charged with disorderly conduct, it was reported that he could be placed on probation or sent to prison for one to three years per count.

Smollett's case has become an issue in Foxx's bid for a second term. Those looking to unseat the first black woman to hold the county's highest law enforcement position, have blasted her handling of the matter as haphazard and indecisive. They say it indicates she has bad judgment and favors the rich and powerful in deciding who will be prosecuted.

Foxx's campaign committee issued a biting statement Tuesday referring to former FBI Director James Comey's decision to briefly reopen an investigation into Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton's email shortly before the presidential election in 2016 that Donald Trump would win.

"What's questionable here is the James Comey-like timing of that charging decision"...which can only be interpreted as the further politicization of the justice system, something voters in the era of Donald Trump should consider offensive," the statement from Friends for Foxx said.

Smollett's attorney also raised political implications.

The attempt to re-prosecute Smollett "on the eve of the Cook County State's Attorney election is clearly all about politics not justice," she said.

Smollett, 37, has not had any notable film or television roles announced since his departure from the TV series was made public in April 2019. Producers have the option to bring him back during the sixth and final season but have said they have no plans to do so.

"Empire" has 10 episodes left. It is scheduled to return March 3.

Klobuchar faces tough questioning in case of juvenile lifer

By **MICHAEL REZENDES** and **ROBIN McDOWELL** Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — As voters made their way to the New Hampshire polls, Democratic presidential candidate Amy Klobuchar faced pointed questions Tuesday about her oversight of a high-profile murder case in which a black teen was sentenced to life after a flawed police investigation.

"I mean, how do you defend something like that, to someone like me, who is the mother of a black boy, a black teenager?" asked Sunny Hostin, co-host of the ABC show "The View." "This case would be my worst nightmare."

Klobuchar, a Minnesota senator who has drawn enthusiastic crowds following her debate performance Friday night, said, "All of the evidence needs to be immediately reviewed in that case. The past evidence and also any new evidence."

The back-and-forth between Hostin and Klobuchar, the former top prosecutor in Minneapolis, concerned an Associated Press investigation into the case of Myon Burrell. Burrell was 16 when he was apprehended in the 2002 death of an 11-year-old African American girl, killed by a stray bullet while doing her homework.

No gun, fingerprints or DNA were ever recovered, and the case against Burrell relied on the testimony of a teen rival who offered conflicting stories when identifying the trigger man, who was standing 120 feet away, mostly behind a wall, the AP reported.

The AP also uncovered questionable police tactics in the case, including an investigator who offered cash for information, and interviewed a prison inmate who said that he was the triggerman and that Burrell was not on the scene when Tyesha Edwards was shot and killed.

Klobuchar, whose office prosecuted the case, has raised the case throughout her political career — even during her 2020 presidential campaign — as an example of how she helped find justice for victims of violence.

After the AP's story, Klobuchar said evidence in the case should be reviewed. But her exchange with Hostin was especially heated and took place at a pivotal moment in her candidacy.

"You're a U.S. senator now," Hostin said. "You're a powerful woman. What do you intend to do to right this wrong?"

Klobuchar replied: "It must be reviewed. Sunny, I think you know that I care so much about justice, and this case must be reviewed."

McDowell reported from Minneapolis.

This story has been corrected to show "The View" airs on ABC, not CBS.

Equifax hack highlights China interest in U.S. personal data

By **FRANK BAJAK** AP Technology Writer

BOSTON (AP) — In 2014, the Obama administration accused five Chinese military agents of targeting Pittsburgh-area industrial companies including Westinghouse Electric, Alcoa and U.S. Steel. Since then, the number of companies allegedly targeted by Chinese hackers has only grown.

Chinese President Xi Jinping assured then-President Barack Obama in 2015 his military would stop stealing commercial secrets from U.S. companies. The evidence indicates that pledge was short-lived, if it was honored at all.

The latest in a string of China-linked hacking incidents came with the Monday indictment of four members of the Chinese military for breaking into the credit-reporting agency Equifax in 2017. The motives, as with several others hacks that preceded it, appear to be more about espionage than stealing trade secrets, cybersecurity experts say.

Among other things, experts who monitor the dark web say they have seen no evidence of data stolen in the Equifax hack — or in an earlier breach of Marriott — being sold to common criminals for ID theft and credit card fraud.

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The state-backed Chinese hackers allegedly vacuumed up billions of data points on Americans that could be used to cross-reference data and obtain deep insights into individual lives. The data could be used in the recruitment of spies, and the hackers may have seeded cover identities for Chinese agents inside Equifax's databases, said Priscilla Moriuchi, a former NSA employee now at the cybersecurity firm Recorded Future.

Here are the biggest cases of wholesale data theft blamed on Chinese agents.

OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

In a devastating blow to U.S. national security, the personal data of more than 21 million current, former and prospective federal employees was stolen. Although a first hacker was detected in March 2014, a second intruder went undetected until April 2015, by which time data on security clearances, background checks and fingerprint records had been extracted. A House inquiry said the hack was likely the work of "Deep Panda," a group linked to the Chinese military.

ANTHEM

Hackers stole personal information on nearly 80 million current and former customers and employees of the Indiana-based health insurer over at least seven months ending in January 2015. Two members of a hacking group operating from China were later indicted in the biggest health care hack in U.S. history.

Stolen data included Social Security numbers, birth dates, email addresses, employment details, incomes and street addresses. Anthem said it had no evidence that medical or financial information was taken or that any of the data stolen resulted in fraud.

The security firm Symantec said the hack was believed to be the work of a well-resourced Chinese group it called Black Vine that had been conducting cyber-espionage targeting industries including aerospace, energy and health care.

MARRIOTT

Beginning in 2014, hackers extracted data including credit card and passport numbers, birth dates, phone numbers and hotel arrival and departure dates on as many as 383 million guests of the hotel chain. The breach went undetected for four years and affected hotels in the Starwood chain that Marriott acquired in 2016.

Analysts noted that information from hotels — common venues of extramarital trysts and corporate espionage — could be used for blackmail and counterespionage. On Monday, Attorney General William Barr blamed the hack on Chinese agents.

OTHER MAJOR CORPORATIONS AND AGENCIES

Two hackers were indicted in December 2018 for extensive data theft from major corporations in the U.S. and nearly a dozen other nations beginning in 2006, allegedly on behalf of Beijing's main intelligence agency. They allegedly obtained names, Social Security numbers and other personal information of more than 100,000 Navy personnel.

Targets included NASA's Jet Propulsion Lab and Goddard Space Center. The indictment said more than 45 technology companies were targeted by the group, known as "Stone Panda," and that other victims spanned strategic industries from aerospace to factory automation, laboratory instruments and biotechnology.

Teacher unions: Children terrified by active shooter drills

By PAT EATON-ROBB Associated Press

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP) — The nation's two largest teachers unions want schools to revise or eliminate active shooter drills, asserting Tuesday that they can harm students' mental health and that there are better ways to prepare for the possibility of a school shooting.

The American Federation of Teachers and National Education Association joined with the advocacy group Everytown for Gun Safety Support Fund in calling for an end to unannounced drills or drills that simulate gun violence.

"Everywhere I travel, I hear from parents and educators about active shooter drills terrifying students, leaving them unable to concentrate in the classroom and unable to sleep at night," said Lily Eskelsen Garcia,

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president of the National Education Association. "So traumatizing students as we work to keep students safe from gun violence is not the answer. That is why if schools are going to do drills, they need to take steps to ensure the drills do more good than harm."

The report released Tuesday recommends schools concentrate on training teachers to respond to an active shooter incident rather than drilling students.

It also issued guidelines for schools that decide to use drills. Those include never simulating an actual shooting; giving parents, educators and students advance notice of any drill; working with mental health officials to create age-appropriate and trauma-informed drills; and tracking the effects of drills.

About 95% of schools drilled students on lockdown procedures in the 2015-16 school year, according to a survey by the National Center for Education Statistics.

"In Indiana they were shooting teachers with rubber pellets so they would feel the adrenaline of what a school shooting would feel like," said Shannon Watts, founder of Moms Demand Action, which is part of Everytown. "In California recently, a superintendent hired a stranger to wear a mask to rattle the doors of classrooms without letting faculty and students know. We've seen students asked to pretend to be victims and lie down using fake blood in the hallway."

Jean-Paul Guilbault, the chief executive of the Alice Training Institute, which runs active shooter drills, said they are effective when done appropriately. He said his company never runs surprise drills but believes that simulating an event is the best way to prepare for one "and allow students to practice their options, whether that be lockdown or evacuation."

"According to a recent study conducted by The U.S. Secret Service, most school shootings last for two minutes or less, and nearly half of the events studied ended within one minute," he said in a written statement. "That means it is up to us to keep ourselves safe for those seconds that will feel as slow as a lifetime. We drill so everyone has a plan when faced with danger, to give people a chance at survival."

But Abby Clements, who was teaching second grade at the Sandy Hook school in Newtown when a gunman killed 26 people in 2012, said she doesn't believe a drill would have saved lives there.

"Our students knew what to do," said Clements, who now teaches at another elementary school in town. "We taught them what to do in an emergency. We knew evacuation routes and where a safe spot was in the room, where nobody could see inside. But frightening students with some type of active drill, I think that is barbaric. There is no way you could possibly be prepared for the infinite number of ways that a shooting could go down with these weapons of war."

Clements, an active member of Moms Demand Action, said it breaks her heart when she hears stories like the one about a little girl who refused to wear light-up shoes after a drill, because she was told it could make her an easier target.

"I've got kids at the elementary school level who tell me they have to keep a cell phone on them at all times, just in case," she said. "It should not be like that."

New faces aplenty as spring training begins

By JIMMY GOLEN AP Sports Writer

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP) — The crack of the bat at spring training camps replaced the sound of trash can lids banging in homemade YouTube videos as baseball emerged from its winter of cheating scandals and salary dumps to bask in the Florida and Arizona sun.

The Pittsburgh Pirates and San Diego Padres held their first official workouts, and pitchers and catchers for 16 other teams reported to their Grapefruit and Cactus League complexes on Tuesday. The rest of the major leagues will filter in this week.

Red Sox players checked in without knowing who their manager will be, almost a month after Alex Cora was fired for his part in the Houston Astros 2017 sign-stealing scheme. Bench coach Ron Roenicke, a former Brewers skipper, will serve as interim manager while the team waits for Major League Baseball to wrap up its investigation into Boston's attempts to steal signs after Cora arrived in '18.

The Red Sox were also without a former MVP and Cy Young Award winner after the long-haggled trade

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of Mookie Betts and David Price to the Dodgers was finalized on Monday.

"Great teammates. Great players," Red Sox outfielder Jackie Bradley Jr. said after arriving at Fenway South on Tuesday. "Time to move forward."

At the Red Sox complex in Fort Myers, reliever Matt Barnes tossed a football on a back field while teammates stretched and sprinted. The rest of the position players are scheduled to report on Sunday; spring training games begin in earnest on Feb. 22.

Across Fort Myers at the Minnesota Twins' camp, Marwin Gonzalez became the first Astros hitter to apologize for his role in the sign-stealing. The utilityman was in Houston from 2012-18, including the championship season that was the subject of the MLB investigation that led to the firing of manager A.J. Hinch and general manager Jeff Luhnow.

"I'm remorseful for everything that happened in 2017, for everything that we did as a group and for the players that were affected directly by us doing this," Gonzalez told reporters. "I wish I could take it back and do it a different way, but there's nothing we can do. I just want to move forward and focus on the 2020 team."

The Dodgers added Betts and Price to make another run at a World Series after being denied in back-to-back seasons by teams that have been accused of cheating. The Astros, who report to West Palm Beach on Wednesday, replaced Hinch with Dusty Baker.

The Mets were the third team to fire a manager in the wake of the scandal. They reported to Port St. Lucie on Monday with new manager Luis Rojas; he replaced Carlos Beltrán, a player on the Astros World Series team who never managed a game for New York.

"We expect to be a contender," Rojas said in his first spring training news conference. "We have a great roster, great position players with versatility, great starting rotation or pitchers that have a history of Cy Youngs and World Series winners. And our bullpen has a history of saving games and being closers."

Here is some other news from around spring training:

WORKING FOR TIPS

Phillies manager Joe Girardi said he will make sure his pitchers and catchers aren't giving away their signs. And if the team picks up on any tells from opposing pitchers — within the rules — that's fair game.

"We're going to do things the right way and we're going to look for every advantage there is," Girardi said. "If the pitcher is tipping, we're going to use that. And we're going to protect ... make sure that our guys aren't tipping."

HOME AGAIN

Joe Maddon returned to the Angels, where he spent the first three decades of his baseball career. A light-hitting catcher who worked his way up through the organization before managing the Rays and Cubs, he is back with a franchise that hasn't won a playoff game since 2009.

"It's kind of eerily the same, so I feel pretty comfortable with it," he said, noting that he saw some of the same faces at the complex in Tempe, Arizona, from before he left for Tampa Bay in 2006. "Listen, I've always loved this place. ... I get flooded with nostalgia, I do. And it's OK. It's a good thing."

ROLLING IN

Reliever Aroldis Chapman showed up at Yankees camp in Tampa in a white Rolls Royce convertible with a black roof. But the biggest arrival was right-hander Gerrit Cole, who signed a \$324 million, nine-year contract in the offseason.

"He brings a dynamic that's crazy," first baseman Mike Ford said. "He boosts our staff that's already is awesome. To have him, probably the top pitcher in the game, couldn't be happier."

NEW DIGS

New Giants manager Gabe Kapler liked the looks of the team's expanded complex at Scottsdale Stadium in Arizona. A three-story building behind the seats down the first base line houses a new clubhouse, weight room, meeting spaces, coaches offices, trainers room and large event space.

"Everything will be more intertwined, and that's by design," Kapler said. "We want to bring departments together and we want to solve problems collectively. And then we can take advantage of a very diverse

group of thinkers.”

AP Sports Writer Greg Beacham and AP freelance writers Mark Dittler, Corey Long, Jose M. Romero and Bill Whitehead contributed to this report.

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

Warren betting that getting personal can help her rebound

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

PORTSMOUTH, N.H. (AP) — Elizabeth Warren still “has a plan” for everything. She’s just trying to put a more personal face on them.

Being a proud policy nerd helped catapult the Massachusetts senator into front-runner status last summer but may have carried her as far as it can. She has retooled the speech she gives voters at multiple daily campaign stops and has begun stressing that she’s been counted out of fights all her life -- only to find a way to prevail.

That’s a strategy Warren is hoping to emulate enough to recover her footing in the Democratic presidential primary race.

“One of the things that I realize is that voters have a right to know not just the policies but also the heart of the person they’re going to pick as president of the United States,” she said after a packed event at a church in Portsmouth on Monday night. “So I put out all the policies. But I also put more of my heart out there for people.”

And while she’s promoting her softer side publicly, her campaign is using hard-boiled political calculus to try to convince supporters that she can outlast many of her top rivals over the long haul.

Warren has begun telling crowds that, when she was in high school, her mother said she would never go to college — so she used her babysitting money to pay for applications and secured a debate scholarship. She describes beating incumbent Republican Sen. Scott Brown in 2012, despite once being down by nearly 20 points: “I got knocked on my fanny multiple times during that campaign. But you know what I did? I got up each and every time.”

And a new centerpiece of her speech features a February 2017 episode when Warren was on the Senate floor opposing Jeff Sessions’ nomination as attorney general and Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell evoked an obscure rule to stop her from speaking. Co-opting McConnell’s words, Warren has summed up the experience under the slogan “Nevertheless, she persisted,” which often draws standing ovations.

Those changes likely came too late to help Warren in New Hampshire’s primary Tuesday. But her campaign sees the struggles of former Vice President Joe Biden as opening up a wealth of new would-be supporters that she could scoop up in states like Nevada and South Carolina, which vote next on the Democratic presidential calendar.

Her team sees a winnowing field perhaps eventually setting up a fight between Warren and former New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg, a billionaire who is pouring vast swaths of his fortune into the states that vote on Super Tuesday, March 3. Warren has called for a wealth tax on the nation’s rich, and her message of economic populism could give her a second campaign wind against someone like Bloomberg -- if she can make it that far.

A wild card could be Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar, who generated late-stage enthusiasm in New Hampshire. Still, Warren’s campaign is betting that staff infrastructure she’s already built in around 30 states means she can play a longer political game than Klobuchar, giving her a path to the nomination -- albeit one that is narrowing the longer she goes without winning a state.

Warren has largely refrained from criticizing her top rivals, but in a lengthy memo to supporters on Tuesday, her campaign manager, Roger Lau, laid out contrasts in a way his candidate hasn’t. He argued that while others rise and fall, Warren will hold steady throughout a primary battle that is set to be long and protracted.

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"The process won't be decided by the simple horse race numbers in clickbait headlines," Lau wrote in the memo. "That's never been our focus — our focus is on building a broad coalition to win delegates everywhere."

He said that Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, Warren's chief rival for progressive Democrats, "starts with a ceiling that's significantly lower than the support he had four years ago." Lau also detailed how Biden entered the race as a front-runner but has seen his support dwindle among several key voting demographics and says Klobuchar "is playing catch up on a very short timeline" as she tries to match Warren's nationwide organization.

Lau suggested that Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, faces his "most significant challenge" in upcoming states that aren't as white as Iowa and New Hampshire. Last week's Iowa caucuses were too close to call, but Warren finished third, well behind Sanders and Buttigieg.

Top advisers point to Warren's highlighting the Senate speech from 2017 as a new and important way to excite voters. The senator mentioned it after a largely forgettable performance in Friday night's New Hampshire debate. It got such a good reaction that she said it on stage before an arena full of cheering Democrats at a state party dinner the next night. Now it's the loudest applause line at her rallies.

Warren insists the race is still fluid, saying "the best evidence of that" is incorrect past predictions about who would be the strongest primary candidate to this point.

"Who was supposed to be in this race today, and who wasn't? I think I wasn't, and a lot of people who were supposed to have locked it up by this point are not here," she said after a rally in Rochester, New Hampshire.

The senator also argues that she is the best candidate to unify the Democratic Party, a subtle shot at Sanders, who is calling for political revolution.

As part of what she sees as the unification process, Warren has hired staffers who worked for Democratic White House candidates who left the race, and she's even begun spelling out how she's incorporated their plans into her own: abortion rights proposals from California Sen. Kamala Harris, a paid family leave plan promoted by New York Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand and calls for universal prekindergarten programs that former Obama administration housing chief Julián Castro championed.

"She's trying to get the message out that that is part of her platform," said Beth Carta-Dolan, a restaurant owner who met Warren when she stopped at a cafe in Conway, in northern New Hampshire's breathtaking White Mountains. "So that the people who supported these other people are now being drawn in to understand that she represents them as well."

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

AP Explains: What T-Mobile takeover of Sprint means for you

By MAE ANDERSON and TALI ARBEL AP Technology Writers

NEW YORK (AP) — T-Mobile's \$26.5 billion takeover of Sprint could mean higher or lower phone bills, depending on whom you ask.

A federal judge in New York ultimately took T-Mobile's track record of aggressive competition into account in ruling Tuesday that the deal would be good for consumers. In doing so, he rejected a challenge by a group of states worried about reduced competition. Though the deal still needs a few more approvals, T-Mobile expects to close it as early as April 1.

Here's what a combined T-Mobile-Sprint company could mean for you and your phone bill:

FOR MOST T-MOBILE AND SPRINT CUSTOMERS

Sprint customers will get a T-Mobile bill, but that transition may take a few years. If you are a T-Mobile customer, you might not see many changes. However, because the goal of the takeover is to roll out a next-generation, 5G cellular network, subscribers of both are ultimately expected to get faster service.

WHAT ABOUT PREPAID CUSTOMERS?

As part of the deal, Dish will get Sprint's prepaid Boost Mobile customers. Dish has committed to building

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its own cellular network, but it will use T-Mobile's for now, so customers aren't supposed to see service quality drop.

HOW STRONG IS DISH?

That has yet to be tested.

Sprint is an existing company with more than 40 million customers. Dish would start from scratch building a network that will cost billions of dollars. It gets only 9 million customers from the deal and will have to fight to win more.

As for the network, Dish already owns spectrum, or airwave rights, but hasn't been using it. The deal would give Dish additional airwaves that travel far and work well in rural areas. Dish is supposed to put those to use in its own network, but it has to rely on T-Mobile's network in the meantime.

Dish says it will offer service to 70% of the U.S. population by 2023. But while it's billed as 5G, Dish is promising speeds that are only slightly higher than what's typical today.

Dish co-founder Charlie Ergen said in a statement that the company is eager to start serving Boost customers, while bringing consumers lower prices, greater choice and more innovation.

But it may take a while before Dish can challenge the bigger companies — if it ever does — the way T-Mobile developed a reputation as the "Un-carrier" by promoting consumer-friendly practices that shattered industry norms.

Many public-interest groups have criticized the Dish solution, saying it is risky, as there is no guarantee Dish will succeed as a major competitor, and that it does not fill the hole left by Sprint.

AND FOR VERIZON AND AT&T CUSTOMERS?

T-Mobile was instrumental in pushing the more established players to be more consumer friendly, doing away with two-year phone contracts and offering unlimited data plans. T-Mobile has offered goodies for its customers like free or discounted Netflix and free international data. With just three major providers, the worry is that there would be less incentive to add services that consumers like or to compete on price.

T-Mobile has promised not to raise prices for three years, but after that, it's fair game. But T-Mobile CEO John Legere said that the company will continue to be the "Un-carrier" and keep Verizon, AT&T and others on their toes.

"Look out Dumb and Dumber and Big Cable — we are coming for you ... and you haven't seen anything yet!" Legere said in a statement on Tuesday. Legere is stepping down as CEO in April; T-Mobile Chief Operating Officer and president Mike Sievert will replace him.

In his ruling, Judge Victor Marrero in New York said he found T-Mobile's promises credible.

SO WILL PHONE BILLS GO UP OR DOWN?

Opinion is divided.

Generally, fewer competitors mean higher prices, which is why the Department of Justice required the companies to sell part of its business to Dish to keep the number of major wireless providers at four. This is also central to the states' challenge to the deal.

But Marrero said the states had not convincingly argued that the deal would lead to higher prices and lower quality service. He said Dish would become an aggressive competitor, while T-Mobile had the incentive to continue competing aggressively.

WHAT'S THIS 5G ALL ABOUT?

5G is a new technical standard for wireless networks that promises faster speeds; less lag, or "latency," when connecting to the network; and the ability to connect many devices to the internet without bogging it down. 5G networks will ideally be better able to handle more users, lots of sensors and heavy traffic.

The major U.S. wireless companies have all launched 5G networks and will continue rolling them out. There aren't many users yet, as the networks are limited in coverage, and few phones are currently equipped for 5G.

Sprint's 5G network is now in parts of nine cities, while T-Mobile says its version already could cover 200 million people. They have promised to cover 97% of the U.S. within three years of finalizing the deal and 99% in six years. T-Mobile says its goal is a nationwide network that will be five times faster than current

LTE service in a few years and 15 times faster by 2024.

T-Mobile and Sprint would have built a 5G network even without combining, but Marrero agreed with the companies that their standalone networks would be more limited in scope and take longer to build.

Samsung's new foldable phone: Cheaper, but still a novelty

By RACHEL LERMAN and KELVIN CHAN AP Technology Writers

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Samsung on Tuesday unveiled a new foldable phone, the Galaxy Z Flip, its second attempt to sell consumers on phones with bendable screens and clamshell designs.

The new phone can unfold from a small square upward into a traditional smartphone form, and will go on sale Feb. 14 starting at \$1,380. The company announced the phone at a product event in San Francisco.

Samsung's first foldable phone, the Galaxy Fold, finally went on sale last September after delays and reports of screens breaking. The Fold, which carries a price tag of nearly \$2,000, folds at a vertical crease rather than horizontally as a flip-phone design would. Motorola has also taken the flip-phone approach with its new \$1,500 Razr phone.

The foldable phones represent manufacturers' attempt to energize a market where sales have slowed. Many consumers are holding onto old phones longer, in part because new phone features offer increasingly marginal benefits. But these foldable models come with higher price tags and are likely to appeal for now mostly to tech enthusiasts and others at the forefront of technology.

"While there's a lot of excitement around this new category, it is still early days and they will evolve significantly," said Paolo Pescatore, an analyst at PP Foresight. "While these innovative new designs are nice to have, they're not must-have, sought-after features among users."

The Z Flip can stay open at different angles for use watching videos or taking photos. When the phone is closed, it will take selfies and display notifications in a small window on the cover. Unfolded, its screen measures 6.7 inches diagonally.

Samsung says it added fibers to the gap between the hinge and the phone to keep out dust and improve hinge function, likely to address shortcomings of the Galaxy Fold.

On the more traditional front, Samsung offers its S series. In a nod to the start of the 2020s, the South Korean company showed off the Galaxy S20, S20 Plus and S20 Ultra, skipping directly to the S20 from its previous S10 series.

The S20 phones are designed to take high-quality pictures in dark settings, Samsung product manager Mark Holloway said. The phones can take both video and photos at the same time, using artificial intelligence to zero in on the best moments to capture the still images.

Samsung's renewed focus on the camera follows other smartphone makers. Apple last fall announced the iPhone 11, which offers an additional lens for wider-angle shots and combined multiple shots with software to improve low-light images. Google's Pixel phones also offer a similar low-light feature.

Samsung's S phones already offer the wider angle and some features for low-lighting. But the company says the new phones will focus on high-resolution photos and the ability to zoom in 30 to 100 times, depending on the model.

The camera on the S20 series is "a giant leap," said Patrick Moorhead of Moor Insights & Strategy, who argued that people might gravitate toward the more expensive models even as the sales of smartphones slow.

Gartner analyst Tuong Nguyen called the S20 "astounding," but worried that the crowd at the event had a muted response.

"I think we've reached the point in the technology timeline that all of us have technology that's so good, better than we can even grasp or take advantage of, that anything new that's introduced is not greeted with the same enthusiasm," he said.

The S20 phones go on sale in the U.S. on March 6, and will range in price from \$1,000 to \$1,400. All S20 models will be compatible with next-generation cellular networks known as 5G, although it's still an early technology that consumers typically won't need yet. The Z Flip will not work with 5G networks.

As people packed into San Francisco's Palace of Fine Arts for Samsung's launch event, they passed a team taking remote temperatures in the security line, likely a precaution to check for the coronavirus. Samsung also offered hand sanitizer stations and face masks inside the event lobby.

Kelvin Chan reported from London.

Global experts study promising drugs, vaccines for new virus

By JAMEY KEATEN and MARIA CHENG Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — The World Health Organization convened outside experts Tuesday to try to speed the development of tests, treatments and vaccines against the new coronavirus, as doctors on the front lines experiment on patients with various drugs in hopes of saving lives in the meantime.

The 400 scientists participating in the two-day meeting — many remotely — will try to determine which approaches seem promising enough to advance to the next step: studies in people to prove if they really work.

"We prioritize what is really urgent, what we absolutely need to know to fight the outbreak, to develop drugs, vaccines," said Marie-Paule Kieny, co-chair of the meeting and a viral-disease specialist at the French research institution INSERM. That will allow science to "focus on what is the most pressing issue and not to disperse too much the efforts."

Also on the agenda: Is it possible to build a standing supply of drugs similar to the vaccine stockpiles that exist for diseases such as yellow fever and Ebola?

"If any of these drugs does show an effect, there will be massive demand," Dr. Graham Cooke, a professor of infectious diseases at Imperial College London, said earlier this week.

There are no proven treatments or vaccines for the new and still-mysterious virus, which has infected more than 43,000 people worldwide and killed over 1,000, with the overwhelming majority of cases in China. And while several labs have come up with tests for the virus, there is no quick means of diagnosis, and results take time.

"It's hard to believe that just two months ago, this virus — which has come to captivate the attention of media, financial markets and political leaders — was completely unknown to us," WHO director-general Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said at the start of the meeting.

Experts say it could be months or even years before any approved treatments or vaccines are developed, by which time the outbreak might be over. But they say they will at least have more weapons at their disposal if the virus strikes again.

The flu-like disease, officially named COVID-19 on Tuesday, has ranged from mild to serious and can cause pneumonia.

Doctors give patients fluids and pain relievers to try to ease the symptoms, which can include fever, cough and shortness of breath. In the case of those who are severely ill, doctors use ventilators to help them breathe or a machine that pumps and oxygenates their blood outside the body, easing the burden on the heart and lungs.

Beyond those standard treatments, doctors are looking at using drugs that have already been approved to fight other viruses, or experimental medications.

At least two studies in patients are already underway in China: one of a combination HIV drug containing lopinavir and ritonavir, sold in the U.S. as Kaletra, the other of an experimental drug named remdesivir, made by Gilead Sciences.

In a draft research plan published last month, WHO said remdesivir was considered "the most promising candidate." It was used briefly in some Ebola patients in Congo before that study stopped. But the WHO cited laboratory studies that suggested it might be able to target SARS and MERS, cousins to the new virus.

Gilead has provided the drug for use in a small number of patients, including a man in Washington state who fell ill after a trip to Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak in China. He is no longer hospitalized, but it is not clear whether the Gilead drug helped him.

Doctors in China, Thailand and Italy have also used the HIV drug combination in some patients. In Malaysia, authorities reported that a 40-year-old man with the virus who needed oxygen recovered eight days after receiving the drug, although it is not known if that was the reason.

Dr. David Heymann, who led WHO's response to the global 2002-03 SARS outbreak, said doctors don't entirely understand how the HIV drugs might work to fight the new virus, but hope they will buy patients some time.

Treatments are mostly intended so that patients "can recover enough so their own immune systems can take over and fight off the virus," he said.

Cooke said it might be enough if these drugs, instead of killing the virus, interfere with how it reproduces and spreads in the body.

The U.N. health agency said there were still many critical unanswered questions about the virus, including what animals it came from and how exactly it is transmitted between people. It is thought to spread through droplets in the air when an infected person sneezes or coughs.

"To defeat this outbreak, we need answers to all those questions and more," Tedros said.

Cheng reported from London.

Feds: Ex-convict extorted college students for nearly \$1M

By JIM MUSTIAN Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — An ex-convict accused of bilking several college students out of nearly \$1 million and forcing some into prostitution or unpaid labor was arrested Tuesday on extortion and sex trafficking charges.

Lawrence "Larry" Ray was previously known for his role in helping to send former New York City police commissioner Bernard Kerik, who was a close confidant of Rudy Giuliani, to prison.

Federal prosecutors said Ray, 60, used "physical, sexual and psychological abuse" to extort money from five different students at Sarah Lawrence College, a private liberal arts college outside New York City. He convinced them they were indebted to him, authorities said, subjecting them to "grueling interrogations" that spanned hours and deprived them of food and sleep.

Ray was taken into custody Tuesday and expected to appear hours later in Manhattan federal court. He had previously denied the allegations, saying they were the result of a conspiracy against him. It was not clear whether he had a defense attorney who could comment on the charges.

U.S. Attorney Geoffrey Berman told reporters the investigation was prompted by an article that appeared last year in New York magazine.

Ray allegedly ensnared many of his victims while they were college sophomores at Sarah Lawrence. His first victims were his daughters' roommates, Berman said.

Ray moved into the students' on-campus housing in late 2010, presented himself as a father figure to the roommates and began conducting "therapy" sessions with them, according to an indictment filed in U.S. District Court.

Prosecutors said he alienated them from their parents, persuading some of them to move into a Manhattan apartment and convincing them they were "broken."

"After gaining his victims' trust, Ray turned on them, falsely accusing them of harming him by attempting to poison him or to deliberately damage his property," Berman said.

Ray solicited false confessions from more than a half-dozen victims, Berman said, and coerced them to make payments "they did not actually owe and could not possibly afford." Prosecutors said Ray recorded some of the confessions.

In interviews with New York magazine, Ray said he believed he was being poisoned as part of a conspiracy hatched by some of the students and Kerik, who denied any involvement.

Sarah Lawrence said Tuesday that it has not been contacted by federal prosecutors but would cooperate "if invited to do so."

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The college said it investigated the allegations raised in the New York magazine article but "did not substantiate those specific claims."

"The charges contained in the indictment are serious, wide-ranging, disturbing and upsetting," the college said in a statement. "As always the safety and well-being of our students and alumni is a priority for the college."

Prosecutors allege that Ray directed the students to drain money from their parents' savings accounts and forced some of them into unpaid labor at a family member's property in North Carolina. Others opened lines of credit or solicited contributions from others to help pay the false debts.

"Ray subjected his victims to almost unspeakable abuse," Berman said, alleging Ray once tied a woman to a chair and placed a plastic bag over her head that nearly suffocated her. Ray collected more than \$500,000 from that woman after forcing her into prostitution, prosecutors said.

Ray previously played a role in a scandal involving Kerik, a former police driver for Giuliani while he was mayor. Kerik became New York City's corrections commissioner in 1998 and then its police commissioner from 2000 to 2001, serving during the 9/11 attacks.

Kerik nearly became President George Bush's homeland security secretary in 2004, but his name was abruptly withdrawn as the nominee.

Two days later, The Daily News reported that Ray, who had been the best man at Kerik's wedding, had come forward with evidence that Kerik failed to report thousands of dollars in gifts he'd received while working for the city. At the time, Ray was under indictment in a \$40 million stock scam.

Kerik ultimately served nearly four years in prison for tax fraud, making false statements and other charges related to gifts he accepted from companies looking for favors, including a construction firm that wanted his help getting a city license.

Associated Press writer David B. Caruso contributed to this report

How the Iowa caucuses 'broke down in every way possible'

By RYAN J. FOLEY Associated Press

IOWA CITY, Iowa (AP) — Days before the Iowa caucuses, Democratic Party activist Lindsey Ellickson prepared to run her Cedar Rapids precinct by downloading the new smartphone app designed to calculate and report results.

But her planning ran into a problem: Her phone was ruined when she accidentally dropped it in the toilet. She struggled to get the app on her replacement phone and decided to call in the results instead. But it took two hours for her to report them to a party hotline overwhelmed with calls, genuine and prank.

By then, the caucuses were on their way to becoming a disaster of epic proportions. With the world waiting to learn who won the nation's first presidential nominating contest, the Iowa Democratic Party would not release even partial results until 21 hours after residents began gathering in schools and churches to express their preferences.

When results were released in batches in coming days, they were tainted by mistakes that required corrections and apparent math errors that may never be fixed. Bernie Sanders and Pete Buttigieg have requested a recanvassing of results from dozens of precincts that they said may be erroneous and could affect the still-unresolved outcome. The party is expected to announce its next steps Wednesday.

Sorting through the wreckage isn't just a humbling experience for the state's Democrats — it's also a cautionary tale. The disaster has already reshaped how Nevada will run its caucuses 11 days from now and raised questions about whether caucuses, often criticized as quaint vestiges of another political time, can survive in the modern era.

In interviews with The Associated Press, party leaders and activists described widespread missteps in planning and running one of the nation's signature and most high-stakes political contests. They said bad decisions, technological failures and poor communications created the mess that humiliated Democrats, undermined confidence in the outcome and threatens to end the tradition of Iowa getting to pick first.

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"The whole thing just broke down in every way possible," said Pete D'Alessandro, an Iowa-based adviser to Sanders' campaign.

Beyond the missteps, some said the caucuses were set up to fail because they had gotten too big and complicated. They blamed an arcane process for determining which candidates are viable and win delegates at each volunteer-run precinct and rule changes that looked simple on paper but may have backfired in practice.

For the first time, the party was to gather and release the number of supporters for each candidate at each site twice during the caucuses. That was in addition to calculating and releasing the number of delegates they were awarded. The change was pushed by those who wanted caucuses to be more transparent and more like elections that reward the top vote-getter. But that additional data overwhelmed party officials when the systems for reporting it failed. The reporting delay allowed both Sanders and Buttigieg to claim victory in the razor-thin race.

Noting that the numbers could still change, the AP has declined to declare a winner. The Iowa Democratic Party's final results give Buttigieg a lead over Sanders of two state delegate equivalents out of 2,152 counted, or 0.09 percentage points. But the party's data also show that more people caucused for Sanders during the first and second alignments at precincts.

"Caucusing is not voting, but I think that everyone just lost sight of that and just got drunk on the hoopla," said Des Moines lawyer Grant Woodard, a longtime party activist who called the new rules "confusing as hell." "I think so much of this has gotten out of control. We're all somewhat to blame: the party, the activists, the media, the campaigns."

The app that party leaders boasted would make it easier for precinct chairs to calculate delegate math and report a statewide winner within hours largely failed. Party officials ignored warnings in the days and hours before the caucuses that volunteers were struggling to download and log into the app. Many volunteers decided in advance to simply phone in the numbers.

On caucus night, party officials discovered that the data entered into the app was publishing inaccurate partial results. They halted any release of results to the public and discovered that a coding error in the software was to blame.

Party officials had promoted a phone reporting system as a reliable backup to the app, but they made a key change that turned out to be a miscalculation.

In previous cycles, organizers said the party used an Interactive Voice Response system that allowed precinct chairs to enter results using the keypads of their phones. It's unclear why the party opted not to use that automated system this time and instead used a hotline manned by dozens of volunteers that had been a backup previously.

In another move that would backfire, the party released the hotline number in online materials weeks before the caucuses. On caucus night, it was overloaded with hundreds of precinct chairs trying to call in results and journalists trying to find out why none were being released. Callers intentionally trying to disrupt the process added to the chaos after the number was posted on social media.

"The failure of the app just set off a chain reaction of a bunch of other things that made it worse and worse as the night and ultimately days went on," said Norm Sterzenbach, a former executive director of the Iowa Democratic Party.

Sterzenbach had been given a contract from the party to oversee the development of the reporting system for the caucuses but resigned in March 2019 to work for Beto O'Rourke's campaign.

Amid the failure of the reporting systems, Iowa Democratic Party Chairman Troy Price made a decision that many observers call devastating and puzzling a week later. Rather than giving the public results as they trickled in and could be verified, they waited until 4 p.m. the next day to release results from 62% of precincts at once. It took two more days for all precinct results to be released.

The inexplicable delay led to rampant criticism on cable news and fed into conspiracy theories that the election results were being rigged to help Buttigieg, who declared his campaign "victorious" in the absence of results. "Mayor Cheat" trended on Twitter.

Campaign representatives say Price hung up on them during a conference call when they asked ques-

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tions about the delays. At a 1 a.m. Tuesday call with reporters that lasted fewer than two minutes, Price said results would be available soon and didn't elaborate or take questions.

"This very well may be the textbook chapter in communications classes on how not to handle crisis communications," D'Alessandro said. "It literally was like every step along the way the wrong decision was made."

Price has apologized and pledged an independent review.

By early Tuesday, hundreds of precincts had yet to successfully report their numbers. The party dispatched officials in the middle of the night to knock on the doors of chairs who either forgot or failed to report in. "I was unsuccessful," said former state Rep. Nate Willems, who pounded on one sleeping volunteer's door in rural Jones County.

Volunteers answering phones wrote down results, which were verified using photos of the caucus math worksheets and entered in a database. The manual process would later introduce embarrassing data errors, like former Massachusetts Gov. Deval Patrick performing strongly in some precincts, even after the party claimed its methodical "quality control checks" would ensure accurate results.

DNC Chairman Tom Perez went on Twitter days after the caucuses to declare "enough is enough" and demand a recanvassing — a request that he didn't have the authority to make under the rules and that was rebuffed by state party officials.

While data entry errors were corrected, party officials said they were powerless to change errors on caucus math worksheets that led to the wrong number of delegates being awarded to candidates at other precincts. A legal opinion from a party lawyer said the caucus results certified by precinct leaders were the official outcome and could not be changed without an official recount — even if the math was wrong. Other lawyers disputed that interpretation.

Some Iowa insiders blamed the DNC for a chaotic planning process that wasted their time and effort.

The state party spent months seeking to address one of the chief criticisms of the caucuses: that too many people could not participate because of work, family obligations and disabilities. Encouraged by the DNC to increase participation, state party leaders developed a "virtual caucus" plan to allow participants to express their preferences using their phones.

The DNC's rules and bylaws committee gave conditional approval to Iowa's plan in June while raising some concerns. But the committee rejected the plan in late August after its security experts said the phone system could be prone to hacking.

The late rejection outraged Iowa leaders, required them to develop a new plan to hold satellite caucuses around the state and gave critics of Iowa's leadoff position a key talking point. "Everything changed then," said Ellickson, a member of the party's state central committee.

While party leaders focused on the virtual caucus, the development of the reporting app seems to have been put on the back burner.

Party officials envisioned having Microsoft update the app that it developed for the 2016 caucuses and was successfully used to report results. But the app would need a major overhaul to handle the party's new rules, and the company expressed reservations about getting involved this cycle.

Price said the party conducted a bidding process for the smartphone technology as required by its delegate selection plan and hired Shadow Inc., a startup founded by veterans of Hillary Clinton's 2016 campaign. Price, who also worked on that campaign, said Monday the independent review would look into the awarding of the contract.

Shadow had already been hired by the Nevada Democratic Party to develop a reporting app for its caucus — a relationship that was ended after Iowa's meltdown. Shadow was also providing other software programs to presidential campaigns, including Buttigieg's, which would later fuel unfounded conspiracies. In fact, Joe Biden's campaign had dropped the firm's technology over cybersecurity concerns.

Shadow's contract in Iowa wasn't finalized until the fall, and its identity was a closely guarded secret. The company, which had never developed an election reporting system, had just months to create one and have it tested by security experts and users in the field.

Experts who reviewed the IowaReporterApp since the caucus breakdown say it was technically flawed,

appeared rushed and was likely subjected to inadequate security and stress testing.

Some precinct chairs got a link to test the app about two weeks before the caucus. The program wasn't available through the App Store, which triggered a security warning when users tried to download it. Some were scared away then.

Others struggled to navigate a complicated two-factor authentication system required for security purposes and get logged in. Still others got error messages when they tried to report results or send in a required photo of them.

"My hunch is there was not preparation for total failure of the app network," said party activist John Norris, who worked to help the party verify precinct results. "Once you start having failure, it creates doubt and that creates pressure on the backup system. And it snowballed downhill from there."

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

Powell: Economy looks resilient despite risk of China virus

By MARTIN CRUTSINGER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Federal Reserve Chairman Jerome Powell said Tuesday that the U.S. economy appears durable, with steady growth and unemployment near a half-century low, but faces risks from the broadening viral outbreak that began in China.

Powell also said that the Fed is content with where interest rates are, suggesting that no further rate cuts would be contemplated unless economic conditions were to change significantly. Since last fall, the Fed has kept its benchmark short-term rate in a low range of 1.5% to 1.75%, well below levels typical during previous economic expansions.

The chairman made his remarks Tuesday to the House Financial Services Committee on the first of two days of semiannual testimony to Congress.

The Fed is monitoring developments stemming from the coronavirus, Powell said, which he cautioned "could lead to disruptions in China that spill over to the rest of the global economy."

In response to questions, Powell said it was too early to assess the scope of the threat the virus poses to the U.S. economy. But he observed that the economy "is in a very good place," with strong job creation and steady if modest growth.

"We will be watching that carefully," he said about the virus' impact. "And the question we will be asking is will these be persistent effects that could lead to a material reassessment of the outlook" in the United States.

The daily death toll in China topped 100 for the first time, raising the number of deaths there from the virus above 1,000. China remained mostly closed to business, with around 60 million people under virtual quarantine in the country.

The lockdown has raised concerns about how much damage the loss of production in China, the world's second-largest economy, will inflict on global supply chains. China accounts for more than 80% of smart-phone and notebook production globally and more than half of global TV and server production, according to recent estimates.

In the midst of his testimony Tuesday, Powell drew an attack from a familiar corner: President Donald Trump, the man who nominated him to the Fed's chairmanship but who has repeatedly attacked him since for not cutting rates more aggressively.

"Fed rate is too high," Trump tweeted. "Dollar tough on exports."

The president complained in his tweet that the Dow Jones Industrial Average had slipped during Powell's testimony, though the Dow later recovered. It was unclear that Powell's testimony had directly affected stock prices either way.

Asked during the hearing about the tweet, Powell gave his standard reply that he and other Fed officials are concerned only with their mandate to serve the economy and do not consider outside criticism — from the president or anyone else — in their policy-making.

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"My colleagues and I are completely focused on using our tools to support ... our goals, and that is all we are focused on," he said.

Powell was also asked about negative interest rates, a policy that Trump appeared to endorse in his tweet as a way to further boost the economy.

"That's not a tool we're looking at," he said, noting that some research has suggested that negative rates could hurt banks' profitability.

Powell, who has made frequent visits with both House and Senate lawmakers to understand their concerns, faced sharp questioning from Rep. Katie Porter, D-Calif., about a recent photo that showed him attending a party at the Washington home of Jeff Bezos, head of Amazon. Porter noted that Trump's daughter Ivanka and son-in-law Jared Kushner, as well as presidential counselor Kellyanne Conway, were at the Bezos party at a time when Trump has exerted pressure on the Fed, an independent government agency, to lower interest rates.

Powell replied that he didn't talk with any of those people and was mainly escorting his son and his son's new wife to the party, where he introduced them to former Trump Defense Secretary James Mattis.

Porter also pressed Powell if he knew how costly child care had become.

"It costs a lot," the chairman said. But he said he didn't know specifically because all his children are grown.

Several lawmakers asked the chairman about how the Fed is addressing the issue of climate change. Rep. Sean Casten, an Illinois Democrat, said that changing weather patterns and rising sea levels could threaten banks that have provided mortgages to homes in coastal areas.

Powell said banks should take that into account and later acknowledged that climate change could eventually influence Fed policy.

"As severe weather becomes more common — and that's connected to climate change — you will see those things ... entering our supervisory practices as well as our economic forecasting," he said.

On interest rates, Powell said the Fed "believes that the current stance of monetary policy will support continued economic growth, a strong labor market" and annual inflation returning to the committee's 2% target level.

As long as incoming economic data "remains broadly consistent with this outlook, the current stance of monetary policy will likely remain appropriate," he said.

The chairman expressed satisfaction with many economic barometers, noting that the expansion is well into its 11th year — the longest period of uninterrupted U.S. growth on record. Last year, the economy was being buffeted by a global slowdown and rising uncertainty sparked by Trump's trade war with China and other nations.

Powell said that while the "global headwinds had intensified last summer," the economy proved resilient. He noted that job openings remain plentiful and that employers appear increasingly willing to hire workers with fewer skills and train them.

Those developments, he said, mean that the benefits of a robust job market are becoming more widely shared, with employment gains broad-based across racial and ethnic groups and levels of education.

Powell suggested that the government should capitalize on low borrowing rates to put the federal budget on a sounder footing. The Trump administration proposed a new budget Monday that projects that the deficit will top \$1 trillion this year before starting to decline. The Congressional Budget Office sees the deficit remaining above \$1 trillion over the next decade.

Putting the budget on a sustainable path while the economy is strong, the chairman said, would help ensure that policymakers would have the room to use the budget to help stabilize the economy during a recession.

AP Economics Writer Christopher Rugaber contributed to this report.

Universal will release controversial 'Hunt' film in March

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Universal Pictures said Tuesday that it will release the social satire "The Hunt," a film it canceled in the wake of criticism about its premise of "elites" hunting people for sport in red states.

A trailer announcing the film's March 13 release date presents the "elites" hunting regular people as a conspiracy theory. Star Hilary Swank says at one point that "it wasn't real" amid images of shootings, explosions and other violence.

The trailer includes the line, "The most talked about movie of the year is one nobody's seen yet."

In August, Universal Pictures canceled a September release for "The Hunt" after criticism, including from President Donald Trump. The president, without mentioning the film by name, said it was intended "to inflame and cause chaos."

The cancellation came after the studio had already paused the ad campaign for the R-rated film in the wake of mass shootings in Texas, Ohio and California.

The film features 12 strangers who awake in a clearing who don't yet know they've been chosen for The Hunt, but one of them manages to turn the table on the pursuers, a synopsis released Tuesday stated.

"The Hunt," produced by Jason Blum's Blumhouse, stars Oscar winner Swank and Betty Gilpin, and is directed by Craig Zobel. It was written by Damon Lindelof and his "Watchmen" collaborator Nick Cuse. News of the film's release was first reported by The Hollywood Reporter.

Klinsmann quits as Hertha Berlin coach, leaves club in chaos

By CIARÁN FAHEY AP Sports Writer

BERLIN (AP) — Jürgen Klinsmann surprisingly resigned as coach of Hertha Berlin on Tuesday after only nine Bundesliga games.

The former Germany and United States coach said in a statement on Facebook that he "cannot live up to my potential as coach and therefore cannot live up to my responsibility" without the trust from people at the club.

"That's why, after long thought, I came to the conclusion to make my position as coach of Hertha available and return to my original long-term task as a supervisory board member," Klinsmann wrote.

Much was expected of Klinsmann when he was appointed coach on Nov. 27, helped by an extensive backroom staff. He was supposed to deliver on the promise provided by a \$250 million investment from new backer Lars Windhorst and lead Hertha up the standings toward the European qualification places. But the team is still fighting off relegation.

Klinsmann's decision to quit caught Hertha by surprise, with the players and general manager Michael Preetz only finding out on Tuesday morning before he made the announcement on Facebook.

"The coach came into the changing room. We thought it would be about the analysis of the last game. And then he told us," Hertha midfielder Marko Grujic said after training. "We were completely surprised."

Preetz suggested the decision came as a shock, "especially after the trustful cooperation regarding decisions over personnel in the winter transfer period, there was no sign of it. We will inform of further developments at the appropriate time."

Assistant coach Alexander Nouri was set to take temporary charge of the team.

Klinsmann later told German mass daily Bild that he wanted a bigger role at Hertha with responsibility for transfers – a job currently carried out by Preetz as general manager.

"In my understanding a coach should bear all responsibility for sporting matters, as per the English model. That gives the position much more power," Klinsmann said.

The 55-year-old said stepping down was not a spontaneous decision.

"In the past few days we received clear reactions and indications that the situation is not getting any better, but worsening," Klinsmann told Bild.

Hertha was in 15th place in the 18-team Bundesliga when Klinsmann took over from Ante Covic, and is only one place better off now. Hertha managed only three wins in nine league games under Klinsmann and Saturday's 3-1 loss at home to Mainz left it just six points above the relegation zone — four days after

it was knocked out of the German Cup in extra time at Schalke.

Klinsmann called Hertha a "sleeping giant." He was consulted on player signings as Hertha made its first splash on the transfer market following Windhorst's investment. Hertha signed Matheus Cunha from Leipzig, Krzysztof Piatek from AC Milan, Santiago Ascacibar from Stuttgart and Lucas Tousart from Lyon, as its transfer spending in January reached an estimated 76 million euros (\$83 million).

Windhorst, who had brought Klinsmann to the club, had been given advance warning.

"I learned of the decision yesterday," Windhorst said. "I very much regret this step from Jürgen Klinsmann."

Klinsmann had a long association with Hertha through his father Siegfried, who was from Eberswalde near Berlin and was a fan, and his son Jonathan, who was a reserve goalkeeper for Hertha from 2017 until last year when he moved to Swiss club St. Gallen. Siegfried died in 2005.

As a player, Klinsmann enjoyed a glittering career as a prolific striker for clubs in Germany, Italy, France and England. He won the World Cup and European Championship. His coaching career began with Germany in 2004 and he had mixed fortunes coaching Bayern Munich before taking over the U.S. national team.

Klinsmann told news agency dpa on Monday that he was happy working with Windhorst.

"I met him for 10 minutes in a bank ... on the way to Tegel airport. We didn't know each other at the time," Klinsmann said. "He told me, 'I need you at my side because I don't know the ropes in football. You tell me if I'm doing right or wrong.'"

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Ciarán Fahey on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/cfaheyAP>

Epilepsy treatment side effect: New insights about the brain

By **CARLA K. JOHNSON** and **MALCOLM RITTER** Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — Though Genette Hofmann is still using her brain, last month she donated a bit of it — to science.

Hofmann needed the surgery — her Seattle surgeon was looking deep into her brain, where he found the trigger for the epileptic seizures that had disrupted her life for 30 years. But to get there, he teased out a bit of healthy tissue the size of a lima bean, and with her blessing quickly sent it to some researchers, who were eager to study brain cells while they were still alive.

That's how Hofmann joined a long line of epilepsy patients who've helped scientists reveal basic secrets of the brain — knowledge that could pay off in better ways to measure consciousness in brain-injury patients and new treatments for a variety of diseases.

Research volunteers such as Ruth Nall, who made a different kind of contribution in a California hospital room, reading sentences aloud as a network of surgically implanted sensors kept close track of how her brain worked.

Since she was going to have electrodes implanted anyway, she reasoned, why not help out?

"Plus," she added, "I'd have visitors."

Epilepsy disrupts the brain's electrical activity, producing recurrent seizures that involve strange sensations, behaviors, emotions and, sometimes, loss of consciousness. Most people with epilepsy don't need surgery and can control seizures with medications. But when surgery is necessary, research scientists can ask to piggyback on the procedures for a rare chance to study the brain directly.

For decades, studies of epilepsy patients have revealed secrets of the brain, like how the two halves operate differently. And research with "H.M.," a now-deceased Connecticut man who's been called the most famous patient in the history of neuroscience, revealed key insights into how memory works.

The disease has a long history of revealing the importance of the brain to memory, emotion and everything we call the self, says Christof Koch, chief scientist at the Allen Institute in Seattle, where Hofmann's cells were analyzed. "Seizures have taught us more about brain and the mind, and the relationship between the two, than any other disease," he said.

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Hofmann's brain cells were rushed to the institute on "life support" in a cooler rigged up with artificial cerebral spinal fluid and oxygen. At the lab, researcher Herman Tung sliced the pearl of brain into thin sheets for viewing with a powerful microscope, readying it for a three-part series of experiments.

After resting for an hour after slicing, Hofmann's brain cells were ready for their star turn under the microscope.

Researcher Katherine Baker found a single brain cell and recorded its electrical activity. She injected dye that spread into the threadlike dendrites of the neuron to reveal its shape.

Baker removed the cell's nucleus for the third step: a readout of which genes are turned off and which are turned on.

About three-quarters of such donations at the Allen Institute come from epilepsy patients; the rest come from cancer surgeries. The Allen Institute is building an online atlas that makes information on hundreds of human brain cells freely available for study. The institute hopes that will provide a new avenue, beyond brain scans and animal studies, for tackling conditions like Alzheimer's disease and autism.

For Hofmann, 57, the decision to contribute to the study was simple, even beyond her own epilepsy. She spent years caring for a grandmother with dementia.

"It was the easiest decision I've ever made," she said. "This will be my chance to make a difference."

Dr. Andrew Ko, who performed Hofmann's surgery at Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, stressed that it's important to make sure patients understand the difference between what's needed for therapy and what's optional for research. At Harborview, Ko talks to patients about treatment while a research coordinator discusses the opportunity to participate in studies, he said.

Nall, the California woman, underwent surgery too. But before that, doctors had to discover the spot that was triggering her seizures.

To do that, surgeons often implant arrays of 100 or more sensors on and within a patient's brain, to eavesdrop on its activity and catch the trigger in the act of causing a seizure. Patients being monitored in this way may spend a week or more in a hospital room as doctors wait for seizures to happen.

During that time, patients don't have a lot to do. For neuroscience researchers, a group of people with implanted brain electrodes and plenty of time is a golden opportunity.

"It is rare that you have the opportunity to study the brain in such a detailed way in awake people," says Dr. Joshua Rosenow of Northwestern University.

In some cases, researchers use the implanted electrodes for stimulation. A few years ago, to explore the role of a certain part of the brain in perceiving faces, Dr. Josef Parvizi of Stanford University activated that area in a 41-year-old patient. The man was looking at Parvizi, who was next to his hospital bed, when the stimulation began.

"You just turned into somebody else," the patient told Parvizi. "Your nose got saggy and went to the left. You almost look like somebody I've seen before but somebody different. That was a trip."

Other times, the brain electrodes are used to monitor what happens as patients do specific mental tasks. Patients may sniff odors, do math, sing, read specific words or sentences aloud, listen to music or speech, look at faces on a screen, name objects in line drawings, stick out their tongues, or do other things meant to create specific brain activity. All the while, scientists track what's going on in their brains.

"There is an explosion of studies in this field, because it is immensely important to know the timing of events in the brain, which areas light up first" and which follow, said Parvizi. "And when area A lights up, what does area B do?"

The monitoring of Nall's brain provided data for several papers published in the past couple years. One of her experimental tasks sounds a little strange: During her 2013 hospital stay she was asked to repeat the sentence, "I never said she stole my money" over and over, putting an emphasis on a different word each time. Those changes altered the meaning of the sentence.

Researchers had sought her help in learning how the brain produces and controls speech, perhaps a step toward helping people unable to talk. That goal struck a chord with Nall, of Waterford, who recalled that an uncle's voice was stilled by Lou Gehrig's disease.

Looking back, she said she'd encourage others to take the same step. "It is something you feel good about later," she said. "Let your life be defined by the lives that you change."

Two weeks after Hofmann's surgery, a scar curves from the top of her right ear to her forehead hairline. "So far, so good," she said. "No seizures." Part of her brain is gone, but she doesn't feel anything's missing. In fact, happy memories have surfaced, "things I haven't thought of since I was a girl."

Contributing brain cells to science "makes me so proud and so satisfied," she said. "It makes me feel more connected to the human race."

Ritter reported from New York.

The Associated Press Health & Science Department receives support from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

US open jobs fall sharply for 2nd straight month

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER AP Economics Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — U.S. businesses sharply cut the number of jobs they advertised in December for the second straight month, an unusual sign of weakness in an otherwise healthy job market.

The number of available positions dropped 5.4% to 6.4 million, a historically solid number, the Labor Department said Tuesday. There are still more open jobs than there are unemployed people, an unusual situation that has persisted for nearly two years. Before that, the ranks of those out of work exceeded the number of open jobs.

Still, the total of available jobs has fallen by more than 1 million in the past year, the biggest annual drop since the Great Recession. Most of that decline has occurred in just the past two months. Job openings are now at their lowest level in two years. The decline comes after job openings had hit the highest level on records dating back to December 2000.

Nearly all other measures of the labor market remain healthy: The unemployment rate is 3.6%, nearly a half-century low, and employers added 225,000 jobs last month, a solid increase.

"The trend in job growth has remained strong through January ... but the recent decline in job openings signals that job growth could slow at some point," said Daniel Silver, an economist at JPMorgan Chase.

Over the past two months, openings have fallen across all large industries covered by Tuesday's report, known as the Job Openings and Labor Turnover survey, or JOLTS. Some of the biggest declines were in construction, manufacturing, financial services, and retail.

Other data in the report suggested hiring and the job market remains solid. Total hiring rose 1.4% to 5.9 million in December. The JOLTS tracks gross hiring, while the monthly jobs report counts net job gains. The Labor Department said last month that employers added a net total of 147,000 jobs in December.

Layoffs also rose in December to nearly 1.9 million, the highest in more than two years. But that number is historically volatile and may not signify a shift in trends. As a percentage of the workforce, job cuts remain low. And weekly figures on unemployment claims also point to a low level of layoffs.

The number of Americans quitting their jobs declined moderately, but remains at a healthy level. More frequent job departures are typically a sign of job market health, because most workers leave their jobs for a better or higher-paying position.

More US firms are boosting faith-based support for employees

By DAVID CRARY AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) —

It has become standard practice for U.S. corporations to assure employees of support regardless of their race, gender or sexual orientation. There's now an intensifying push to ensure that companies are similarly supportive and inclusive when it comes to employees' religious beliefs.

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One barometer: More than 20% of the Fortune 100 have established faith-based employee resource groups, according to an AP examination and there's a high-powered conference taking place this week in Washington aimed at expanding those ranks.

"Corporate America is at a tipping point toward giving religion similar attention to that given the other major diversity categories," says Brian Grim, founder and president of the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation that's co-hosting the conference along with the Catholic University of America's Busch School of Business.

A few companies have long-established faith-in-the-workplace programs, such as Arkansas-based Tyson Foods, which deploys a team of more than 90 chaplains to comfort and counsel employees at its plants and offices. That program began in 2000.

However, Grim says most companies — over the past few decades — have given religion less attention in their diversity/inclusion programs than other categories such as race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and disabilities.

Grim is an associate scholar at the Religious Liberty Project at Georgetown University and a former senior researcher with the Pew Research Center. From 2015-16, he served as chair of the World Economic Forum's global agenda council on the role of faith.

Grim's foundation, founded in 2014, recently completed a detailed analysis ranking the Fortune 100 companies on their commitment to religious inclusion as part of those programs.

The top 10 in the rankings featured some of America's best-known companies - Google's parent company Alphabet, Intel, Tyson Foods, Target, Facebook, American Airlines, Apple, Dell, American Express and Goldman Sachs.

Tyson won points for its chaplaincy program; most of the others have formed either a single interfaith employee resource group or separate groups for major religions such as Christianity, Islam and Judaism. Google's interfaith group, the Inter Belief Network, has chapters for those faiths and for Buddhists, while Intel has a group for agnostics and atheists, as well as groups for major religious faiths.

One employer, the Internal Revenue Service, has a group specifically for Christian fundamentalists.

Grim says several other high-profile companies -- including Walmart, the largest U.S. employer -- have recently decided to launch faith-based employee groups.

One of the fastest growing faith-based groups, called Faithforce, was launched by Salesforce in 2017. Its founder, Farah Siddiqui, says more than 2,600 employees have signed up since then, joining 17 regional hubs on five continents.

Siddiqui, a Muslim whose family is from Pakistan, said the group now includes Sikhs, Hindus, pagans and humanists, as well as followers of America's largest faiths.

"We're a very inclusive group," she says. "If someone has something interesting to share, we share it. There is no proselytizing."

Siddiqui said Faithforce, in somber fashion, proved its value after a string of deadly attacks on houses of worship in far-flung parts of the world - notably the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, three Christian churches in Sri Lanka and two mosques in New Zealand.

"We had healing circles after each of those tragedies," said Siddiqui, who recounted in-person visits by a rabbi and a Muslim scholar.

"What we've done is support our employees of those faiths to show that the rest of us are here for them," she said.

At Tyson Foods, the team of chaplains includes one Muslim, but is overwhelmingly Christian. However, the team's director, Karen Diefendorf, says the chaplains are trained to provide empathetic pastoral care to employees and their families regardless of what faith -- if any -- the workers belong to.

Diefendorf, whose career includes stints as a United Methodist minister and a U.S. Army chaplain, said there's a key difference between pastoring and chaplaincy.

"When I pastor, I only represent my denomination, my faith tradition," she said. "As a chaplain, I can support people who come from very different backgrounds...I ask them how their beliefs are helping them

cope with what's going on."

Often, the chaplains are sought out by employees struggling with difficulties at work or at home, but Diefendorf said her team members sometimes act proactively - for example, finding tactful ways to signal to a supervisor that his or her management practices are causing problems for workers.

Her advice to other companies considering a chaplaincy team: "Making the right hire is critically important." "You want a person who has maturity, who is secure in their own faith but not spiritually conflicted in allowing others to pursue their faith," she said.

Formal theological training is an asset, but not sufficient in itself, she added. "They can have all the training in the world, but if they don't have the right compassion in their heart, they aren't worth a plugged nickel."

Thus far, the faith-in-the-workplace movement has mostly escaped harsh criticism. Brian Grim has taken pains to argue that faith-based employee resource groups are not a threat to LGBTQ employees, and instead should be viewed as a sign of a corporation's overall commitment to diversity and inclusion. American Airlines is evidence of that: Its presence high atop the new religious-freedom rankings come after many years of accolades for its strong support of LGBTQ employees.

"The perception out there is that religion is a dangerous topic, but some companies have found the opposite -- that it reinforces the other things they care about," Grim said.

Nick Fish, president of American Atheists, said companies considering faith-based initiatives should strive to ensure they are inclusive.

"Creating a work environment that is exclusionary of non-religious staff or members of religious minorities is a recipe for disaster," he said via email. "I'd urge any employer who is considering this sort of action to instead ensure that their workplace is religiously neutral and welcoming to staff and customers of any religious belief or those who are non-religious. "

Associated Press religion coverage receives support from the Lilly Endowment through the Religion News Foundation. The AP is solely responsible for this content.

Ferocious storm in Europe kills 8, causes travel disruptions

By KIRSTEN GRIESHABER Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — Ferocious winds, with gusts over 200 kph (125 mph), lashed Corsica and whipped up a forest fire that flared overnight on the French Mediterranean island on Tuesday, after a storm with hurricane-force winds and heavy rains battered northern Europe for days, killing at least eight people and causing severe travel disruptions.

More than 300 fire officers were involved in fighting the blazes and two ports were closed and flights suspended on Corsica. Power was cut to 2000 homes.

The storm also continued to batter other parts of Europe. Fallen trees blocked roads and train tracks in southern Germany and Austria.

The Austrian city of Salzburg near the German border was hit by the storm Tuesday. Public broadcaster ORF reported that more than 400 firefighters worked for hours to remove downed trees from crushed cars and roads. They also had to remove a huge metal roof that was blown off a building. No one was injured, ORF reported.

German railroad operator Deutsche Bahn, which had shut down all long-distance trains on Monday, said most of its service resumed Tuesday with the exception of some trains in southern regions that were still being battered by gusty winds. Schools across Germany reopened.

Deaths due to the fierce storm were reported in Poland, Sweden, Britain, Slovenia, Germany and the Czech Republic. On Tuesday, Polish officials reported a third storm-related death in the country, saying a relative of two people killed Monday when the roof of the ski rental building collapsed also died.

In northern Bavaria, where a gust of over 160 kph (100 mph) was recorded, the storm produced a record amount of electricity being fed into the German grid from wind turbines, equivalent to almost 44 nuclear power plants.

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The German Weather Service said strong winds would keep blasting much of the country on Tuesday but the brunt of the storm had moved to the southeast. In northeastern Germany, a new storm was expected to reach the Baltic coast. The German Weather Service also forecast heavy rains for most of the country as well as for France and Belgium.

In England and Scotland, the Met Office national weather agency still had 85 flood warnings in force as torrential rains caused numerous rivers to overflow their banks.

Further north, in Norway, water from the North Sea overflowed harbors and entered houses along the country's southern coast, causing damage but no victims. Local airline Wideroe canceled 21 departures because low pressure over northern Norway meant its small planes couldn't fly, the Norwegian news agency NTB reported. The low pressure was affecting the altitude gauges on the planes with no possibility to adjust for the low pressure.

In the Czech Republic, more than 40,000 households remained without electricity Tuesday morning, down from some 300,000 on Monday afternoon. Around 20 train routes were still blocked because of fallen trees on the track. Only one flight from Amsterdam was canceled Tuesday, Prague's international airport said.

John Leicester in Paris; Vanessa Gera in Warsaw, Poland; Karel Janicek in Prague; and Jan M. Olsen in Copenhagen, Denmark.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Wednesday, Feb. 12, the 43rd day of 2020. There are 323 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On Feb. 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, was born in a log cabin in Hardin (now LaRue) County, Kentucky.

On this date:

In 1795, the University of North Carolina became the first U.S. state university to admit students with the arrival of Hinton James.

In 1914, groundbreaking took place for the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. (A year later on this date, the cornerstone was laid.)

In 1924, George Gershwin's "Rhapsody in Blue" premiered in New York.

In 1959, the redesigned Lincoln penny — with an image of the Lincoln Memorial replacing two ears of wheat on the reverse side — went into circulation.

In 1973, Operation Homecoming began as the first release of American prisoners of war from the Vietnam conflict took place.

In 1980, the FBI announced that about \$5,800 of the \$200,000 ransom paid to hijacker "D.B. Cooper" before he parachuted from a Northwest Orient jetliner in 1971 had been found by an 8-year-old boy on a riverbank of the Columbia River in Washington state.

In 1993, in a crime that shocked and outraged Britons, two 10-year-old boys lured 2-year-old James Bulger from his mother at a shopping mall near Liverpool, England, and beat him to death.

In 1999, the Senate voted to acquit President Bill Clinton of perjury and obstruction of justice.

In 2000, Charles M. Schulz, creator of the "Peanuts" comic strip, died in Santa Rosa, Calif. at age 77.

In 2003, the U.N. nuclear agency declared North Korea in violation of international treaties, sending the dispute to the Security Council.

In 2006, figure skater Michelle Kwan effectively retired from competition as she withdrew from the Turin Olympics due to injury (she was replaced on the U.S. team by Emily Hughes). Snowboarder Shaun White beat American teammate Danny Kass to win the Olympic gold medal.

In 2008, General Motors reported losing \$38.7 billion in 2007, a record annual loss in automotive history, and offered buyouts to 74,000 hourly workers. Uno became the first beagle named Westminster's

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best in show.

Ten years ago: On the day the Winter Olympics opened in Vancouver, British Columbia, Nodar Kumari-tashvili (noh-DAHR' KOO'-mah-ree-tahsh-VEE'-lee), a 21-year-old luger from the republic of Georgia, was killed in a high-speed crash during a practice run. Three University of Alabama-Huntsville professors were gunned down during a faculty meeting; police charged neurobiologist Amy Bishop with capital murder. (Bishop later pleaded guilty and was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.)

Five years ago: European leaders agreed on a truce to halt fighting in eastern Ukraine between government forces and Russian-backed separatist rebels.

One year ago: Mexico's most notorious drug lord, Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, was convicted in New York of running an industrial-scale smuggling operation; a jury whose members' identities were kept secret as a security measure had deliberated for six days. (Guzman is serving a life sentence at the federal supermax prison facility in Florence, Colorado.) Lyndon LaRouche Jr., the political extremist who ran for president in every election from 1976 to 2004, including one campaign waged from federal prison, died at the age of 96. Retired astronaut Mark Kelly announced that he would run in 2020 to finish the Senate term of the late John McCain; Kelly had become a prominent gun-control advocate after the shooting that injured his wife, U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords. Hundreds gathered at a church in suburban Detroit for the funeral of former Democratic Rep. John Dingell, the longest-serving member of Congress in U.S. history.

Today's Birthdays: Movie director Costa-Gavras is 87. Basketball Hall of Famer Bill Russell is 86. Actor Joe Don Baker is 84. Author Judy Blume is 82. Former Israeli Prime Minister Ehud Barak is 78. Country singer Moe Bandy is 76. Actress Maud Adams is 75. Actor Cliff DeYoung is 74. Actor Michael Ironside is 70. Rock musician Steve Hackett is 70. Rock singer Michael McDonald is 68. Actress Joanna Kerns is 67. Actor Zach Grenier is 66. Actor-talk show host Arsenio Hall is 64. Actor John Michael Higgins is 57. Actor Raphael Sbarge is 56. Actress Christine Elise is 55. Actor Josh Brolin is 52. Singer Chynna Phillips is 52. Rock musician Jim Creegan (Barenaked Ladies) is 50. Rhythm-and-blues musician Keri Lewis is 49. Actor Jesse Spencer is 41. Rapper Gucci Mane is 40. Actress Sarah Lancaster is 40. Actress Christina Ricci is 40. NFL quarterback Robert Griffin III is 30. Actress Jennifer Stone is 27. Actresses Baylie and Rylie Cregut (TV: "Raising Hope") are ten.

Thought for Today: "Men make history and not the other way around. In periods where there is no leadership, society stands still." — President Harry S. Truman (1884-1972).

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