

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 1 of 63

- [1- Upcoming Events](#)
- [2- Sunday Extras](#)
- [15- Rep. Johnson's Weekly Column](#)
- [16- Sen. Rounds' Weekly Column](#)
- [17- Sen. Thune's Weekly Column](#)
- [18- Gov. Noem's Weekly Column](#)
- [19- Dragr places third at state wrestling](#)
- [20- G-Force wins State Judges Award](#)
- [20- Lane receives State Coaches Volunteer Award](#)
- [21- Rev. Snyder's Column](#)
- [23- SD News Watch: Land ownership question hovers over \\$185 million Sioux Falls redevelopment plan](#)
- [28- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [29- Weather Pages](#)
- [32- Daily Devotional](#)
- [33- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [34- News from the Associated Press](#)



Upcoming Events

Sunday, March 1, 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, March 2, 2020

Girls' Basketball Regions: Groton area hosts Webster Area, 7 p.m.

Tuesday, March 3, 2020

Boys' Basketball Regions: Groton Area hosts Aberdeen Roncalli, 7 p.m.

City Council Meeting at Groton Community Center, 7 p.m.

Thursday, March 5, 2020

Girls' Basketball Region at highest seed

Friday, March 6, 2020

Boys' Basketball Region at highest seed

State Debate at Huron

Saturday, March 7

State Debate at Huron

Regional DI Competition at Groton Area

Sunday, March 8, 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, March 9, 2020

School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.

Girls SoDak 16

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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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 2 of 63

Sunday Extras



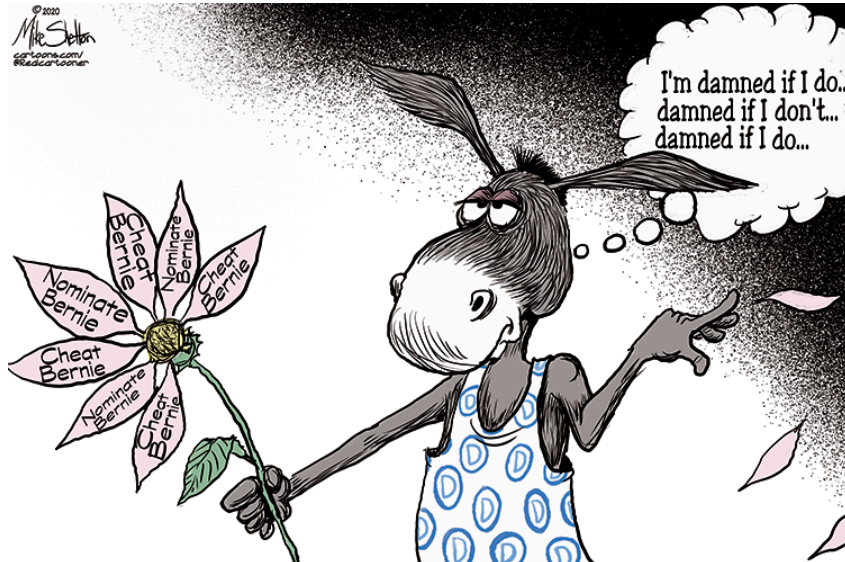
THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

*Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace;
thereby good will come to you.
Receive, please, instruction from His mouth,
and lay up His words in your heart.
If you return to the Almighty, you will be built up;
you will remove iniquity far from your tents.*

🌀 JOB 22: 21-23 🌀



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BIBLE TRIVIA

by Wilson Casey

1. Is the book of 1 Thessalonians in the Old or New Testament or neither?

2. From 2 Samuel, what king confessed his adulterous affair after being confronted by the prophet Nathan? *Silas, Josiah, Jael, David*

3. In Acts 19, where were books worth 50,000 silver coins burned at a public bonfire? *Gezer, Samaria, Ephesus, Jericho*

4. From Numbers 11, what personal assistant of Moses became jealous of Eldad and Medad? *Isaac, Joshua, Job, Cain*

5. What famous prophet was the Son of Amoz? *Paul, Isaiah, Peter, John the Baptist*

6. Who was the wife of Hosea? *Gomer, Ruth, Sarah, Miriam*

ANSWERS: 1) New; 2) David; 3) Ephesus; 4) Joshua; 5) Isaiah; 6) Gomer

Sharpen your understanding of scripture with Wilson's Casey's latest book, "Test Your Bible Knowledge," available in bookstores and online.

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Comfort foods

Made fast
and
healthy



by Healthy Exchanges

Pineapple Cream Pudding

This quick microwave dessert tastes like you're basking in the sun in the Hawaiian Islands.

- 1 (4-serving) package sugar-free vanilla cook-and-serve pudding mix
- 2/3 cup nonfat dry milk powder
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 1 (8-ounce) can crushed pineapple, packed in fruit juice, undrained
- 1/2 teaspoon coconut extract
- 3 tablespoons purchased graham cracker crumbs
- 1 tablespoon chopped pecans
- 1 tablespoon flaked coconut

1. In an 8-cup glass measuring bowl, combine dry pudding mix, dry milk powder, water and undrained pineapple. Microwave on HIGH for 5 to 6 minutes or until mixture starts to bubble, stirring after 4 minutes. Stir in coconut extract. Evenly spoon hot mixture into 4 dessert dishes.

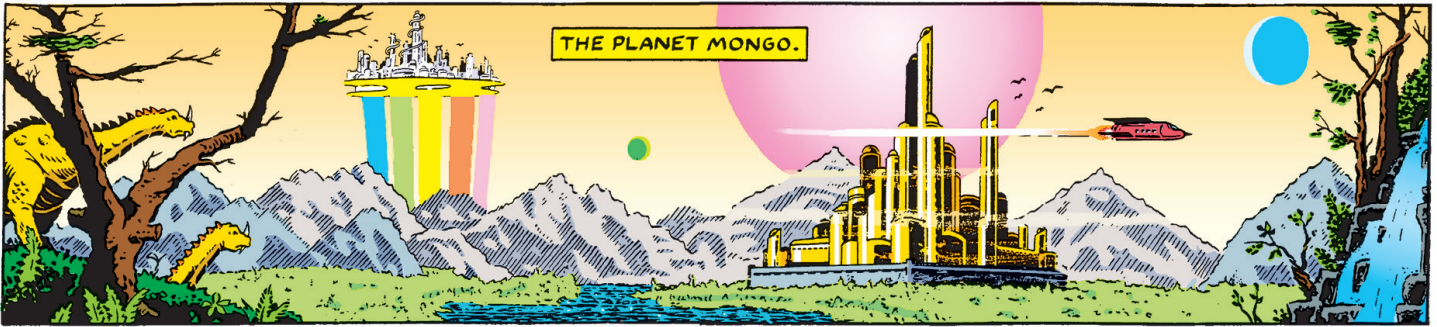
2. In a small bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs, pecans and coconut. Evenly sprinkle a full tablespoon of crumb mixture over top of each. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Serves four.

• Each serving equals: About 142 calories, 2g fat, 5g protein, 26g carb., 214mg sodium, 1g fiber; Diabetic Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1/2 Skim Milk, 1/2 Fruit.

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Groton Daily Independent

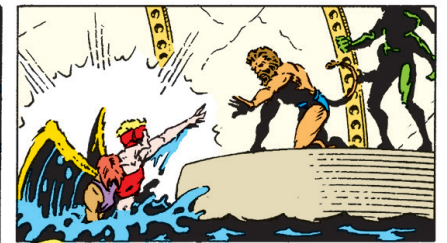
Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 4 of 63



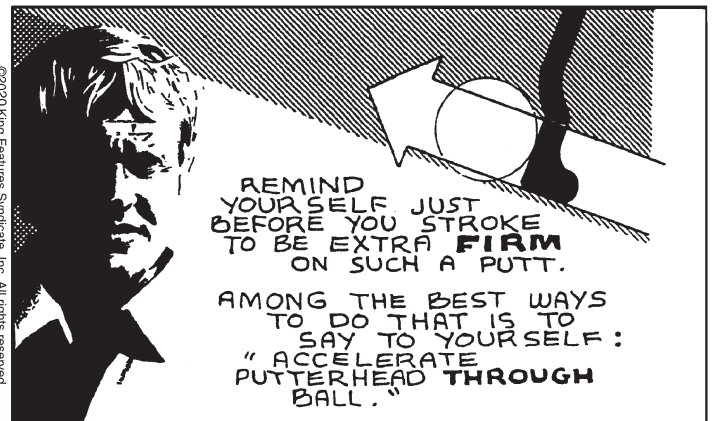
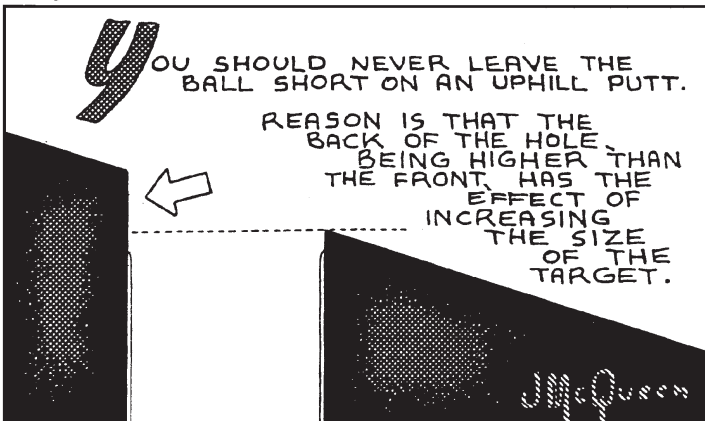
FLASH GORDON

2-23 BY JIM KEEFE

DIVING INTO THE MURKY DEPTHS, FLASH'S RAZOR-SHARP SPEAR HITS HOME!



Play Better Golf with JACK NICKLAUS





'Cotton Ball' Sensation Is a Sign of Neuropathy

DEAR DR. ROACH: I'm a 63-year-old male diagnosed with chronic myelogenous leukemia, Type 2 diabetes and coronary heart disease. I am 5 feet, 11 inches and weigh 240 pounds. I have two stents and take Sprycel for the CML. My levels are good, and the coronary disease is under control.

For a few years I've had what feels like "cotton balls" under the skin in the area of the balls of my feet. Now it feels like it's migrating to the arch. While not too uncomfortable, it is almost impossible to walk barefooted. Some type of foot covering is needed to keep from noticing the feeling. My doctor says it's the diabetes, and to lose weight or see a podiatrist. Other than losing the weight, do you have any opinion about this? —*N.M.*

ANSWER: Cotton-ball sensation is one way that many people describe the beginning of neuropathy, a general term for a variety of different conditions that affect the nerves of the body.

In a person with cancer (like CML, chronic myelogenous leukemia, a cancer of the bone marrow) and a new symptom, it is always wise to consider whether it could be due to the cancer, the treatment for the cancer or from something else. In your case, usually CML is not associated with neuropathy. However, the medicine you are taking, dasatinib (Sprycel), has been associated with a severe kind of reversible neuropathy. I read the case reports of this condition carefully, and I doubt that is what is going on with

you, as the symptoms you have are different from those reported.

People with longstanding diabetes frequently develop a particular disease of the nerves, diabetic neuropathy. This almost always begins with sensation changes in the feet. I agree with your doctor that diabetes is the most likely cause.

Seeing a podiatrist is absolutely a good idea. He or she can test you for this condition (usually a careful physical exam will make the diagnosis), in addition to looking carefully for any early signs or risk factors for injury or infection. You also should learn how to do a daily inspection of your feet and recognize the signs, so you can get to medical attention promptly should any damage to your feet occur. The podiatrist will make sure you have appropriate footwear.

Many people with diabetes benefit from weight loss, but the important thing is to be sure your diabetes is under good control. This is achieved through good diet, regular exercise and medication, if needed, in addition to weight loss in people who are overweight.

DEAR DR. ROACH: Due to cancer, my prostate was removed about seven years ago. My PSA reading has increased since 2012 from 0.09 to 0.304. Should I be concerned? I am 78 years old and in relatively good health. —*B.D.*

ANSWER: PSA readings can go up and down, but a threefold increase could mean that the cancer is coming back, and you should see the specialist taking care of your prostate cancer to discuss getting additional testing.

Not having disease for seven years after treatment is a good sign, but the PSA test is pretty specific for cancer recurrence if two separate readings are above 0.2. You may need additional therapy, but only further investigation will show how concerned you need to be.

Dr. Roach regrets that he is unable to answer individual questions, but will incorporate them in the column whenever possible. Readers may email questions to ToYourGoodHealth@med.cornell.edu.

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1. What is Harry Hippy's real name?
2. Elvis Presley made his first television appearance on which show?
3. Which group began with the unwieldy name Tony Flow and the Miraculously Majestic Masters of Mayhem?
4. What did Duane Allman, Harry Chapin and Eddie Cochran have in common?
5. Name the song that contains this lyric: "I found a woman, I felt a true love, She was everything I'd ever been dreaming of."

Answers

1. Jackie Robinson, a Jamaican lead singer with The Pioneers. Robinson was found sitting outside a recording studio in 1967, was asked if he could sing, and the rest was history.
2. "The Dorsey Brothers Stage Show," on Jan. 28, 1956. He wasn't on Ed Sullivan until later in the year.
3. The Red Hot Chili Peppers, in 1983. They released their first album the following year, played mostly on college radio stations.
4. They all died in motor-vehicle accidents.
5. "Take Time to Know Her," by Percy Sledge in 1968. While numerous others have covered the song, it was Sledge who cut the most memorable version. It was most recently covered by Zydeco Force on their "You Mean the World to Me" album in 2001.

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Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 6 of 63

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



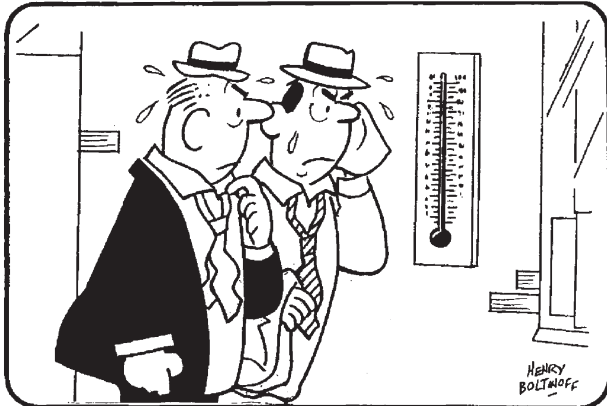
GRIN and BEAR IT



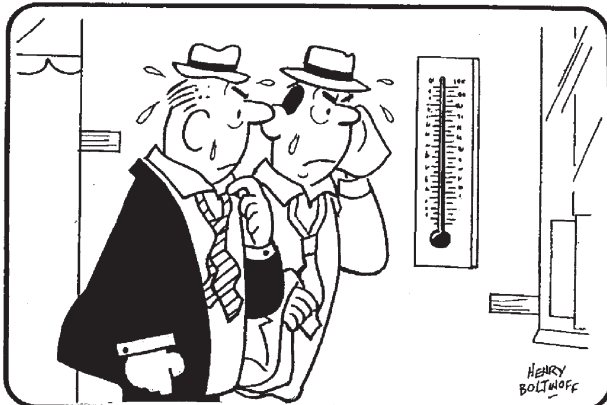
"We're looking very good today, especially me!"

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Droplet is added. 2. Ties are swapped. 3. Step is missing. 4. Buttons are added. 5. Temperature is higher. 6. Awing is different.

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• “Loosen a stuck ring by putting a little bit of butter on your finger to help it slide.” —*D.F. in West Virginia*

• If you’ve gone up or down a size, please consider donating your suits or dress clothes to the organization Dress for Success. It gives businesswear for interviews to women who could not otherwise afford it, helping them to look the part so that they can get the part!

• **DIY Hand Pampering:** Mix together 2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1/5 cup milk, 1/2 cup brown sugar, 1/4 cup honey. Soak hands in mixture for 2 minutes, then rinse and dry hands.

• **How to pack a suitcase:** Roll pants and tops, adding to suitcase first, toward the handle side. Then add heavy items (shoes, boots) toward the wheel end. Make sure you choose the right size case for the trip; too much room will cause items to shift around.

room will cause items to shift around. You can always throw in a light jacket if you have the space.

• In a pinch, you can use toothpaste to scrub your faucet in the bathroom.

• Got unexpected company? For a quick, clean look, vacuum the floors and take care of these four things: the bathroom, dishes in the sink, piles of junk on tables or counters and an overflowing trash can. Your house will look great.

Send your tips to Now Here's a Tip, 628 Virginia Drive, Orlando, FL 32803.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 8 of 63



WINTER SPORTS! See if you can guess which toss clobbered Paul's opponent. You only get one try.

The third toss.
Answer:

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

1.	G					E
2.		G				E
3.			G		E	
4.			G	E		
5.		E			G	
6.		E				G
7.	E					G

FIND THE BIG WORDS?

USING THE definitions and anagrams below, you must find the seven eight-letter words that fit into the framework pictured on the left. The letters in the two anagram words, for each definition, must be unscrambled and used to form the word asked for.

- | DEFINITIONS: | ANAGRAMS: |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| 1. Used in jewelry | song + meet |
| 2. Disturbed or upset | date + gait |
| 3. A bone connector | game + lint |
| 4. Harried or pestered | deed + grab |
| 5. An adolescent | tear + gene |
| 6. Something passed down | gate + hire |
| 7. Giving more | grin + cone |

Illustrated by David Coulson

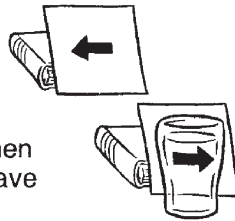
A PROBLEM FOR THE WIDE AWAKE PUZZLER! See if you can rearrange the following letters to form a common word. Lots of coffee will help you answer this one.

EEEELLNPSSSS

Answer: Too much coffee will give you SLEEPLESSNESS, the word we're looking for.



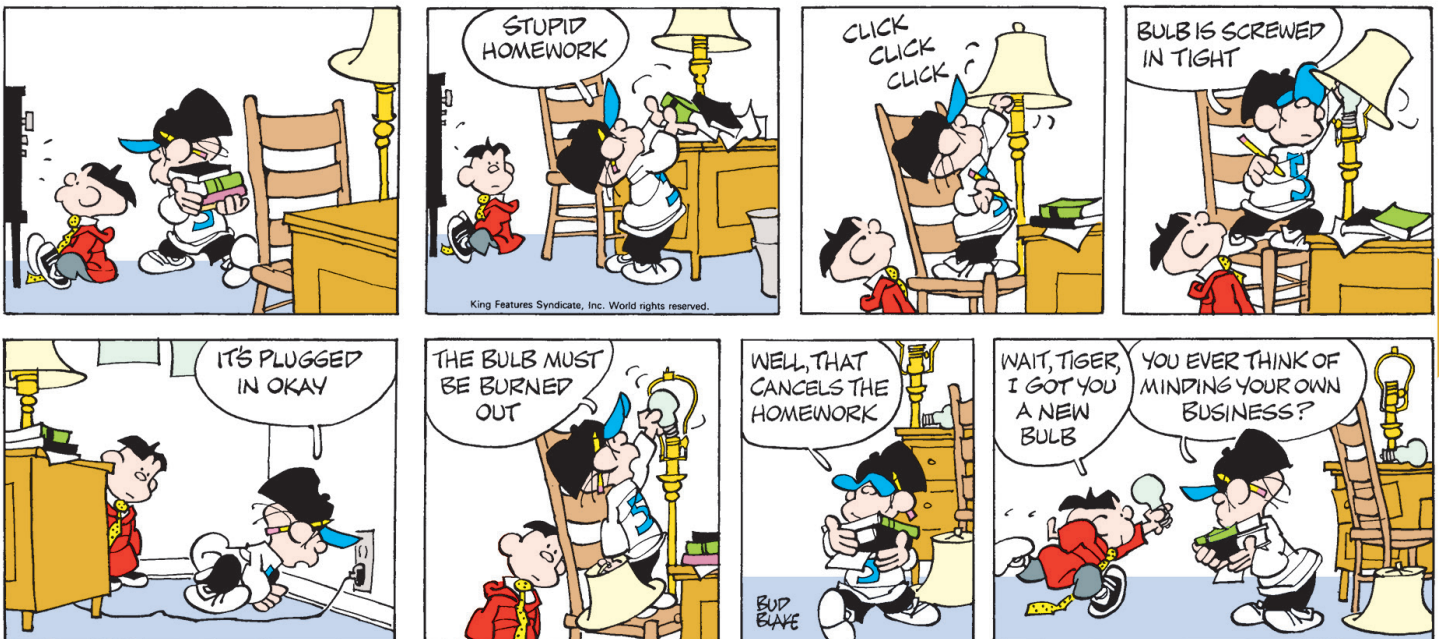
THE FLIPFLOP ARROW! Here's a neat way to stump your friends. On a square of cardboard draw a one-inch arrow pointing to the left. Bet anyone that you can make the arrow point to the right without touching the card or moving the table. Secret: Fill a tall clear glass with water and place it about two inches in front of the card. Now, when you look at the arrow, through the glass, it will appear to have flipped and point.



Answers: 1. Gemstone. 2. Agitated. 3. Lignament. 4. Badgered. 5. Teen-ager. 6. Heritage. 7. Encoring.

TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 9 of 63

King Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 TGIF part
- 4 Bing's buddy
- 7 Block the flow
- 12 Just out
- 13 "Hail!"
- 14 Become one
- 15 Meadow
- 16 High-flying tourist
- 18 \$ dispenser
- 19 Soviet cooperative
- 20 Genius
- 22 Decorate Easter eggs
- 23 Boast
- 27 Discoverer's cry
- 29 Weaken, in a way
- 31 Nary a soul

1	2	3		4	5	6		7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14				
15				16			17					
18				19								
20			21		22				23	24	25	26
			27	28			29	30				
31	32	33						34				
35					36		37					
38					39	40			41	42	43	44
				45				46		47		
48	49	50	51							52		
53						54				55		
56						57				58		

- 34 Star in Orion's left foot
- 35 "Now" or "never"
- 37 Drench
- 38 TV dinner veggies
- 39 "Go, team!"
- 41 Wild and crazy
- 45 Rescues
- 47 "The Raven" writer
- 48 TV show for entrepreneurial hopefuls
- 52 Transgression
- 53 Asian nation

- 54 Hockey surface
- 55 Superlative ending
- 56 That is (Lat.)
- 57 "Ben-Hur" author Wallace
- 58 Vast expanse

DOWN

- 1 Extended family member
- 2 "Choppers"
- 3 Hindu ascetic
- 4 Mexican peninsula
- 5 Exaggerate
- 6 White or
- 7 One-on-one fight
- 8 Pismire
- 9 Bay State sch.
- 10 Multipurpose truck
- 11 Apiece
- 17 Start a garden
- 21 Regions
- 23 All-out attack
- 24 Carpet
- 25 Consumed
- 26 Solidify
- 28 That woman
- 30 Anger
- 31 Siesta

- 32 Praise in verse
- 33 Eggs
- 36 Unruly kid?
- 37 From what place
- 40 Use
- 42 Church recesses
- 43 Din
- 44 Busybody
- 45 Old card game
- 46 Distort
- 48 Tackle moguls
- 49 Scuttle
- 50 Exist
- 51 Scale notes

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 10 of 63

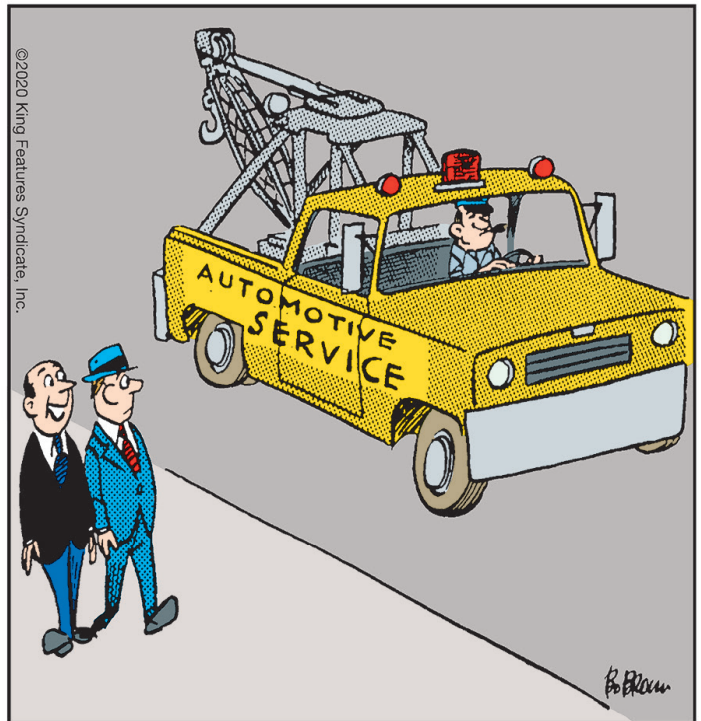
— King Crossword —

Answers

Solution time: 27 mins.

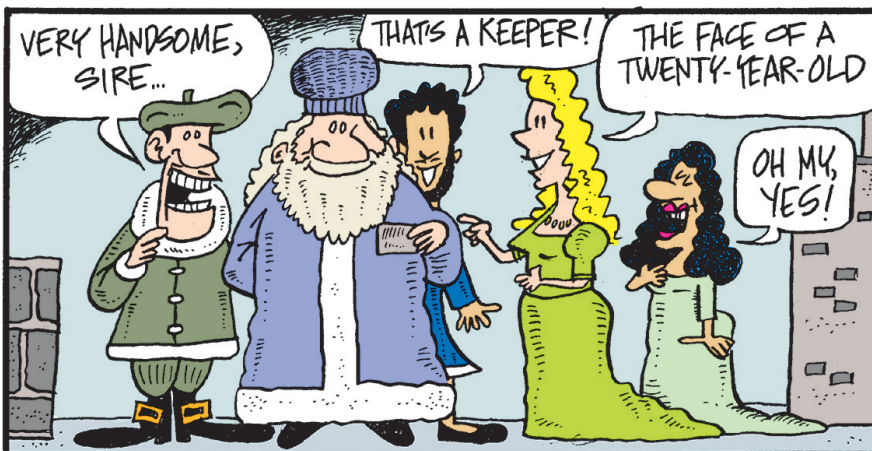
I	T	S		B	O	B		D	A	M	U	P
N	E	W		A	V	E		U	N	I	T	E
L	E	A		J	E	T	S	E	T	T	E	R
A	T	M		A	R	T	E	L				
W	H	I	Z		D	Y	E		B	R	A	G
			O	H	O		D	I	L	U	T	E
N	O	O	N	E			R	I	G	E	L	
A	D	V	E	R	B		W	E	T			
P	E	A	S		R	A	H		Z	A	N	Y
			S	A	V	E	S		P	O	E	
S	H	A	R	K	T	A	N	K		S	I	N
K	O	R	E	A		I	C	E		E	S	T
I	D	E	S	T		L	E	W		S	E	A

LAFF - A - DAY

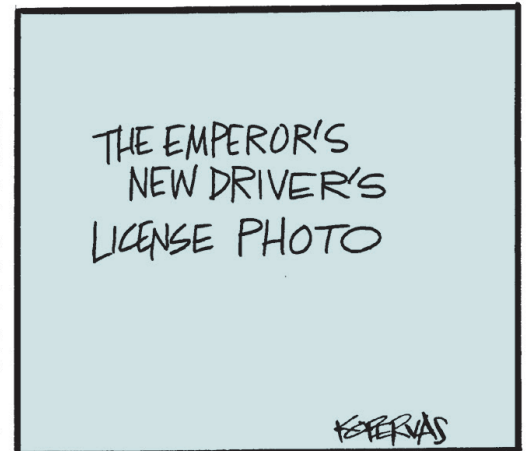


“He’s a darn good mechanic, AND he also overcharges less than anybody else in town.”

Out on a Limb

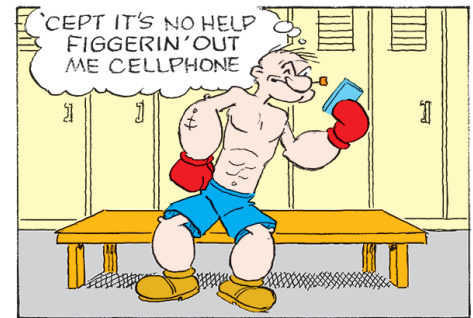
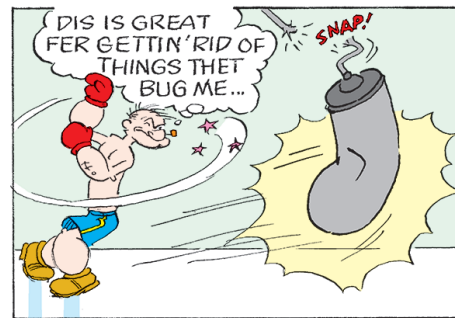
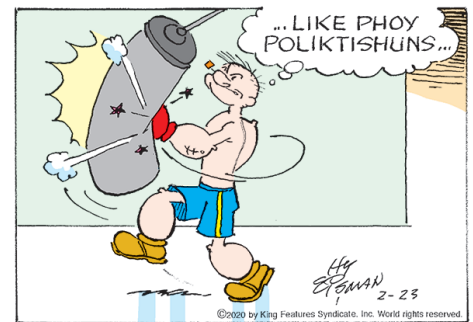
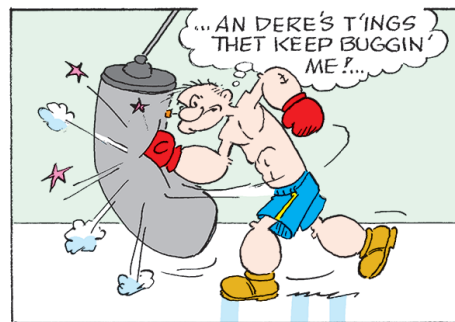
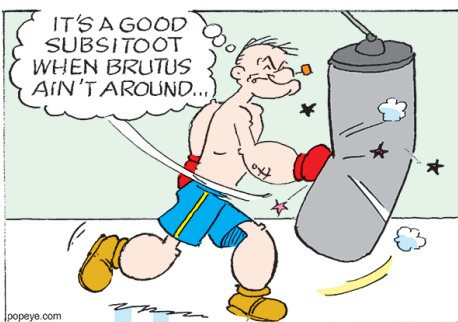
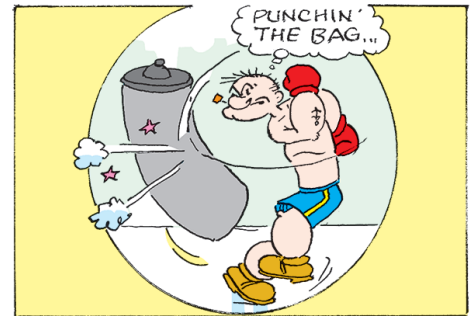
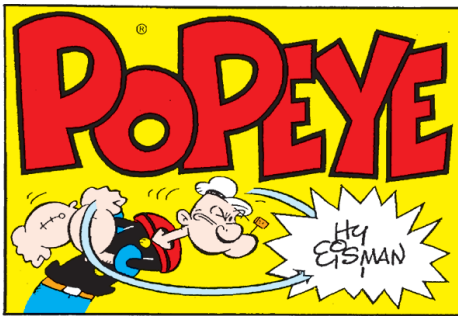


by Gary Kopervas



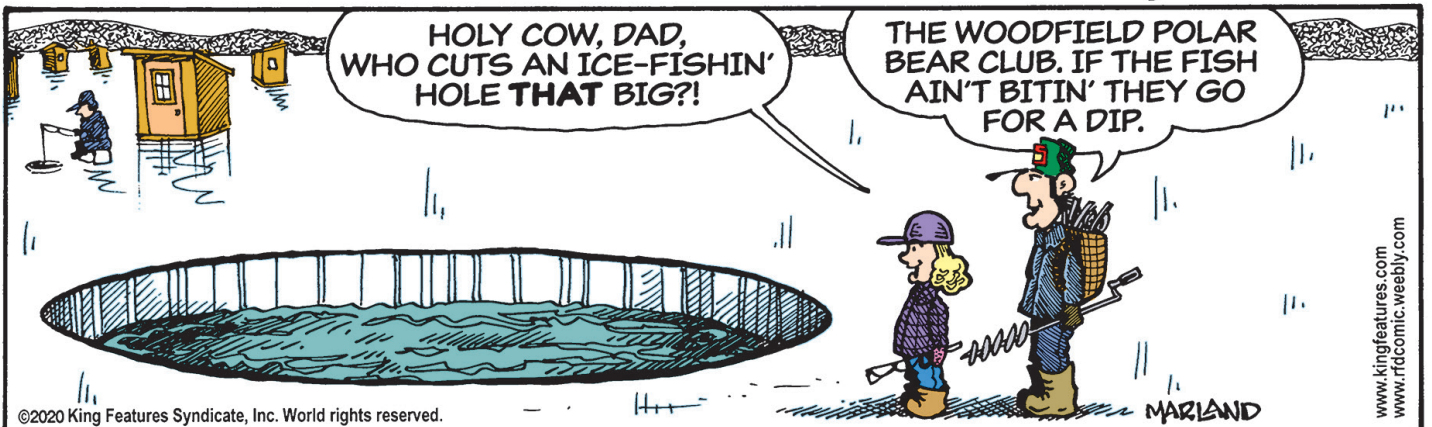
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 11 of 63



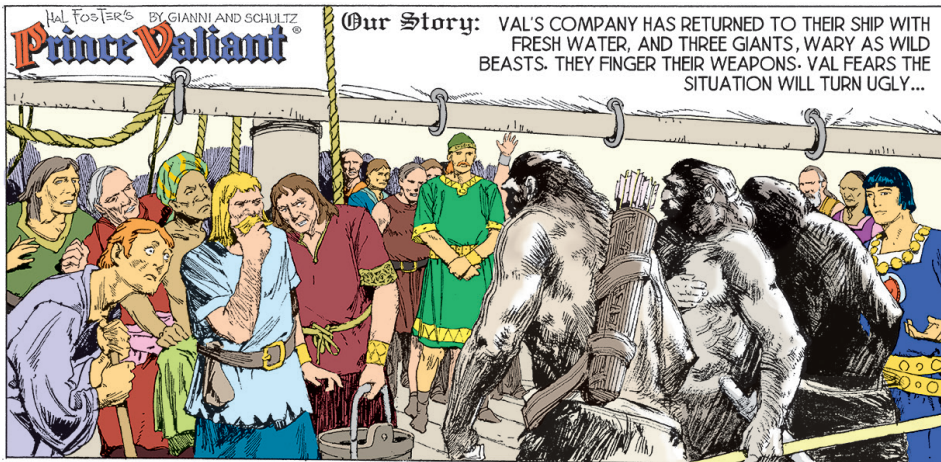
R.F.D.

by Mike Marland



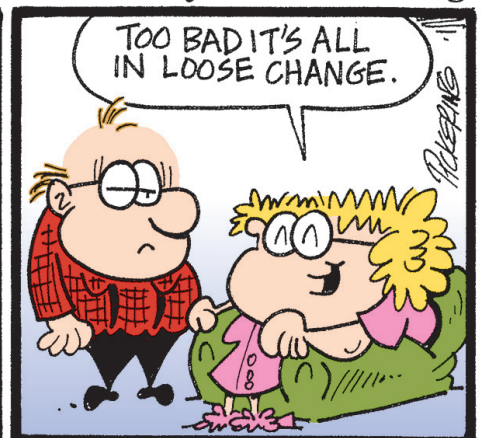
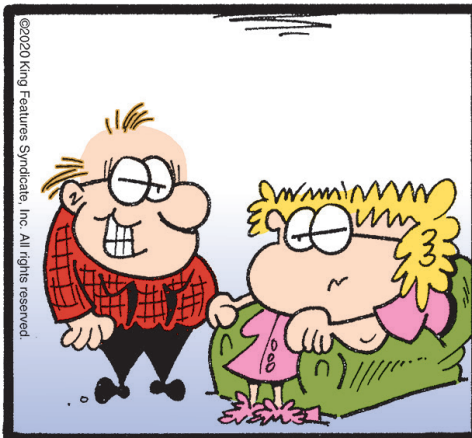
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 12 of 63



The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



SENIOR NEWS LINE

by Matilda Charles

What Makes Us Happy?

What makes us happy as we get older? Below are the results of an informal poll of seniors at the local coffee shop.

- Having enough income. It turns out that many who are living only on Social Security can have enough to make it through the month if they made wise decisions before retiring. Paying off the mortgage is a big one.

- Being listened to, or at least not being disregarded. There's something about aging that seems to make us melt into the background, and if we have opinions or comments, people don't always listen. Medical staff seem to rank very high on this list of people who really aren't listening. Being heard is important.

- Freedom. This comes in many forms. It might mean continuing to drive; it might mean watching only what we want on television.

- Having a social life. For some of

us that might mean being part of a group that meets regularly. For others it might mean talking to friends on the phone daily.

- Laughing. Finding something amusing every day ranked high on the list of what makes us happy. Sometimes it was reading the next page of a joke-a-day calendar. Sometimes it was talking to a friend who had a great, skewed view of the world.

- Having a reason to get up every day. Whether it's a hobby, a good book or a social gathering, having a reason to look forward to the next day was key.

And what does it mean if we're happy? A study monitored 3,000 seniors over the course of eight years to see how happiness impacted physical function. Researchers found that happy people decline more slowly. Conversely, unhappy people were three times more likely to develop health problems.

Where do you fall on the happiness spectrum?

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 14 of 63



1. In 2018, Baltimore's Chris Davis finished with the lowest batting average by a qualifier (.168) in major-league history. Who had held the mark?

2. Which of baseball's Alou brothers played for both the Milwaukee Braves and the Milwaukee Brewers?

3. How many consecutive winning seasons did Virginia Tech's football team have before the streak ended in 2018?

4. Utah's Donovan Mitchell set an NBA record in the 2017-18 season for most 3-pointers made by a rookie (187). Who had held the mark?

5. Which NHL team holds the record for most consecutive seasons reaching the Stanley Cup playoffs?

6. Who was the first rookie to win a NASCAR season championship in one of the three main divisions?

7. Name the last year in which tennis star Serena Williams did not make a grand slam final.

1. Rob Deer (1991) and Dan Uggla (2013), each of whom hit .179 for a season.

2. Felipe Alou (1964-65 with the Braves, and 1974 with the Brewers).

3. It was 25 consecutive seasons (1993-2017)

4. Portland's Damian Lillard, with 185 in the 2012-13 season.

5. Boston, with 29 consecutive seasons (1967-68 through 1995-96).

6. Chase Elliott, who won the 2014 Xfinity Series championship.

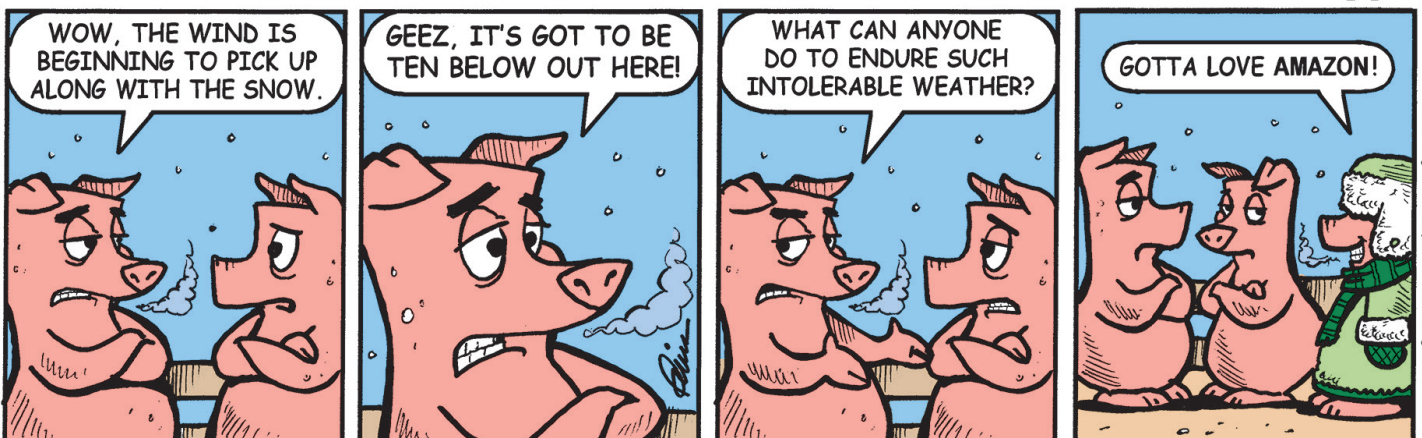
7. It was 2006.

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Answers

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps





CONGRESSMAN
DUSTY JOHNSON
Representing **SOUTH DAKOTA** at large



Staying Informed on the Coronavirus

If you've turned on the news in the last month or so you've probably heard this word over and over: Coronavirus, officially known as COVID-19.

This week, the president addressed the nation regarding the U.S. response to the outbreak. So far, officials have determined more than 80,000 cases globally – the majority of them in China.

There's a lot of information flying around because this illness is so unknown and spreading rapidly. Unfortunately, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has said it's not a matter of if – but when – Coronavirus will increase in prevalence in the U.S.

In the meantime, it's important to make sure you're staying prepared and informed by accurate sources. For now, the main point experts are driving home is: do not panic. Currently, the U.S. only has a small number of known cases of the Coronavirus – most of these folks have recovered and no deaths have been reported.

The CDC is working around the clock to combat this illness and you can visit www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov for the most up-to-date information and best practices. While the U.S. looks for a vaccine, the CDC has recommended the following best practices:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue and immediately throw the tissue away.
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surface areas.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for a minimum of 20 seconds, especially after using the restroom – but hopefully that was a give in.

While the president was quick to act on specific travel restrictions and early containment, Congress is still working on a final funding number to prepare for an outbreak. The president has asked for \$2.5 billion, Democrat leadership is asking for \$8.5 billion, and Republican leadership is deliberating a number somewhere in-between the two.

As Coronavirus impacts financial markets, individuals, and countries – stay vigilant. Cybercriminals have begun exploiting unsuspecting individuals with phishing emails. If you get an email with information about the coronavirus and it didn't come from a .gov address – don't open it. Scammers are attempting to steal email login information and request donations for a cure. The CDC does solicit donations.

Outbreaks often cause panic – understandably so – but the best course of action is to be prepared and be proactive. Most importantly, be wary of bad information. Sanitize your surroundings and wash your hands. Establish an "in case of emergency plan" with your family. And if you're able, go to the doctor if you're experiencing flu-like symptoms (fever, cough, shortness of breath). According to the CDC, symptoms may appear in as few as 2 days or as long as 14 days after exposure.

The U.S. is undergoing extensive preparation efforts, but the American people have a responsibility to dust off their emergency preparedness plans and work together to combat Coronavirus in the best way possible.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 16 of 63



Thank you for Your Prayers and Support

The past ten months have been the hardest challenge we've faced as a family, and that I have faced personally. In May of 2019, I was diagnosed with a malignant, high-grade, aggressive tumor near my sciatic nerve—a sarcoma. Prior to the diagnosis, I had been experiencing a lot of pain and was visiting the doctor frequently. We knew something was going on but weren't sure what exactly we were dealing with. After we got the diagnosis, Mike and I sat our kids down and told them about the sarcoma. We were all devastated. While it was hard for the kids to hear, they were incredibly supportive. As a family, we talked about our plan of action to beat this cancer diagnosis. This involved chemotherapy, surgery and radiation at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester.

We have now gone through all the treatments recommended by my team of doctors. This month I was able to "ring the bell" at the Mayo Clinic, which signifies a successful end to the treatment. I'll continue to go back for monitoring to make sure the cancer is totally gone, but I'm feeling good and we're optimistic.

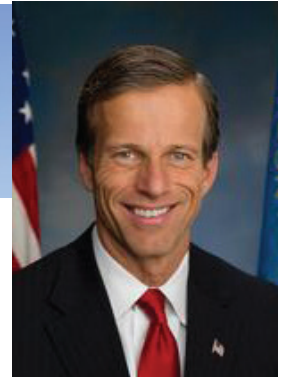
When you go through a difficult time like this, you really think about what your priorities are. For us, our number one priority is our family. Mike has been with me every step of the way—from the biopsies when we didn't know for sure what the diagnosis was, to the chemo treatments, to caring for me post-surgery and through radiation. He never complained and he sat with me in that hospital room at Mayo Clinic for days on end. Many times he came straight to Rochester after the Senate finished voting so he could be with me during treatment and drive me the six hours back home to Fort Pierre afterward. He was my rock during this whole process. When you get married you promise to stick with your spouse in sickness and health, through the good times and the bad. Mike has been by my side throughout the most difficult time of my life. Just knowing that he was sitting in the chair next to me during my treatment helped me to know that I wasn't fighting this battle alone.

Our family and friends have also been incredibly supportive. When you receive a cancer diagnosis, the most devastating thoughts go through your head. But our kids and grandkids, neighbors, friends and entire South Dakota community lifted us throughout my cancer treatment. I was humbled by how many people reached out to us to offer assistance. We are fortunate to have such an amazing community in Pierre and Fort Pierre, and around the state. So many people have contacted me to let me know they're praying for my recovery. Their prayers and our faith in God got us through this hard time. Many have also shared their own stories with cancer, and how it affected their families.

We know we aren't the first family to fight a difficult health battle, and we won't be the last. Many South Dakotans have been in a similar situation. I understand what they're going through, and it's not easy. Mike and I are praying for them.

I'm so grateful to those who have included our family in their prayers. When times get tough, South Dakotans come together to help each other out. I've seen it firsthand, and I can't thank everyone enough for their support.

John Thune
U.S. SENATOR - SOUTH DAKOTA



Defending the Defenseless

The Senate recently voted on two commonsense bills that would have gone a long way to help defend the rights of the defenseless. Unfortunately, the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act and the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act were both defeated, largely on party lines. All Senate Republicans joined a handful of Democrats in supporting the born-alive bill, but we came just four votes shy of what we needed to move this important legislation forward. It was a short-term defeat in a never-ending pro-life mission that I'm deeply committed to pursuing.

Both of these bills should have been uncontroversial. No matter where you stand on abortion, every one of us ought to be able to agree that infants who are born alive during an abortion procedure should receive the same care that a baby born alive in a hospital would receive. Similarly, every one of us ought to agree that, at the very least, we should not be aborting babies after the point that they can feel pain.

While we shouldn't even need the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act or Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act, the sad reality is that we do.

It should be obvious that any baby born alive, wherever he or she is born, ought to receive care. It's become clear, though, that we need to underscore that being born alive in an abortion clinic instead of a hospital doesn't eliminate a baby's right to medical care. And we should all have the courage to say that abortions beginning in the sixth month of pregnancy – a point at which science has clearly demonstrated that the unborn child is able to feel pain – is wrong.

Every year, in the United States alone, hundreds of thousands of irreplaceable human beings are killed by abortion. That's not some number the pro-life movement has cooked up. That's straight from the pro-abortion Guttmacher Institute, formerly affiliated with Planned Parenthood, which reports, "Approximately 862,320 abortions were performed in 2017." Most of us can't even fathom what a number that big looks like. But to put it in perspective, 862,000 is roughly equivalent to the population of the entire state of South Dakota.

Americans are better than this. Our country was founded to safeguard human rights, not to take them away. And while we haven't always lived up to that promise, we've never stopped trying.

It's time. It's time for us as a country to stand up and start protecting the rights of unborn human beings. It's time for us to join the vast majority of the global community in prohibiting elective abortions past 20 weeks. And it's time for us to make it clear that no matter what some may say, Americans believe that all children, whether born alive in a hospital or in an abortion clinic, deserve protection and basic medical care. Our fight is far from over.

Broton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 18 of 63



SOUTH DAKOTA GOVERNOR
KRISTI NOEM



Paving a Path for Economic Progress

A programmer can't do her job without a computer. A farmer can't do his job without a combine. A photographer can't get the job done without a camera.

This year, you've heard me say that South Dakota is open for business. It's true. But if we're going to create jobs that keep our kids here at home, we have to equip South Dakota with the tools that businesses need to thrive. We have to pave the way for economic growth.

Throughout this legislative session, you've heard me set a renewed focus on cleaning up areas of government that hold back economic progress. I've signed bills into law that reduce regulations and make it easier for people to get to work. I testified on a bill that creates a fair, consistent county zoning process for the businesses wanting to create careers in our communities. These are tools that set us up for economic progress and will help us welcome new industries into our state.

Another critical tool is high-speed internet. In today's marketplace, businesses require high-speed connection to stay competitive, market their product or service, or reach new clients. It's not an optional add-on that businesses can function without – it's a necessary tool.

Last year, we made a great first step in our efforts to ensure every South Dakotan has access to quality broadband. Working with the legislature, I allocated \$5 million to be used as matching funds for broadband improvement. Our investment saw a five-to-one return – connecting 6,500 homes and nearly 150 businesses.

A piece of this story that doesn't often get told is that we didn't do this alone. With the help of industry leaders and federal investment, we were able to identify our gaps and outline a plan to bridge them.

At the end of February, Mona Thompson, the General Manager of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Telephone Authority, told me about a teacher in Timber Lake who would send videos to her students. Students would have to start downloading the video before they left for school, and when they'd come home from school, it'd still be downloading. "The quality of internet was slow as molasses," she said, but because of the state's partnership in securing broadband for her area, internet is now "as fast as lightning."

I'm proud of the work we've done, but it's just a drop in the bucket. This year, I have requested another \$5 million to continue equipping businesses in every corner of our state with this necessary tool for growth. Working with the legislature, I'm confident we can find a way to secure broadband to develop the next generation of South Dakota communities and pave the way for economic progress.

Dragr places third at state wrestling

Dragr Monson placed third in the state wrestling tournament held this weekend in Sioux Falls. Monson won the first two matches, then got pinned by a Canton wrestler, and then came back to win the last two matches to take third place.

B-106: Christian Ehresman (27-16)

Champ. Round 1 - Kasen Konstanz (Kimball/White Lake/Platte-Geddes) 40-9 won by major decision over Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 27-16 (MD 15-5)

Cons. Round 1 - Maxton Brozik (Winner Area) 27-25 won by decision over Christian Ehresman (Groton Area) 27-16 (Dec 9-2)

B-113: Dragr Monson (40-8) placed 3rd and scored 18.5 team points.

Champ. Round 1 - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 40-8 won by tech fall over Logan Buseman (Parker) 29-25 (TF-1.5 4:59 (18-3))

Quarterfinal - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 40-8 won by decision over Jagger Tyler (Wagner) 22-8 (Dec 1-0)

Semifinal - Andy Meyer (Canton) 42-5 won by fall over Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 40-8 (Fall 3:29)

Cons. Semi - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 40-8 won by fall over Kaleb Osborn (Winner Area) 36-11 (Fall 2:41)

3rd Place Match - Dragr Monson (Groton Area) 40-8 won by major decision over Bryson Muirhead (Lyman) 48-10 (MD 9-1)

B-160: Thomas Cranford (17-14)

Champ. Round 1 - Spencer Hanson (Kimball/White Lake/Platte-Geddes) 37-12 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 17-14 (Fall 0:49)

Cons. Round 1 - Elijah Steele (Custer) 22-24 won by fall over Thomas Cranford (Groton Area) 17-14 (Fall 1:35)

B-182: Lane Krueger (24-19) scored 1.0 team points.

Champ. Round 1 - Tanner Meyers (Canton) 16-4 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 24-19 (Fall 0:09)

Cons. Round 1 - Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 24-19 won by decision over Gabe Fanning (Bennett County) 28-19 (Dec 7-6)

Cons. Round 2 - Joey Wheeler (Potter County) 34-10 won by fall over Lane Krueger (Groton Area) 24-19 (Fall 1:11)



Dragr Monson pinned Kaleb Osborn of Winner Area in 2:41. The win advanced Monson to the third place match at the state wrestling tournament. (Photo from Susan Foster's Facebook Page)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 20 of 63



G-Force wins State Judges Award

The G-Force team of Garrett Schultz, Travis Townsend and Tannor McGannon earned the Judges Award at the Robotics State tournament held Saturday. (Photo from Kellie Townsend's Facebook Page)

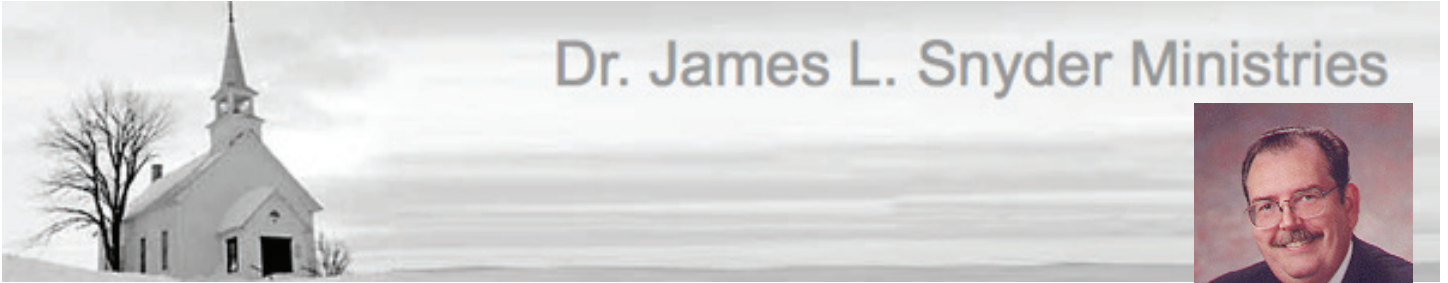


Lane receives State Coaches Volunteer Award

Congratulations to Jim Lane for receiving the Coaches Volunteer Award at the Robotics State tournament today! So well deserved! (Photo from Kellie Townsend's Facebook Page)

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 21 of 63



In My Humble Opinion

It was a busy week last week. I was chasing my tail so much, I thought I would actually catch it. What I would do after I caught it is beyond my imagination.

However, I was quite busy, and then the mail came.

Whenever the mail comes, I'm always expecting "the check." Rarely do I get it, but my expectation is that I will get a \$10,000 check. I don't know from whom.

"What are you going to the mailbox for?" The Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage would ask. "Are you looking for your \$10,000 check?"

One of these days, I am going to get a \$10,000 check and rub it in her face before I take it to the bank.

This time the mail brought me a package from one of my relatives. It turned out to be old pictures of my family from decades ago. Most of them were black-and-white, so you can imagine how old they were.

As I was going through these photographs, I could hardly recognize most of them. According to the letter in the package, they were my relatives. Most had been dead for 40 to 50 years. I cannot remember what I had for breakfast this morning, let alone a relative 50 years ago.

Then I hit that "aha" moment. There was a picture of a relative I had long ago forgotten about. Why I forgot about him, I will never know. He actually died almost 50 years ago.

When I saw that picture, I had to call my wife over to show her.

"This is a picture of Uncle Frank." I leaned back and smiled, thinking of him and all the antics associated with him.

"Have I ever met your Uncle Frank?"

I looked at my wife, smiled, and said, "No, my dear, you would have remembered him if you did."

The memories of good old Uncle Frank began marinating in my head, and stories began developing. If anybody could screw up a situation, it was good old Uncle Frank.

He was a good person in many regards; very congenial and generous and happy all the time. However, his timing was not really that good, and what he said never aligned with what was happening at the time.

His wife, Aunt Betty, always got frustrated at her husband when he was interrupting her conversations. He did that quite often, much to her chagrin. And believe me, her "cha" didn't grin that much.

In the middle of a conversation, Uncle Frank would break in and say, "In my humble opinion..." Then he would take the conversation off in the direction nobody could have ever expected. He had the knack of messing up conversations to the point that nobody knew what anybody was talking about.

If, for example, somebody was talking about politics, Uncle Frank would say, "In my humble opinion, the Red Sox are going to win the World Series..." And for the next five or six minutes, he would be talking about baseball, which had nothing whatsoever to do with the conversation he interrupted.

By the time he was done, nobody could remember what in the world they were talking about before.

I never really knew if Uncle Frank did that on purpose or if it just came naturally to him. I would have liked to have gotten to know him a little better because I am suspicious that he did it most of the time on purpose.

One time, I wish that I could have been there then, it all came to a head.

I think it was in a church setting, but a group of people was together talking about something. I do not know what the conversation was about, and I wish I'd been there. But it was at that point that everything



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 22 of 63

came to a head with good old Uncle Frank.

As the conversation was getting along all of a sudden, Uncle Frank said, "In my humble opinion..." At that moment, Aunt Betty had enough, jumped in, and took control of the situation.

"Frank," she said in a very stern voice, "you are not humble, and nobody is interested in any opinion you might have."

According to the report I was given, everybody went silent and tried looking in the opposite direction because Aunt Betty was staring at Uncle Frank as he had never been stared at before or since.

From that moment on, nobody ever heard Uncle Frank ever say again the words, "In my humble opinion..."

My wife laughed rather heartily as I told her this story. I wish she could have met him because he was quite a character. I must say, as I think about that situation, my wife reminds me a lot of good ole Aunt Betty.

Later on that day, we were involved in something; she was talking about the plans that we needed to make, and I interrupted her by saying, "In my humble opinion..." That is as far as I got because she immediately jumped in and said, "Now I know who reminds me of Uncle Frank."

A verse of Scripture came to my mind at that time. "Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Peter 5:5).

What I have learned is that humble people rarely give their opinion.



Land ownership question hovers over \$185 million Sioux Falls redevelopment plan

Bart Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Questions about the ownership of a strip of land within the Sioux Steel Co. site in downtown Sioux Falls has created a new, unexpected hurdle for the proposed \$185 million redevelopment of the property.

The land in question was once a channel of the Big Sioux River and has ownership origins that stretch back beyond South Dakota statehood all the way to the presidency of Abraham Lincoln.

Archived press clippings appear to indicate that the channel that separated Seney Island from the western bank of the Big Sioux River was filled in and, along with the former island, was turned into usable land in the early 1900s. Sioux Steel Co. has owned and operated on the site since 1918.

Officials in the state School and Public Lands and Attorney General's offices are reviewing maps, historic documents and other information to determine whether the state may have a claim of ownership to the strip of land.

Though it is uncertain what action, if any, the state might take if it claims to own the land, the state could demand financial compensation for its use, potentially adding to the cost of the redevelopment project. Theoretically, if deemed the owner of the land, the state could stand in the way of the redevelopment of the property.

A team of experts with the Lloyd Cos., which was selected by Sioux Steel ownership to redevelop the site, has completed its own investigation that the firm says indicates the land is not state-owned and is available for legal sale and development.

Jake Quasney, executive vice president of development at the Sioux Falls-based Lloyd Cos., said part of the channel route is within the roughly 11-acre site that Lloyd hopes to redevelop. Lloyd wants to turn the site on Sixth Street in Sioux Falls into an urban community with riverfront hotel and convention center, residential tower, parking ramp and an office and retail complex on the north end of downtown Sioux Falls.

According to South Dakota law, the state can claim ownership of any land beneath a waterway that is now or ever has been navigable. The key question state officials are investigating is whether the former channel was navigable.

Quasney said Lloyd and Sioux Steel are confident that their research proves the channel was not navigable



The Sioux Steel Co. property as viewed from the east bank of the Big Sioux River just north of East Sixth Street in Sioux Falls. A strip of land that used to be a river channel runs through part of the steel company property that is targeted for a massive, \$185 million redevelopment plan. Photo: Bart Pfankuch,

South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 24 of 63

and should not be considered state land.

"From our title perspective, and we have a lot of the history that exists there, from our perspective it pretty well supports that the land is available to us," Quasney said.

The uncertainty over the land ownership has arisen at a critical time for the project, he said.

In January, Lloyd Cos. received approval of a Tax-Increment Financing district from the city of Sioux Falls that will provide the firm with \$21.5 million in tax benefits. The company said after the TIF approval that construction on the project could begin as early as August 2020. Project timelines call for full completion in spring 2022.

"We're at a weird point here if this was to cause everything to go south," Quasney said of the project, adding that Lloyd had already spent \$3.5 million on planning. "For a family [the Rysdons] that has operated a business for 100 years, they stand to lose something. But we're also talking millions of dollars here that this could cause an issue with."

Amy L. Ellis, a legal representative for Sioux Steel, said the sale of land to Lloyd would occur before any development would take place. She said the steel company, which is moving its operations to Lennox, S.D., is confident it owns the channel land free and clear.

"Sioux Steel has operated on the property for over 100 years and acquired the property after it was filled in," Ellis wrote to News Watch in an email. "We believe that title properly rests with Sioux Steel and can be conveyed to Lloyd Companies for the project."

Ellis said the location of the channel land is not precisely known but that it appears to wind through the southern and northern edges of the redevelopment site.

The land-ownership questions were initially raised by Steve Wegman of Pierre, a former state policy analyst who now runs the South Dakota Renewable Energy Association.

Wegman said he first heard about the mystery of the former island and channel when he was a paperboy for the Sioux Falls Argus Leader and a customer on his route told him about it.

Decades later, when the Sioux Steel redevelopment project first made news in 2018, Wegman — a trained surveyor who is also an amateur historian — said he began researching the history and ownership of the island and channel.

His research took him back to the original land warrant, which showed that 160 acres was given by the U.S. Congress to Verinique Bicott, the widow of Louis Bicott, who was under the command of a Capt. Knagg in Michigan when he was killed in the War of 1812.

A federal document later shows that after changing hands a few times, the land was formally deeded by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863 to Wilmot W. Brookings, who served as provisional governor of the Dakota Territories and later as a South Dakota Supreme Court justice (and who is the namesake of both Wilmot and Brookings, S.D.)

Wegman said his research raised questions about who owned the island and also who filled in the western channel. He said his findings appeared to indicate that the ownership of the island and channel land



This 1859 survey map of early Sioux Falls shows not only the large island in the Big Sioux River north of downtown but also appears to indicate that the channel on the west side, or left of the island in the image, was fairly wide. The island was connected to the west bank of the river after the western channel was filled during the early 1900s, and the land is now home to the Sioux Steel Company. Map courtesy Steve Wegman

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 25 of 63

was unclear but is probably held by the state.

"It's an interesting story all around," Wegman said. "But the bottom line is that somebody does not have clear ownership of that property."

Wegman said he has a long-held belief that the state has been too quick to give away its land, particularly highly valuable land. The state also has lost out on opportunities to preserve valuable land, he said.

In late 2019, Wegman took his findings to Ryan Brunner, commissioner of the state School and Public Lands. Brunner said he began his own research in February and that he eventually reached out to Lloyd Cos. to inform them the land ownership was in question.

For a time, it appeared possible the state could also make a claim of ownership to the former island, which is also now part of the Sioux Steel property.

But Brunner said the state's research showed the island property is not subject to state ownership.

Brunner said state lawyers had concluded that the estimated 18- to 20-acre island parcel is legally owned by Sioux Steel and can be sold and redeveloped without title concern.

According to statute 5-2-4, the state relinquishes ownership of islands or sand bars in waterways if the land is "conveyed" or given by the state or federal government to a private party.

In this case, since the federal government deeded the full 160 acres of Bicott land to Wilmot W. Brookings in 1863, the state's current position is that it was conveyed to Brookings and is therefore no longer state land.

"The state has never been the owner of that land," Brunner said. "I have notified Lloyd Companies that the island is not owned by the state."

Yet the historic and modern status of the former channel is less clear, Brunner said.

In general, state law 43-17-3 says that waterways that are navigable, or were at some point, remain state owned even if they fill in naturally or by outside means.

"Islands and accumulations of lands formed in the beds of streams which are navigable and in meandered lakes belong to the state, if there is no title or prescription to the contrary," the law says.

That puts great importance on whether the channel was navigable before being filled in.

Brunner said Lloyd had provided the state with "an extensive report and engineering opinion" that appears to show the western channel was not navigable and therefore is not state land.

But the state has not yet made its determination on the ownership of the channel lands — either whether they were navigable or whether the state will claim ownership, Brunner said.

A team of legal and engineering experts in the state Attorney General's Office is reviewing the Lloyd report and is doing its own research. Brunner said the state's opinion on the channel ownership could be released within the next few weeks.

Brunner refused to take a position on whether the channel is state-owned, but he said it is incumbent on the state to do the research to make a fair ruling.

"We are having experts review it because we are trying to get more assurances tied to the possibilities there; we're doing our due diligence because there's a lot of different factors at play," Brunner said.

Quasney said in an email to News Watch that the firm's experts had found published materials indicating



Amateur historian Steve Wegman looks over a mid-20th century map of Sioux Falls in his office in Pierre. Wegman, an amateur historian who is director of the South Dakota Renewable Energy Association, first alerted state officials about questions over ownership of land on the Sioux Steel Company site that is poised for redevelopment. Photo: Bart

Pfankuch, South Dakota News Watch

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 26 of 63

that before being filled in (possibly by a railroad company or Sioux Falls Light and Power), the western channel was filled with stagnant water and would flow only during flooding events.

"The reality was that the area was likely surrounded by stagnant water, and was an area that largely housed vagrants," Quasney wrote. "A number of pictures are seen where people are taking horses and buggies across the low lying area where stagnant water would sit and where water would run during flood stage waters."

However, some old maps of the island and river channels surrounding it appear to show a fairly large river opening to the west of the island. In maps from 1859 and 1881 discovered by Wegman, the cartographers both drew eastern and western channels of roughly equal width around the island, and one map even shows the western channel as wider than the eastern channel.

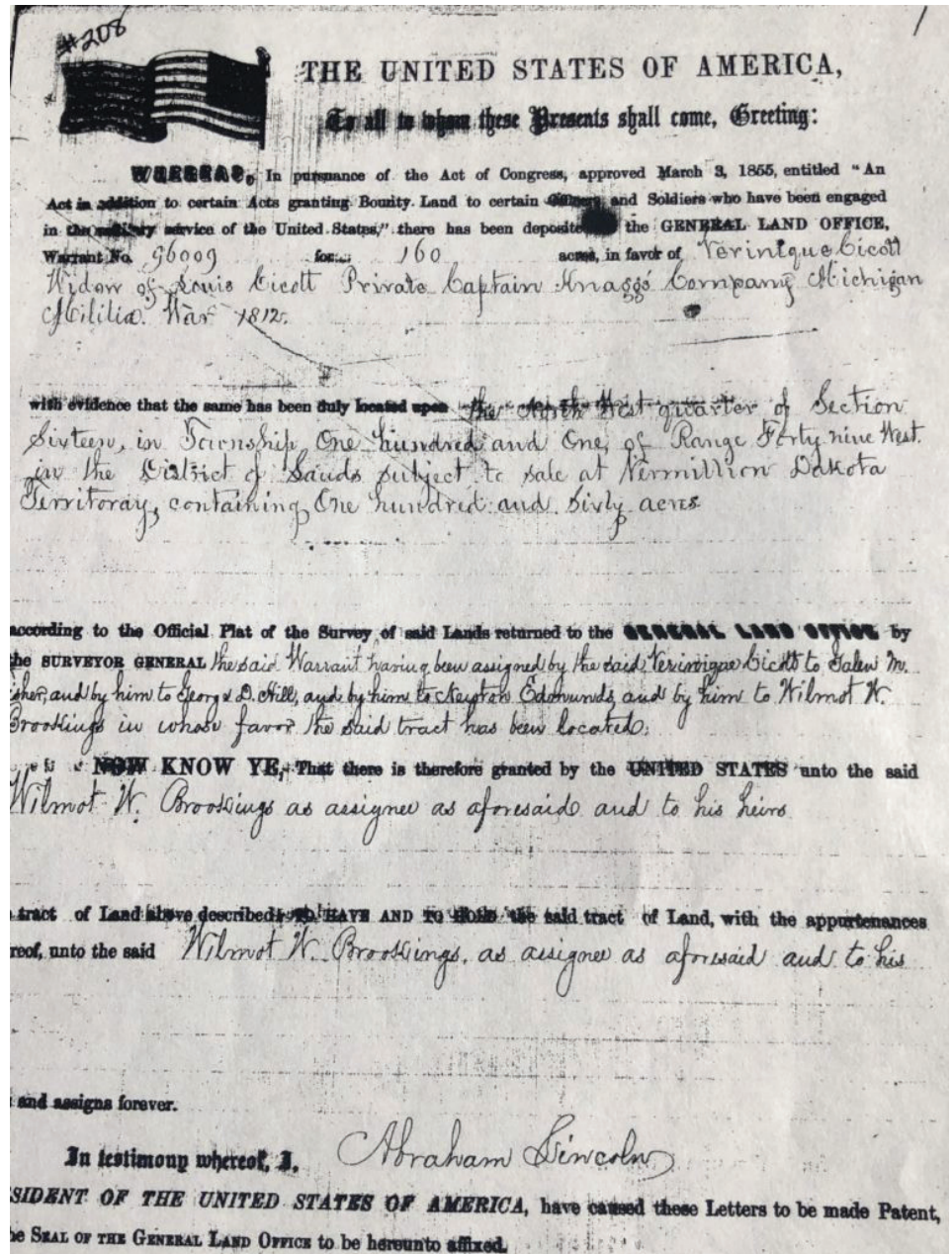
A 2016 Argus Leader article by historian Eric Renshaw noted that Seney Island, also known as Picnic Island and Brookings Island, was a popular destination for revelers in the late 1800s but devolved into "a dumping ground for garbage" in the early 1900s.

Renshaw wrote that the island was separated from the shore by "a shallow channel of water on its western side that needed to be forded" to reach the island.

The importance and sensitivity of the state's ruling and the fact that it could affect a major redevelopment plan in the state's largest city is not lost on the state, Brunner said.

"It's a very large project we're talking about, and there's a lot that goes into that," he said.

The office of School and Public Lands is responsible for managing and renting state-owned lands that were given to South Dakota by the federal government at statehood in 1889. The lands are mainly rented



This federal document from September 1863 shows that 160 acres of land in what would become Sioux Falls was deeded to Verinique Bicott, the widow of a soldier killed in the War of 1812. It further indicates that the land changed hands prior to the signing of this document, which transferred ownership to Wilmot Brookings. The document has the signature of President Abraham Lincoln, though the signature does not appear to match other signatures made by Lincoln's hand.

Image courtesy of Steve Wegman

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 27 of 63

by farmers and ranchers, who pay about \$15 million in leasing fees to the state each year. Most of that revenue is used to fund K-12 and higher education in the state, Brunner said.

While other, energy-rich Great Plains states often face land-ownership questions surrounding navigable or meandering waterways arising from mining interests, South Dakota rarely faces those issues.

The Sioux Steel case has led him to do research and to learn more about South Dakota laws.

For example, Brunner pointed out that when heavy rains cause a navigable waterway to change course, the state maintains ownership of the new river or stream bed but ownership of the newly dried portion is transferred to the landowner who lost land when the waterway changed course.

State residents depend on his office to review the ownership of land and, if it is state-owned, possibly to receive compensation for future use, he said.

"As a public entity, we need to do that due diligence," Brunner said. "Once the information comes back, then we will have to review other caveats about meandering waters and changes that have taken place since the 1880s."



This historic hand-drawn map shows the large island and channels surrounding it in the Big Sioux River at the north end of downtown Sioux Falls. The channel was filled in during the early 1900s and the island and channel lands became part of what is now the site of the Sioux Steel Company. Map

courtesy Steve Wegman

ABOUT BART PFANKUCH

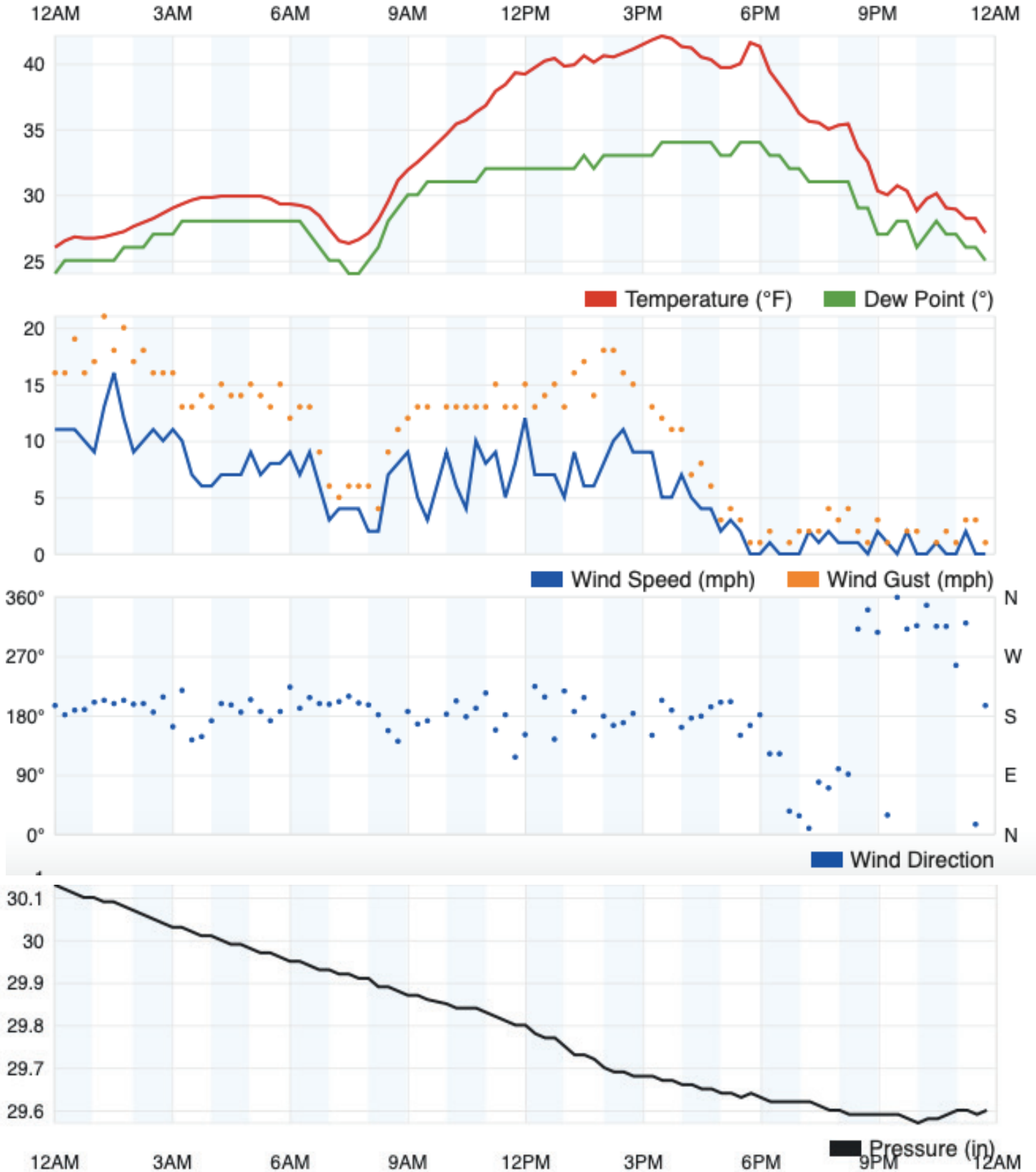


Bart Pfankuch, Rapid City, S.D., is the content director for South Dakota News Watch. A Wisconsin native, he is a former editor of the Rapid City Journal and also worked at newspapers in Florida. Bart has spent more than 30 years as a reporter, editor and writing coach.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 28 of 63

Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 30 of 63

Today in Weather History

March 1, 1970: Freezing rain and drizzle impacted much of South Dakota on March 1, 1970. Ice accumulation up to 1/8 of an inch thick was reported in Rapid City, with heavier amounts in the northwestern part of the state. Some utility lines were broken, but there was no extensive line damage. Also, some schools were closed due to icy roads.

March 1, 1998: An incredible amount of snow falls on Lead, South Dakota from February 25 through March 1. The official storm total was 103 inches for five days.

March 1, 2014: Arctic air combined with strong northwest winds brought bitter cold wind chills to central and northeast South Dakota east of the Missouri River. Bitter wind chills of 35 below to around 40 below occurred. Some of the coldest wind chills include; 39 degrees below zero west of Long Lake; 40 degrees below zero at Highmore; 41 degrees below zero near Roy Lake; and 42 degrees below zero at Summit.

1910: The worst avalanche in US history regarding lives lost occurred in Wellington, Washington. Heavy snow occurred from February 26 through the 28th, which blocked the rail lines. Weather conditions turned on the 28th with a thunderstorm occurring over the area. Just after 1 AM on March 1st, a ten to 14 foot high mass of snow broke free from the mountainside and pushed the trains 150 feet down into the Tye River Gorge. In all, 96 people were killed by this avalanche.

1914 - High winds and heavy snow crippled New Jersey and New York State. Two feet of snow were reported at Ashbury Park, and at New York City the barometric pressure dropped to a record 28.38 inches. The storm caused complete disruption of electric power in New Jersey. (David Ludlum)

1980 - Norfolk, VA, received 13.7 inches of snow to push their season total to a record 41.9 inches exceeding their previous record by more than four inches. (David Ludlum)

1980 - An unusually large Florida tornado, 500 yards in width at times, killed one person and caused six million dollars damage near Fort Lauderdale. (The Weather Channel)

1983 - A ferocious storm battered the Pacific coast. The storm produced heavy rain and gale force winds resulting in flooding and beach erosion, and in the mountains produced up to seven feet of snow in five days. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - A storm crossing the Great Lakes Region produced heavy snow and gale force winds from Wisconsin to northern New England, with eight inches of snow reported at Ironwood MI. (The National Weather Summary)

1988 - Thunderstorms produced large hail and damaging winds in north central Texas. Baseball size hail was reported at Lake Kickapoo. Hail fell continuously for thirty minutes in the Iowa Park area of Wichita Falls. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

2006: The day's high temperature of 93 degrees at the Dallas/Fort Worth Airport in Texas broke a 107-year-old record. Other hot North Texas cities included Wichita Falls with 96 degrees and Fort Worth Meacham Airport with 90 degrees.

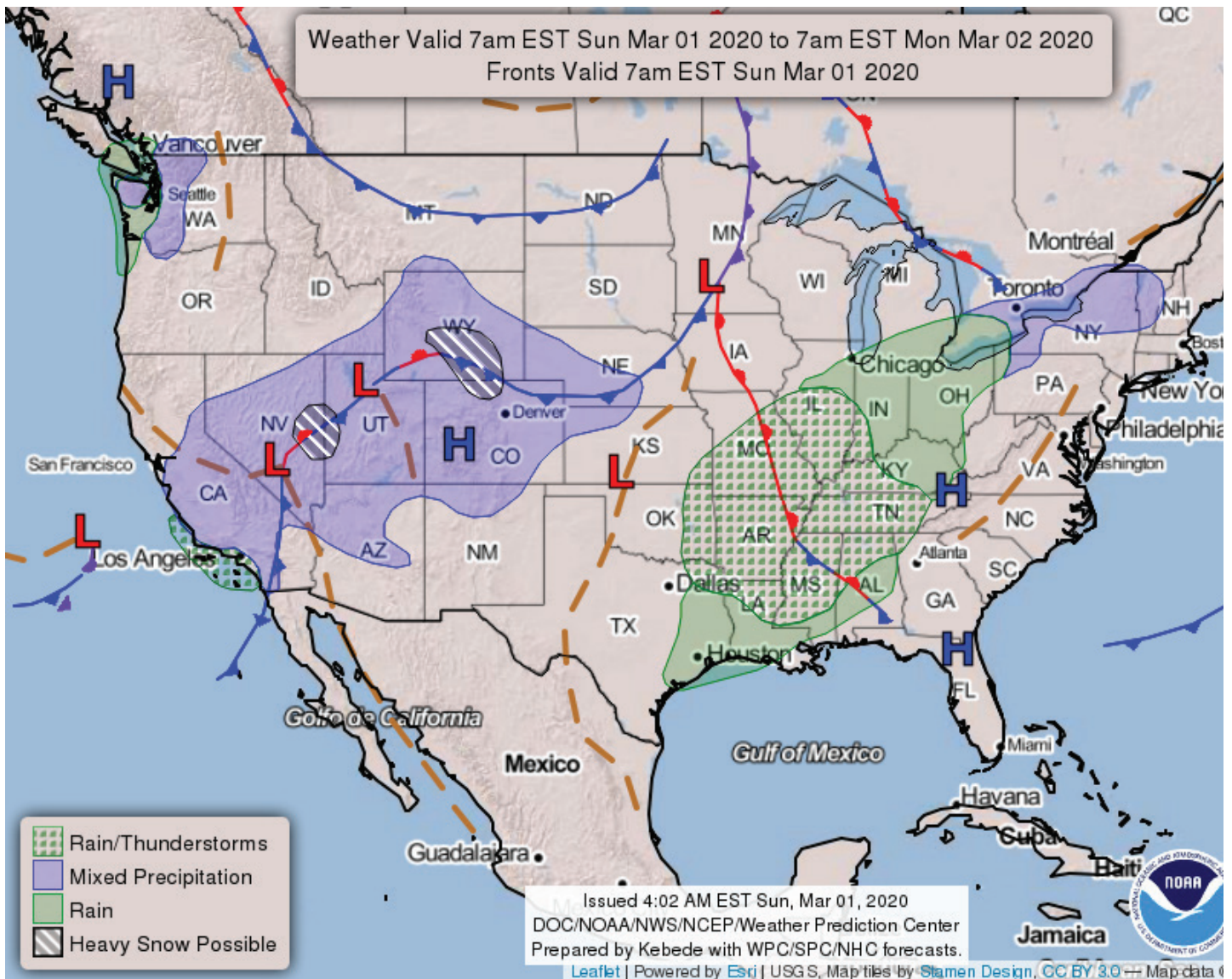
Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 31 of 63

Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

High Temp: 42 °F at 3:32 PM
Low Temp: 26 °F at 12:00 AM
Wind: 21 mph at 1:07 AM
Snow

Record High: 73° in 1992
Record Low: -29° in 1962
Average High: 33°F
Average Low: 13°F
Average Precip in Feb.: 0.55
Precip to date in Feb.: 0.00
Average Precip to date: 1.02
Precip Year to Date: 0.35
Sunset Tonight: 6:22 p.m.
Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:09 a.m.



Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 32 of 63



WHAT IF IT'S YOUR LAST DAY?

A radio talk show host asked his audience an interesting question. "If you knew that this was the last day of your life, what would you do?" The responses were overwhelming and most enlightening.

The first caller said, "I'd hurry to an organ donor bank and make sure that some worthy persons would benefit from my body parts."

Another said, "I would crowd everything that I thought was fun in this, my last day. I'd want to go out laughing."

The third caller said, "I would phone all of my friends and tell them how much I appreciated all that they had done for me. I'd want each of them to know how much our friendship meant."

Finally, one said, "I'd want to take time to be alone with God and pray and make sure that my heart is right with Him. I'd want Him to know how much I was looking forward to meeting Him, too."

Although it is not a pleasant thought, we each have a date with death. Few know the day or the hour. But we all know for certain that there is life after this life.

Prayer: Father, "Now is the acceptable time" for us to be sure that Your Son is our Savior and Lord. May we live in light of eternity, making the most of each moment. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: 2 Corinthians 6:2 For God says, "At just the right time, I heard you. On the day of salvation, I helped you." Indeed, the "right time" is now. Today is the day of salvation.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 33 of 63

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)
 - 05/11/2020 Girls High School Golf Meet at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 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
 - 06/20/2020 Shriner's Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 06/22/2020 Olive Grove Golf Course Ladies Invitational
 - 06/26/2020 Groton Businesses Golf Tournament at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 07/04/2020 Firecracker Golf Tourney at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 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
 - 08/07/2020 Wine on Nine Event at Olive Grove Golf Course
 - 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 Olive Grove Golf Course Tour of Homes & Holiday Party
 - 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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 34 of 63

News from the Associated Press

SD Lottery

By The Associated Press undefined

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

Dakota Cash

04-20-21-25-28

(four, twenty, twenty-one, twenty-five, twenty-eight)

Estimated jackpot: \$87,000

Lotto America

19-30-32-35-36, Star Ball: 2, ASB: 5

(nineteen, thirty, thirty-two, thirty-five, thirty-six; Star Ball: two; ASB: five)

Estimated jackpot: \$8.45 million

Mega Millions

Estimated jackpot: \$65 million

Powerball

24-44-46-50-51, Powerball: 13, Power Play: 3

(twenty-four, forty-four, forty-six, fifty, fifty-one; Powerball: thirteen; Power Play: three)

Saturday's Scores

By The Associated Press

BOYS PREP BASKETBALL=

Brandon Valley 51, St. Thomas More 50

Sioux Falls Roosevelt 53, Sioux Falls Lincoln 50, OT

Sioux Falls Washington 71, Aberdeen Central 43

Yankton 81, Douglas 31

GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL=

Brandon Valley 56, St. Thomas More 53

New Underwood 38, Wall 22

Sioux Falls Washington 42, Aberdeen Central 36

Yankton 63, Douglas 32

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

South Dakota tops N. Dakota 77-67 behind balanced scoring

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Tyler Peterson had 17 points to lead five South Dakota players in double figures as the Coyotes defeated North Dakota 77-67 on Saturday.

Triston Simpson added 15 points for the Coyotes (20-11, 10-6 Summit League). Tyler Hagedorn and Stanley Umude scored 14 each and Cody Kelley had 10. Umude also had six rebounds.

Tied 39-39 at the break, North Dakota scored a season-low 28 points in the second half. The Coyotes made 19 of 26 free throws while North Dakota was 5-for-10.

Marlon Stewart had 19 points for the Fighting Hawks (13-17, 7-9) before fouling out. Filip Rebraca added 17 points and 12 rebounds. De'Sean Allen-Eikens had 15 points and eight rebounds.

The teams meet again in the Summit League quarterfinal for the third and sixth seeds on March 8.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and http://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 35 of 63

Elements of this story were generated by Automated Insights, <http://www.automatedinsights.com/ap>, using data from STATS LLC, <https://www.stats.com>

No. 20 South Dakota women get perfect Summit League

VERMILLION, S.D. (AP) — Ciara Duffy scored 17 points, Taylor Frederick added 15 and No. 20 South Dakota rolled to its second undefeated Summit League season and school-record 27th win with a 76-47 win over North Dakota on Saturday.

Reserves Monica Arens and Hannah Sjerven added 11 points apiece for the Coyotes (27-2, 16-0), who posted the only other perfect season in conference history in 2017-18. South Dakota won 26 regular-season games in 2007-08 and last year.

Jaclyn Jarnot scored eight points for North Dakota (15-14, 6-10), which shot 29% and had 23 turnovers. South Dakota, only leading by five at halftime, took over by outscoring North Dakota 28-8 in the third quarter. The Coyotes were 11 of 16, making both of their 3-pointers while the Fighting Hawks were 3 of 17, missing all four of their shots from distance.

Arens had all 11 of her points in the third. Duffy finished with seven rebounds and five assists. The Coyotes average margin of victory in league games was 32 points.

More AP women's basketball: <https://apnews.com/Womenscollegebasketball> and https://twitter.com/AP_Top25

Thousands of migrants mass at Greek border, more flee Syria

By **COSTAS KANTOURIS** and **ANDREW WILKS** Associated Press

KASTANIES, Greece (AP) — The United Nations said Sunday that at least 13,000 people were massed on Turkey's land border with Greece, after Turkey officially declared its western borders were open to migrants and refugees hoping to head into the European Union.

Turkey's decision to open the borders with Greece came amid a military escalation in Syria's northwest that has led to growing direct clashes between Turkish and Syrian forces.

In Syria, the government said it was closing its airspace for any flights or drones across the country's northwestern region. It said any aircraft that penetrates Syrian airspace will be treated as hostile and shot down.

The announcement came after two days of Turkish drone attacks in Idlib province that Syrian activists said caused heavy losses to Syrian government forces. These confrontations have added to soaring tensions between Turkey and Russia, which support opposing sides of the Syrian civil war.

"Any jet that violates our airspace will be treated as a hostile target that must be shot down and prevented from achieving its goals," the Syrian military statement said. It was not immediately clear whether the statement referred to friendly Russian jets in addition to Turkish aircraft.

The statement came shortly after the Syrian army shot down a Turkish drone over the town of Saraqeb in Idlib, according to military-run media.

Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar, speaking from military headquarters near the Syrian border, said Turkey aimed to confront Syrian government forces rather than Russian troops. He called on Moscow to persuade Syrian President Bashar Assad to withdraw to 2018 cease-fire lines on the edges of Idlib.

Referring to losses inflicted on Syria, he said Turkey had "neutralized" more than 2,200 Syrian troops, 103 tanks and eight helicopters.

"The Spring Shield operation, which was launched following the abominable attack in Idlib on Feb. 27, continues successfully," Akar said, referring to air strikes that killed 33 Turkish soldiers.

The operation is Turkey's fourth in the war-torn country since 2016.

The heavy fighting in northwest Syria has also triggered a humanitarian catastrophe and the single largest wave of displacement in the nine-year Syrian civil war.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 36 of 63

Ankara is worried it might come under renewed international pressure to open its now sealed border with Syria and offer refuge to hundreds of thousands more Syrian civilians. Turkey already hosts 3.6 million Syrian refugees.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's decision to open his country's borders with Europe made good on a longstanding threat to let refugees into the continent. His announcement marked a dramatic departure from the current policy and an apparent attempt to pressure Europe into offering Turkey more support in dealing with the fallout from the Syrian war to its south.

The U.N.'s International Organization for Migration said Sunday that by the previous evening, its staff working along the Turkish-Greek land border "had observed at least 13,000 people gathered at the formal border crossing points at Pazarkule and Ipsala and multiple informal border crossings, in groups of between several dozen and more than 3,000."

Greek authorities fired tear gas and stun grenades through Saturday to prevent repeated attempts by a crowd of more than 4,000 people massed at the border crossing in Kastanies to cross, and fought a cat-and-mouse game with groups cutting holes in a border fence along the border to crawl through.

Erdogan's communications director Fahrettin Altun later said Turkey had changed its focus to preparing for the possibility of new arrivals from Syria "instead of preventing refugees who intend to migrate to Europe."

"Europe and others must take robust action to address this monumental challenge," Altun said. "We can't be expected to do this on our own."

He accused critics of Turkey's refugee policy of "rampant hypocrisy."

He claimed 80,888 had left Turkey for Europe "in the past several days" and called on Europe to share the burden of looking after refugees. But there was no evidence to support his claim. Greece has shut its border, and there were a few dozen arrests of people who managed to cross through the border, Greek authorities have said.

Greek Deputy Defense Minister Alkiviadis Stefanis told the local broadcaster Skai there were around 9,600 attempts to illegally cross Greece's border during the night Saturday to Sunday. Stefanis said all were successfully thwarted. Previously several dozen migrants had managed to make it through.

Greek officials said they arrested 66 migrants Friday, 17 of whom were sentenced to 3.5 years in jail for entering the country illegally. All Afghans, they were the first migrants sentenced for illegal entry since 2014. On Saturday, Greece arrested another 70 people who tried to cross the land border illegally.

Stavros Zamalides, president of the local community in Kastanies, said Turkish soldiers were actively helping people cross the Greek border clandestinely.

"Turkish soldiers with cutters in their hands were cutting the wires of the fence to lead the illegal migrants" into crossing the border, he said. "The attempt was thwarted by the intervention of our own patrol that happened to be passing that area on patrol at the time, and it repaired the damage in the fence," he added.

Twenty-year-old Afghan Ayamuddin Azimi made it to the Greek border village of Nea Vyssa along with a compatriot. He said Turkey had opened its borders "to save the refugees" but when they got to the frontier they found the Greek side closed.

He crossed clandestinely, he said. "What can I do? We have nothing to do. This is our life."

Others were making the short but often perilous sea crossing from the Turkish coast to the Greek islands.

Initial figures collected by Greece's Merchant Marine Ministry from the coast guard around the eastern Aegean islands showed a clear increase in the number of people arriving by dinghies from the nearby Turkish coast.

By midday Sunday, the ministry said initial figures indicated 390 people had arrived since Sunday morning in several boats. The vast majority arrived on the island of Lesbos, with smaller numbers on Chios and Samos. More were believed to be attempting to reach the islands.

In parallel, the heavy fighting in northwest Syria has pushed nearly 950,000 displaced Syrian civilians to flee toward the border with Turkey.

Turkey is a strong backer of the rebels in Syria's Idlib province. But the presence of thousands of Turkish troops there has done little to stop Assad's relentless campaign to seize the last rebel-held territories.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 37 of 63

Dozens of Turkish soldiers have been killed by the Russian-backed Syrian government forces around Idlib in recent days.

Erdogan has warned of an "imminent" operation against Assad's forces unless they pull back from Turkish lines in Syria by the end of February.

As that deadline passed Saturday night, Turkish drones bombed Syrian government targets in Idlib, and Turkey-backed rebels shelled Syrian army positions. Fighting raged near the strategic town of Saraqeb as government troops sought to take it back from rebels, opposition activists and Syrian state-media said. The town, which lies on the Damascus-Aleppo highway, had changed hands several times in the last month.

Turkey has lost 55 soldiers in Idlib in February, including 33 killed in an airstrike on Thursday, and now feels the need to respond strongly. Talks between Turkey and Russia, the main power brokers in Syria, have so far failed to defuse tensions.

On Saturday, Erdogan said Turkey would no longer stand in the way of refugees and migrants already in the country who hope to head to Europe.

"We will not close the gates to refugees," he said. "The European Union has to keep its promises. We are not obliged to look after and feed so many refugees."

Under a 6 billion euro deal in 2016, Turkey agreed to stem the tide of refugees to Europe in return for financial aid after more than a million people entered Europe in 2015. It has since accused the EU of failing to honor the agreement. Erdogan has frequently threatened to "open the gates" and allow refugees and migrants to head to Europe unless more international support was provided.

Wilks reported from Ankara, Turkey. Albert Aji in Damascus, Syria, Elena Becatoros in Athens and Zeina Karam in Beirut contributed to this report.

Friendly kissing poses European dilemma as virus spreads

By COLLEEN BARRY Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — When French President Emmanuel Macron leaned in to give Premier Giuseppe Conte the Italian double-cheek kiss not once, but on two separate occasions, during a Franco-Italian summit in Naples this week, it was much more than a greeting.

It was a signal to citizens not to fear their neighbors as a new virus from China spreads, with Italy established as Europe's hotspot.

Friendly kissing in the time of coronavirus has become a fresh dilemma, especially in effusive southern Europe, with perhaps the power to reshape customs. But even more-reserved northerners are grappling with whether to forgo the hallowed handshake.

The government's special commissioner for coronavirus, Angelo Borrelli, has suggested that Italians' demonstrative nature could be contributing to the virus' spread, with more than 1,100 people testing positive and 29 deaths, almost all in the country's north.

But there have been no official edicts on the social custom of kissing, which sociologists say is rooted in Italy's Mediterranean culture as well as its strong family and social structure.

"We have a collective social life that is very florid, very expansive. We have lots of contact, we shake hands, we kiss each other, we hug each other," Borelli told reporters. "Maybe it is better in this period not to shake hands, and do not have too much contact, and try to be a bit less expansive, which is different from how I am."

In neighboring France, Health Minister Olivier Veran on Saturday advised people to cut back on "la bise," the custom in France and elsewhere in Europe of giving greetings with kisses, or air kisses, on the cheeks, along with shaking hands. France, which has had 100 cases and two deaths so far, made a similar recommendation during the swine flu epidemic a decade ago.

In Germany, where children are taught to shake hands with adults and the firmness of the grip can be seen as correlating to personality strength, health experts and doctors are trying to persuade people to quit traditional etiquette.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 38 of 63

At Virchow hospital in Berlin, doctors not only stopped shaking hands with their patients — even non-contagious ones — but are actively encouraging them to follow the example as cases in Germany hit 66. Health experts have been warning that shaking hands is a prime way to spread the disease.

In northern Italy, the virus is taking a deep social toll, curtailing the usual opportunities to meet.

With schools, museums and most public offices officially closed until Monday, many people are staying at home and avoiding all social contact. Italy's financial capital, Milan, is as empty as in the peak summer holiday period, with many companies giving professionals the option to work from home, and some restaurants and neighborhood shops closed because of a lack of business. Ones that remain open are unseasonably empty.

During Milan Fashion Week, cheek kissing was dropped as the week went on and cases spiraled in favor of other acknowledgments, like a little double kiss to fingertips that one fashionista dubbed, "the new coronavirus kiss."

Eleonora Strozzi, marketing manager in a business, WOVO store, specializing in sexy lingerie and erotic accessories that aims to challenge social taboos, said that the virus is teaching Italians boundaries.

"Italians want to be cool with each other, exchange kisses and shake hands. Now they are learning if you are not OK, or if you have doubts, they can create some distance," Strozzi said. "Italians will learn something about consent from this experience."

Marco Pozzi, a film director, met a business contact in a central Milan coffee bar on Friday, unconcerned about the risks of social contact, and was following the same precautions he follows every flu season, including frequent hand-washing. He was critical instead of what he saw as "alarmism" surrounding the virus.

Another meeting involving Pozzi recently in a city office had to be moved to a bar at 5:30 p.m. when emergency measures closed the office, but the bar in turn closed half an hour later because of the same restrictions.

"We ended up finishing the meeting on the sidewalk, talking for an hour in the cold. It was crazy," Pozzi said, adding that "the real Milan is not afraid."

Giampaolo Nuvolati, an urban sociologist at the University of Milan-Bicocca, said Italians' habit of kissing is an expression of trust that is unlikely to be shaken by the virus. But he said something else more fundamental might change.

"Once this is past, we will understand that we cannot confront problems alone, that we need others beyond the family and close group of friends," Nuvolati said. "There is the community, there are institutions. Maybe it will create a broader solidarity, not just restricted to friends and family."

Sylvie Corbet and John Leicester in Paris and Kirsten Grieshaber in Berlin contributed to this report.

Follow AP's coverage of the new coronavirus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak>

Virus outbreak batters economies, raises fear of spread

By FOSTER KLUG Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — Amid fears about where the next outbreak of a fast-spreading new virus would appear, infections and deaths continued to rise across the globe Sunday, emptying streets of tourists and workers, shaking economies and rewriting the realities of daily life.

Panic-buying of daily necessities emerged in Japan, tourist sites across Asia, Europe and the Mideast were deserted, and governments closed schools and banned big gatherings. Amusement parks have been shuttered and concerts cancelled. In Paris, priests stopped placing sacramental bread in worshippers' mouths.

While the new coronavirus has extended its reach across the world, definite geographic clusters of infections were emerging, with Iran, Italy and South Korea seeing rising cases. The United States, meanwhile, recorded its first death, a man in his 50s in Washington state who had underlying health conditions but who hadn't traveled to any affected areas.

"Additional cases in the United States are likely, but healthy individuals should be able to fully recover,"

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 39 of 63

President Donald Trump said at a Saturday briefing, where officials announced heightened warnings about travel to certain regions of Italy and South Korea as well as a ban on travel to Iran.

China on Sunday reported a slight uptick in new cases over the past 24 hours to 573, the first time in five days that number has exceeded 500. They remain almost entirely confined to the hardest-hit province of Hubei and its capital, the epicenter of Wuhan.

The list of countries hit by the virus climbed to nearly 60. More than 86,000 people worldwide have contracted the virus, with deaths topping 2,900.

Many cases of the virus have been relatively mild, and some of those infected apparently show no symptoms at all. That can allow for easier spread, and worries are mounting that prolonged quarantines, supply chain disruptions and a sharp reduction in tourism and business travel could weaken the global economy or even cause a recession.

Around the world, the virus, and the fear that accompanies it, caused turmoil.

Islam's holiest sites were closed to foreign pilgrims, while professional baseball teams played in deserted stadiums in Japan; officials in France advised residents to forgo customary greeting kisses.

South Korea's men's professional basketball league said its regular session would be halted from Sunday, after an infection was reported at a hotel in southern South Korea where a team had stayed.

Tokyo Disneyland and Universal Studios Japan announced they would close, and big events were canceled, including a concert series by the K-pop supergroup BTS.

In France, the archbishop of Paris advised parish priests not to administer communion by placing the sacramental bread in worshippers' mouths. Instead, priests were told to place the bread in their hands.

U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres recommended that a meeting March 9 where about 10,000 people were to commemorate the 25th anniversary of a U.N. conference on women's rights be drastically scaled back because of the spread of COVID-19, the disease the virus causes.

The president of South Korea, the second hardest hit country after China, used a speech marking the 101st anniversary of an anti-Japanese independence uprising to call for national unity to overcome the soaring virus outbreak.

President Moon Jae-in spoke soon after health authorities reported 376 additional cases of coronavirus, raising the total in the country to 3,526.

The Japanese northern island of Hokkaido said Sunday that a man in his 70s died from the virus, becoming the 12th victim in Japan. It was the third fatality in Hokkaido, where 70 people have been infected and a state of emergency declared Friday after clusters of unknown transmission emerged.

Thailand also reported its first death on Sunday, a 35-year old Thai man who worked as a salesperson and had contact with foreign tourists.

Italian authorities say the country now has more than 1,100 coronavirus cases, with 29 deaths so far.

Iran is preparing for the possibility of "tens of thousands" of people getting tested for the virus as the number of confirmed cases spiked again Saturday, an official said. So far, the virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes have killed more than 40 people out of nearly 600 confirmed cases in Iran.

As governments scrambled to control the spread and businesses wrestled with interruptions, researchers working to better understand the disease reported that the death rate may be lower than initially feared as more mild cases are counted.

A study by Chinese researchers published Friday in the New England Journal of Medicine analyzing 1,099 patients at more than 500 hospitals throughout China calculated a death rate of 1.4%, substantially lower than earlier studies that focused on patients in Wuhan, where it started and has been most severe.

Assuming there are many more cases with no or very mild symptoms, "the case fatality rate may be considerably less than 1%," U.S. health officials wrote in an editorial in the journal.

That would make the new virus more like a severe seasonal flu than a disease similar to its genetic cousins SARS, severe acute respiratory syndrome, or MERS, Middle East respiratory syndrome.

There's growing evidence of the vast cost and economic turmoil of the disease that emerged in central China in December. A new report shows a sharp decline in Chinese manufacturing in February after efforts to contain the virus shut down much of the world's second-largest economy. The survey comes as global

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 40 of 63

stock markets fall sharply on fears that the virus will spread abroad.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced a 270 billion yen (\$2.5 billion) emergency economic package to help fight the virus. Abe said at a news conference that Japan is at critical juncture to determine whether the country can keep the outbreak under control ahead of the Tokyo summer Olympics.

Abe, whose has faced criticism for closing schools for more than a month, said the emergency package includes financial support for parents and their employers affected by the closures.

AP writers Hyung-jin Kim in Seoul, Mari Yamaguchi in Tokyo, Joe McDonald in Beijing and Edith M. Lederer at the United Nations contributed to this report.

Trump, on 1st death from virus in US: 'No reason to panic'

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE and ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seeking to reassure the American public, President Donald Trump said there was "no reason to panic" as the new coronavirus claimed its first victim inside the U.S. The White House also announced new restrictions on international travel to prevent its spread.

Trump, speaking Saturday only moments after the death in Washington state was announced, took a more measured approach a day after he complained that the virus threat was being overblown and that his political enemies were perpetuating a "hoax."

"This is very serious stuff," he said, but still insisted the criticism of his administration's handling of the virus outbreak was a hoax.

Trump appeared at a hastily called news conference in the White House briefing room with Vice President Mike Pence and top public health officials to announce that the U.S. was banning travel to Iran and urging Americans not to travel to regions of Italy and South Korea where the virus has been prevalent.

He said 22 people in the U.S. had been stricken by the new coronavirus, of whom one had died while four were deemed "very ill." Additional cases were "likely," he added.

Trump said he was considering additional restrictions, including closing the U.S. border with Mexico in response to the virus' spread, but later added: "This is not a border that seems to be much of a problem right now."

"We're thinking about all borders," he said.

Travel to Iran is already quite limited, though some families are allowed to travel there on a visa. It is one of the seven initial countries on Trump's travel ban list, which means travel from Iran also is already severely restricted.

Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said there was "no evidence of link to travel" abroad in the case of the man who died. The patient was described as being in his late 50s and having a high health risk before contracting the virus. Redfield said the CDC mistakenly told Trump in an earlier briefing that the victim was a woman.

On Friday, health officials confirmed a third case of coronavirus in the U.S. in a person who hadn't traveled internationally or had close contact with anyone who was known to have the virus. The U.S. has about 60 confirmed cases. Trump's tally appeared to exclude cases of Americans repatriated from China or evacuated from the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

The Washington case was the first death in U.S. but not first American to die: A 60-year-old U.S. citizen died in Wuhan in early February.

Trump said healthy Americans should be able to recover if they contract the new virus, as he tried to reassure Americans and global markets spooked by the virus threat.

He encouraged Americans not to alter their daily routines, saying the country is "super prepared" for a wider outbreak, adding "there's no reason to panic at all."

He added he wasn't altering his own routine either. "You're talking about 22 people right now in this whole very vast country. I think we'll be in very good shape."

The president also said he would be meeting with pharmaceutical companies at the White House on

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 41 of 63

Monday to discuss efforts to develop a vaccine to counter the virus.

Trump spoke a day after he had denounced criticism of his response to the threat as a "hoax" cooked up by his political enemies. Speaking at a rally in South Carolina he accused Democrats of "politicizing" the coronavirus threat and boasted about preventive steps he's ordered in an attempt to keep the virus that originated in China from spreading across the United States. Those steps include barring entry by most foreign nationals who had recently visited China.

"They tried the impeachment hoax. ... This is their new hoax," Trump said of Democratic denunciations of his administration's coronavirus response.

Trump said Saturday he was not trying to minimize the threat of the virus.

"Again, the hoax was used in respect to Democrats and what they were saying," he said.

Some Democrats have said Trump should have acted sooner to bolster the U.S. response to the virus. Democratic and Republican lawmakers also have said his request for an additional \$2.5 billion to defend against the virus isn't enough. They've signaled they will provide substantially more funding.

Trump said Democrats want him to fail and argued that steps he's taken so far have kept cases to a minimum and prevented virus deaths in the U.S.

On Saturday, Democratic challenger Joe Biden hit back, saying Trump's use of the word "hoax" when discussing the virus was "absolutely dangerous." Democratic candidate Pete Buttigieg told NBC he was particularly disturbed to hear the word used because "our lives depend on the wisdom and the judgment of the president at a time like this."

But Trump defended his language and emphasized he was not referring to the virus as a hoax, saying that his description referred to "the action that they take to try and pin this on somebody because we've done such a good job."

As global markets plunged this week, Trump predicted they will come back, and encouraged the Federal Reserve to cut interest rates.

"The markets will all come back," he said. "I think the Fed has a very important role, especially psychological. If you look at it, the Fed has a massive impact."

Miller reported from Mountain Lake, Florida. Associated Press writer Kevin Freking contributed to this report.

Takeaways from the South Carolina primary: Joementum

By **NICHOLAS RICCARDI** and **JOSH BOAK** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — South Carolina provided Joe Biden with a lifeline he desperately needed, propelled by the power of the black vote, but his victory does not necessarily provide clarity to the race.

Both Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana, and Sen. Amy Klobuchar finished well behind Biden, but they are still planning to compete in Super Tuesday states. They could draw just enough of the vote to deny Biden the numbers he needs to make the case for a one-on-one competition with Sen. Bernie Sanders.

And if they don't, the larger question for Biden is how he fares against Mike Bloomberg, the billionaire former New York mayor, who has spent more than \$500 million and will be on the ballot for the first time Tuesday.

Other takeaways from the South Carolina primary:

BIDEN MUST BROADEN HIS APPEAL

The win in South Carolina was the first primary victory for Biden in his three presidential campaigns. Super Tuesday will prove whether it signals a resurgence, where party leaders try to coalesce around him, or a mirage. Former Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe endorsed Biden after Saturday's results.

Biden demonstrated his oft-stated appeal to black voters, who historically play a decisive role in determining the Democratic nominee. Now he will have to show that he can broaden that appeal to college-educated suburban women who have been the fulcrum for Democrats in recent elections.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 42 of 63

The former vice president has still got a long way to go.

SANDERS HOPES SECOND IS A BLIP

For one brief moment after his commanding Nevada win, Sanders thought he could win South Carolina. Instead, he showed the limits of his progressive appeal in the South. But you can win the Democratic nomination without winning the South, and Sanders wants to show how on Super Tuesday. He has a commanding lead in polls for the biggest prize on the map, California, and is competitive in every state.

Sanders' schedule shows his confidence — he has campaigned in Massachusetts and will travel to Minnesota on Sunday and Monday, trying to win the home states of rivals Warren and Klobuchar.

But he won't be getting a pass, especially from Bloomberg, who has argued that Sanders' democratic socialism is a loser for Democrats in November.

While Biden is hoping South Carolina puts wind in his sails, Sanders just has to hope the current breeze keeps blowing.

CHECK, PLEASE?

At some point in the nominating process, they stop handing out participation trophies. Klobuchar, Buttigieg and Sen. Elizabeth Warren have yet to prove they can win with diverse coalitions of the Democratic Party.

Now all three will be under varying degrees of pressure to consider dropping out. Among the three, Warren has the most money and organization, but not necessarily the better rationale for staying in the race given the strength of Sanders, the leading progressive.

None of the three has shown any notable appeal to African American voters, and they do not have the time or the resources to focus their campaigns more narrowly with an eye on just winning some delegates to maintain leverage.

Then there is the other billionaire in the race, Tom Steyer, who also ran well behind Biden and Sanders, despite spending more than \$20 million in the state.

WILL BLOOMBERG'S MONEY EQUAL RESULTS?

A few hours before polls closed in South Carolina, Bloomberg announced he was buying three-minute ads on two television networks Sunday night. And that will follow an interview on CBS's "60 Minutes."

Bloomberg hasn't been a factor yet in the early states — he sat them out in favor of an audacious strategy that he could fill the moderate lane if Biden faltered, by spending hundreds of millions on ads in Super Tuesday states.

It's a theory of the case that's never happened at this level of presidential politics. And it is about to be tested. If Bloomberg doesn't prevail and merely fragments the moderate vote, that will be to Sanders' benefit.

At the same time, Bloomberg has to try to recover from his disastrous debut on the debate stage in Las Vegas and a second, still rough, session at the South Carolina debate last Tuesday. The Biden resurgence may drown out his hoped-for position as the most sensible alternative to Sanders.

WITH ONE VOICE, FOR ONCE

For once, self-described moderate and conservative Democrats spoke with something resembling a unified voice. This group has consistently been the majority of voters in previous contests, only to dilute their vote by splitting it among candidates.

But in South Carolina, preliminary results from AP VoteCast found a solid share of moderate and conservative voters — more than half — went for Biden. No more than 1 in 10 backed Buttigieg or Klobuchar.

Still, the survey also hints at the possibility of Sanders, who has dominated among liberals, having some crossover appeal. Among moderates and conservatives, 14% voted for the self-described socialist.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 43 of 63

Weary and divided, Israel goes back to the polls

By JOSEF FEDERMAN Associated Press

JERUSALEM (AP) — For the third time in under a year, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu seeks reelection, and once again the Israeli leader is on the ropes.

After two inconclusive elections last year, opinion polls forecast another stalemate — a troubling scenario for Netanyahu who will go on trial on corruption charges just two weeks after Monday's vote.

This election campaign has been especially tumultuous. President Donald Trump launched his long-awaited Mideast plan, a proposal that heavily favored Israel and was seen as an election gift to Netanyahu. The Israeli leader, meanwhile, was forced to drop his bid for immunity from prosecution, and just this week, Israel battled Gaza militants in a two-day round of fighting.

Monday's election is seen as another referendum on Netanyahu, the country's longest serving prime minister. And once again, the country seems hopelessly divided.

With seeming boundless energy, the 70-year-old Netanyahu has taken to the airwaves and hit the campaign trail, presenting himself to adoring audiences as a global statesman uniquely qualified to lead the country through its many complicated challenges. In recent weeks, he jetted from the White House to Moscow to bring home a young Israeli woman jailed there on drug charges, and flew to Uganda for a meeting with a leader of Sudan, a longtime enemy country.

"We have turned Israel into a world power, a leader in cyber technology, natural gas, water, agriculture, technology, intelligence," Netanyahu boasted at a recent campaign stop.

He claims credit for a strong economy and boasts of his close relationships with world leaders, first and foremost Trump, while deriding opponent Benny Gantz as a lightweight. In a message that has drawn accusations of racism, he also accuses Gantz of plotting with Arab lawmakers to oust him. In recent days, Netanyahu and his Likud surrogates spread unfounded allegations claiming his opponent is corrupt, unstable and susceptible to blackmail by Iran.

"Being prime minister of Israel is a complicated thing, full of pressures 24 hours a day," Netanyahu added. "I don't think Benny Gantz can handle it."

Gantz, a former military chief of staff, has focused his campaign on Netanyahu's character, saying a man accused of serious crimes is unfit to lead. He has painted Netanyahu as an out-of-touch egomaniac obsessed with remaining in power and escaping justice, while portraying himself as a moderate alternative to the polarizing prime minister.

"Netanyahu, look me in the eye. Because of your obsession with evading trial, you're lying, attacking, dividing, mudslinging, spreading malicious rumors and inciting. Netanyahu, you're poisoning Israel," Gantz said last week. "Netanyahu, you've lost it, and you're unworthy of being prime minister for even a single day longer."

Weekend polls, the last to be published before the vote, showed Gantz's Blue and White and Netanyahu's Likud party in a tight race, though Gantz's party has shown some small signs of slippage over the past week. Even so, the polls forecast both parties and their smaller partners will again fall short of securing the 61-seat majority in parliament required to form a government.

The easiest way out of the deadlock would be a unity government between the two parties, which together are expected to control a solid majority in the 120-seat parliament.

But Gantz says he will only form a partnership with Likud if Netanyahu steps down. Netanyahu says he must remain prime minister in any unity deal.

The deadlock raised the possibility of a fourth election in quick succession.

Turnout of key voting groups could end up deciding the race. Weather may play a role, along with fears of the new corona virus which so far has been kept largely in check. Israel set up some 15 stations to allow voting by the hundreds of Israelis who are in home-quarantine after possible exposure to the virus.

The biggest obstacle may be voter fatigue.

"People are fed up. They think 'we're doomed to another gridlock, so what's the point of voting?'" said Guy Ben-Porat, chairman of the department of politics and government at Israel's Ben-Gurion University. "I think this is the decisive factor in turnout, but I can't tell on which side it will work more."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 44 of 63

Netanyahu has been charged with fraud, breach of trust and accepting bribes in a series of scandals in which he is accused of accepting lavish gifts from wealthy friends or exchanging favors with powerful media moguls.

With his trial set to start March 17, he is desperate to remain in office. As prime minister, Netanyahu can use his position to rally public support and lash out at what he claims is a vast conspiracy by police, overzealous prosecutors and a hostile media to oust him.

Israeli law allows a prime minister to remain in office even if charged with a crime, while requiring other public officials to resign once indicted.

While another stalemate seems to be likely, the election could still deliver surprises.

Late last week, the Justice Ministry said it would open an investigation into possible financial wrongdoing by a start-up security firm that Gantz chaired after leaving the military. The late-hour announcement was blasted by Gantz's supporters as politically motivated, but it's not clear if it's had an impact on voters.

The firm, which later went out of business, is believed to have won a lucrative police contract without going through a bidding process. Gantz was not named as a suspect.

If Netanyahu and his allies can somehow muster a majority, it would give him a new lifeline — along with hopes of passing legislation to protect him from prosecution.

Gantz's road to victory is even trickier. Cobbling together a coalition would likely rely on outside support from Arab-majority parties — a politically unpopular choice that Gantz has ruled out. It also would likely require the support of Avigdor Lieberman, a former Netanyahu ally.

Lieberman, a wily political operator who has long caused headaches for Netanyahu, has refused to commit to either candidate. But he also has said he will not allow a fourth consecutive election, raising speculation he will ultimately side with Gantz.

Yohanan Plesner, president of the Israel Democracy Institute, a Jerusalem think tank, said that if the polls are accurate, the country could face many more months of gridlock unless someone compromises.

"It's uncharted territory," he said. "And if we judge it based on what we learned in the previous cycle, then the deadlock would mean a fourth election."

AP VoteCast: Black voters carry Biden to his first victory

By **JOSH BOAK** and **HANNAH FINGERHUT** Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Vice President Joe Biden has for weeks looked to the black voters of South Carolina to hand a win to his flagging campaign. On Saturday, they delivered.

Biden won 60% of the votes cast by non-white voters, dominating a crowded Democratic field among a group that made up more than half of the electorate. Biden also performed strongly with older voters, women, regular churchgoers and moderates and conservatives, according to AP VoteCast, a wide-ranging survey of more than 1,400 voters in South Carolina's Democratic primary.

Biden's strength with the state's African American voters helped him edge out second-place finisher Bernie Sanders. The Vermont senator won roughly 14% of African American voters, while billionaire Tom Steyer won 15%.

Sanders had hoped to chip away at Biden's support by winning over young black voters, who may be more likely to be drawn to Sanders' liberal politics and less likely to give Biden credit for serving as President Barack Obama's No. 2.

But black voters under 45 were roughly split between the two candidates — a sign that Sanders' appeal among younger voters had its limits in South Carolina. Sanders held on to young voters under 30 overall, but his grip weakened among liberal voters.

South Carolina's primary provides the first deep look at the opinions and beliefs of African American voters, will continue to wield influence in upcoming races and will be critical to Democrats' chances of winning the White House. The inability of Democrats to mobilize African Americans in Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan likely contributed to their 2016 loss to President Donald Trump.

Biden has staked his campaign on mobilizing these voters and harkening to the legacy of the nation's

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 45 of 63

first non-white president. It's a message that appeared to carry special appeal in South Carolina, where voters held a greater sense of nostalgia for the Obama presidency than voters in earlier contests.

Forty-five percent of voters in South Carolina wanted to return to the politics of the past, compared to about a third in Iowa and New Hampshire. That includes the 51% of African American voters who said they want a Democratic presidential nominee who would emulate Obama's presidency. Overall, Biden won 65% of voters who preferred a return to politics before Trump.

Compared to Iowa and New Hampshire, where Biden never placed in the top three contenders, South Carolina delivered some built-in demographic advantage for the former vice president.

Its voters were somewhat more likely to identify as moderate or conservative — just 7 in 10 using either label. They were less likely to hold a college degree. More than half were nonwhite, compared to roughly 9 in 10 white voters in Iowa and New Hampshire.

But even among liberals, college graduates and white voters, Biden fared somewhat better on Saturday than he did in the previous contests.

White voters gave just a slight advantage to Biden over Sanders. Biden beat Sanders handily among women, and by a slightly narrower margin among men.

Biden won support from more than half of moderate and conservative voters, a group that has previously been divided among Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend.

Both Buttigieg and Klobuchar have struggled to attract non-white voters — and showed no real progress Saturday. Buttigieg managed to get just 3% of the non-white vote. Klobuchar, whose support among all voters in South Carolina was in the low single digits, drew just 1% of this group.

Among self-described liberals, about a third backed Sanders, who had been leading the pack after previous contests, only a slightly higher share than for Biden.

About half of South Carolina voters say they attend church services at least once a month; Biden won a majority.

On issues, South Carolina's voters were more focused on health care than voters in other early states. About 4 in 10 called it the most important issue. Twenty percent viewed the economy as the top priority, while 14% identified climate change. Democrats in Iowa and New Hampshire put greater emphasis on climate change and less importance on the economy.

As Super Tuesday looms in three days with 14 states and one territory voting, it's unclear just how much more important TV ads are over name recognition.

Steyer pumped money into ads in South Carolina, while media mogul and former New York Mayor Mike Bloomberg — worth about \$60 billion — has been doing so nationwide. But voters are unsure about whether having a financial titan challenging Trump, a reputed billionaire, in November's election would be helpful.

Only 20% said a billionaire would have an easier time against Trump, compared to 55% who said it would make no difference.

After finishing third in South Carolina, Steyer dropped out Saturday night.

AP VoteCast is a survey of the American electorate conducted by NORC at the University of Chicago for The Associated Press and Fox News. The survey of 1,499 voters in South Carolina was conducted for seven days, concluding as polls closed. Interviews were conducted in English or Spanish. The survey is based on interviews with a random sample of registered voters drawn from the state voter file. The margin of sampling error for voters is estimated to be plus or minus 3.7 percentage points.

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

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 46 of 63

Biden hopes South Carolina win boosts him on Super Tuesday

By **STEVE PEOPLES, MEG KINNARD and BILL BARROW** Associated Press

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) — Joe Biden scored a thundering victory in South Carolina's Democratic primary on the strength of African American support, a decisive win that could force moderate rivals out of the race and blunt the rise of progressive leader Bernie Sanders.

Biden's win Saturday came at a perilous moment in his 2020 bid as he needed an emphatic rebound after underwhelming performances this month in Iowa, New Hampshire and Nevada. The race now pivots to the 14 states from Maine to California that vote on Tuesday in what effect will be a national primary.

"We are very much alive," Biden declared at an exuberant post-election rally. "For all of you who have been knocked down, counted out, left behind -- this is your campaign."

Biden won about three times as many delegates in South Carolina as his nearest rival. Sanders claimed a distant second place, a loss that gave a momentary respite to anxious Democrats who feared that the democratic socialist would finish February with four consecutive top finishes that would make it difficult for anyone to overtake him.

The Associated Press declared Biden the winner just after the polls closed in South Carolina. The AP based the call on data from AP VoteCast, a survey of the electorate conducted for the AP by NORC at the University of Chicago. The survey showed a convincing win for Biden.

Even with the victory, the shortcomings of Biden's campaign remain, including a lack of robust funding and organization, and he will face for the first time Mike Bloomberg, a billionaire who has spent more than \$500 million advertising in the Super Tuesday states. Bloomberg announced his own plan to deliver a three-minute prime-time address Sunday night on two television networks. He didn't say how much he paid for the air time, which is unprecedented in recent decades.

Biden is barely running any television advertising in Super Tuesday states. And both Sanders and Bloomberg have many more staff and volunteers.

But Biden is making an aggressive round of media appearances on Sunday in an effort to counter Bloomberg's massive spending. He's also working to secure endorsements from prominent Democrats and, shortly after the Saturday results were in, former Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe backed Biden.

The South Carolina primary was the first major test of the candidates' appeal among black voters. That courtship will continue on Sunday when many of the White House hopefuls travel to Selma, Alabama, to participate in ceremonies commemorating civil rights heroism.

A number of states that vote on Super Tuesday, including Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina and Virginia, have substantial black populations.

One of the candidates who spent recent weeks wooing black voters, billionaire activist Tom Steyer, ended his campaign on Saturday after a disappointing third place finish. He spent more than \$24 million on television advertising in South Carolina -- more than all of his rivals combined -- but never found a clear lane in the crowded contest.

Seven candidates remain in the Democrats' quest to find the strongest possible nominee to take on President Donald Trump in November. They spent Saturday assessing the impact of Biden's win.

Aides to Bloomberg's campaign said they still believe the former New York mayor can win in a handful of states that vote on Super Tuesday, including Arkansas, Alabama, Oklahoma, Virginia and North Carolina.

And Sanders was already looking ahead to the next contests as well, betting he can amass an insurmountable delegate lead. After two consecutive victories and a tie for the lead in Iowa, the 78-year-old Vermont senator's confidence has surged.

Sanders congratulated Biden on his first win and said it was nothing for his own supporters to worry about.

"That will not be the only defeat. A lot of states in this country. Nobody wins them all," he told a cheering crowd in Virginia. "Now we enter Super Tuesday."

Pressure is building on lower performing candidates including former South Bend, Indiana, Mayor Pete Buttigieg, Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren to justify staying in

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 47 of 63

the race. None gave any indication on Saturday that they would exit before Tuesday.

Through four contests, Sanders has a healthy, but shrinking, delegate lead.

The AP has allocated at least 56 delegates to Sanders with a few more expected as South Carolina's remaining votes dribble in. Biden vaulted past Buttigieg into second place with at least 48 delegates and he's likely to get several more. Buttigieg, Warren and Klobuchar remain stuck at 26, eight and seven, respectively.

Trump was paying close attention to the Democratic race.

Speaking before conservative activists earlier in the day, the president conducted a poll of sorts by asking his audience to cheer for who would be the best Democratic contender for him to face in November.

Sanders was the clear winner.

"How could you be easier to beat than Joe? That guy can't put two sentences together," Trump told attendees of the Conservative Political Action Conference in suburban Washington. "But you know he is more down the middle. Everyone knows he's not a communist and with Bernie there a real question about that."

But Saturday was all about Biden and whether he might convince anxious establishment Democrats to rally behind him at last.

Elected officials inclined to embrace his moderate politics had been reluctant to support him after bad finishes in Iowa and New Hampshire and a distant second place in Nevada last week. Yet fearing Sanders' polarizing progressive priorities, they're still searching for an alternative who's viewed as a safer bet to defeat Trump in November.

Biden won 63% of the votes cast by African Americans. He also did well with older voters, women, moderates and conservatives and regular churchgoers, according to AP VoteCast.

Sanders earned the support of roughly 14% of African American voters, while billionaire businessman Tom Steyer won 15%.

There was also evidence that Biden's status as former President Barack Obama's two-term vice president helped him win over African Americans.

VoteCast found that 45% voters in South Carolina wanted to return to the politics of the past, compared to about a third in Iowa and New Hampshire. That includes the 51% of African American voters who said they want a Democratic presidential nominee who would emulate the Obama presidency.

Democratic National Committee Chair Tom Perez cautioned Democrats that it's still early in their presidential primary.

Speaking at a North Carolina Democratic Party fundraising gala, Perez noted that to win the nomination, a Democrat must win 1,991 delegates — and only a fraction of those have been allocated in the party's first four primaries.

"We have a long way to go," he said.

Peoples reported from Washington. Associated Press writers Brian Slodysko, Will Weissert and Seth Borenstein in Washington, Thomas Beaumont in Columbia and Charleston, South Carolina and Alexandra Jaffe in Charlotte, North Carolina, contributed to this report.

Analysis: Biden positions himself as leading moderate

By JULIE PACE AP Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON (AP) — Joe Biden bought himself time. It's unclear how much.

Biden's victory in South Carolina on Saturday was emphatic enough to let him make the claim that it had reordered the race for the Democratic presidential nomination. He can now credibly argue he is the overwhelming favorite of black voters who are the backbone of the Democratic Party. And he is positioning himself as moderates' best alternative to blocking Bernie Sanders' path to the nomination.

But the next three days will determine whether South Carolina was a one-off for Biden or the start of a true comeback for the former vice president. More than a dozen states vote on Tuesday, including California, the primary contest's biggest prize and a state where more than 1 million votes were cast early.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 48 of 63

Biden faces serious challenges in many of those states, including a limited campaign infrastructure and virtually no money spent on advertising. He'll be dependent largely on name recognition built up during more than four decades in national politics and the perception of momentum coming out of South Carolina.

Also standing in Biden's way: several other candidates who are vowing to stay in the race, including billionaire Mike Bloomberg. Most have no discernible path to the nomination, but they could keep Biden's support down and allow Sanders to rack up an insurmountable delegate lead.

Some of Biden's supporters are clear-eyed about the difficulties ahead.

"I think he will have to do better, no question about that," Rep. James Clyburn, the prominent South Carolina Democrat who gave Biden a boost with a crucial endorsement days before the primary, said on CNN. "We need to do some retooling in the campaign, no question about that."

Still, there are real reasons for optimism for Biden out of South Carolina, the first state to test the preferences of black voters. Biden was backed by about 60 percent of African Americans, according to AP VoteCast, a wide-ranging survey of more than 1,400 voters in South Carolina's Democratic primary. He also performed strongly with older voters, who vote more reliably, and self-described moderates.

Also working in Biden's favor were feelings of nostalgia in South Carolina for the Obama era. Though former President Barack Obama hasn't endorsed in the 2020 race, and isn't expected to any time soon, Biden has wrapped himself in his one-time running mate's legacy and held up his eight years in office as an example for a model for what his own presidency would bring.

Biden's campaign is now moving urgently to rebrand its candidate as a front-runner after weeks on the decline (he finished a dismal fourth in Iowa and fifth in New Hampshire, then a distant second to Sanders in Nevada). Biden and his top advisers are pressing prominent moderates in the next states on the calendar for endorsements, and also trying to gently nudge other candidates toward the exit.

"Joe Biden's strength tonight is why we are poised for a strong Super Tuesday and one of only two candidates remaining with a viable path to the nomination," said Anita Dunn, Biden's senior adviser.

But Biden is dependent on factors outside of his control — and his weak start to the primaries means one victory in South Carolina may not be enough to scare off other candidates who are still angling for their own opening.

Indeed, several others insisted Saturday that they plan to stay in the race at least through the Super Tuesday contests this coming week, including Sens. Elizabeth Warren and Amy Klobuchar, as well as Pete Buttigieg, the former mayor of South Bend, Indiana.

But pressure will be particularly acute in the coming days on Klobuchar and Buttigieg. After promising moments in Iowa and New Hampshire, two overwhelmingly white states, neither candidate has shown any significant strength with the minority voters who are crucial to Democrats in the general election.

Then there's Bloomberg, who entered the race late after determining Biden was a weaker-than-expected candidate. He skipped the opening contests, but has poured hundreds of millions of dollars into television advertising into Super Tuesday states in hopes of racking up big delegate totals.

While Bloomberg's campaign privately acknowledged that Biden is likely to get a bump out of his South Carolina win, the campaign still believes the former New York mayor can win in a handful of states that vote on Super Tuesday, including Arkansas, Alabama, Oklahoma, Virginia and North Carolina, all states he's barnstormed in recent days.

"Mike Bloomberg has not been on the ballot yet," said Kevin Sheekey, Bloomberg's campaign manager. "We look forward to Tuesday."

Biden's campaign hasn't mapped out the states where it thinks the former vice president can win on Tuesday, but it's eyeing strong finishes in states with large black populations: Virginia, North Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas and Alabama.

Biden doesn't have the time to build the personal relationships in those states that he had in South Carolina, a state he visited 30 times over the past year, or the money to build out the campaign infrastructure that carried him to Saturday's overwhelming victory.

But a comeback narrative can be a powerful political force, one Biden is hoping he can capitalize on

during these next crucial days for his campaign.

In an emotional address to supporters in South Carolina on Saturday, he declared: "For all those of you who've been knocked down, counted out and left behind, this is your campaign."

EDITOR'S NOTE — AP Washington Bureau Chief Julie Pace has covered the White House and politics for the AP since 2007. Follow her at <http://twitter.com/jpaceDC>

Wash. state sees 1st virus death in US, declares emergency

By **ANDREW SELSKY** Associated Press

The governor of Washington declared a state of emergency Saturday after a man died there of COVID-19, the first such reported death in the United States. More than 50 people in a nursing facility are sick and being tested for the virus.

Gov. Jay Inslee directed state agencies to use "all resources necessary" to prepare for and respond to the coronavirus outbreak. The declaration also allows the use of the Washington National Guard, if necessary. "We will continue to work toward a day where no one dies from this virus," the governor vowed.

Health officials in California, Oregon and Washington state are worried about the novel coronavirus spreading through West Coast communities because a growing number of people are being infected despite not having visited an area where there was an outbreak, nor apparently been in contact with anyone who had.

The man who died was in his 50s, had underlying health conditions and no history of travel or contact with a known COVID-19 case, health officials in Washington state said at a news conference. A spokesperson for EvergreenHealth Medical Center, Kayse Dahl, said the person died in the facility in the Seattle suburb of Kirkland.

Dr. Frank Riedo, medical director of Infection Control at Evergreen, said local hospitals are seeing people with severe coronavirus symptoms but it's probable that there are more cases in the community.

"This is the tip of the iceberg," he said.

The health officials reported two cases of COVID-19 virus connected to a long-term care facility in the same suburb, Life Care Center of Kirkland. One is a Life Care worker, a woman in her 40s who is in satisfactory condition at a hospital, and the other is a woman in her 70s and a resident at Life Care who is hospitalized in serious condition. Neither had traveled abroad.

"In addition, over 50 individuals associated with Life Care are reportedly ill with respiratory symptoms or hospitalized with pneumonia or other respiratory conditions of unknown cause and are being tested for COVID-19," Seattle and King County officials said. "Additional positive cases are expected."

Overlake Medical Center in Bellevue, Washington, said a health care worker from Life Care is a patient at the hospital. The woman, who is in her 40s, was admitted to the hospital Thursday and is in stable condition, the center said.

Amy Reynolds of the Washington state health department said in a brief telephone interview: "We are dealing with an emergency evolving situation."

No one answered the phone at Life Care, but Ellie Basham, its executive director, said in a statement that residents and employees are being monitored and those with symptoms or who were potentially exposed are quarantined. The facility has banned families, volunteers and vendors as a precaution, Basham said.

A growing number of cases in California, Washington state and Oregon are confounding authorities because the infected people hadn't recently traveled overseas or had any known close contact with a traveler or an infected person.

The Santa Clara County Public Health Department announced Saturday the case of a fourth person in the county infected with coronavirus. The case is of a woman who is a "household contact" of a person who is hospitalized with the virus, the health department said in a news release.

The woman has not been hospitalized and is not ill, the department said.

In Oregon, the state's Health Authority said Saturday that the second person who was tested for exposure to the virus doesn't have it. The agency said in a statement that it "continues approving testing

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 50 of 63

for persons under investigation, a number that's likely to increase following the report of the state's first presumptive case and new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidance that calls for testing of anyone experiencing severe respiratory symptoms."

The U.S. has about 60 confirmed cases. Worldwide, the number of people sickened by the virus hovered Friday around 83,000, and there were more than 2,800 deaths, most of them in China. A 60-year-old U.S. citizen died in Wuhan in early February.

Most infections result in mild symptoms, including coughing and fever, though some can become more serious and lead to pneumonia. Older people, especially those with chronic illnesses such as heart or lung disease, are especially vulnerable. Health officials think it spreads mainly from droplets when an infected person coughs or sneezes, similar to how the flu spreads.

The number of coronavirus cases in the United States is considered small. But convinced that they will grow, health agencies are ramping up efforts to identify those who might be sick.

To achieve more rapid testing capacity, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration issued an accelerated policy Saturday enabling laboratories to use tests they develop. FDA Commissioner Stephen Hahn said his agency is "rapidly responding and adapting to this dynamic and evolving situation."

The California Department of Public Health said Friday that the state will receive enough kits from the U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention to test up to 1,200 people a day for the COVID-19 virus — a day after Gov. Gavin Newsom complained to federal health officials that the state had already exhausted its initial 200 test kits.

Oregon was able to more quickly identify a case — an employee of an elementary school in Lake Oswego near Portland because it was able to test a sample locally. School district officials said Saturday the employee had been visited in the hospital by several people before he was diagnosed. Those individuals have been asked to observe a two-week quarantine and are being closely monitored.

Worried shoppers thronged a Costco box store near Lake Oswego, emptying shelves of items including toilet paper, paper towels, bottled water, frozen berries and black beans.

"Toilet paper is golden in an apocalypse," one Costco employee said.

Employees said the store ran out of toilet paper for the first time in its history and that it was the busiest they had ever seen, including during Christmas Eve.

The district is deep-cleaning all its schools and all school buses with the goal of having students back in class Monday, said Superintendent Lora de la Cruz. But Forest Hills Elementary, where the man worked, is closed until Wednesday, marking two weeks since he was last at the school.

Earlier U.S. cases include three people who were evacuated from the central China city of Wuhan, epicenter of the outbreak; 14 people who returned from China, or their spouses; and 42 American passengers on the Diamond Princess cruise ship, who were flown to U.S. military bases in California and Texas for quarantining.

The U.S. government looked at sending dozens of Californians, several of whom tested positive for the virus, who had been aboard the cruise ship to a state-owned facility in Costa Mesa, California. Local officials objected, saying they weren't included in the planning and wanting to know what safeguards would be in place to prevent spread of the virus. The U.S. government said it didn't need to use the facility after all.

At UC Davis Medical Center in California, at least 124 registered nurses and other health care workers were sent home for "self-quarantine" after a Solano County woman with the virus was admitted, National Nurses United, a nationwide union representing registered nurses, said Friday.

The case "highlights the vulnerability of the nation's hospitals to this virus," the union said.

Washington state health officials announced two other new coronavirus cases Friday night, including a high school student who attends Jackson High School in Everett, said Dr. Chris Spitters of the Snohomish County Health District.

The other case in Washington was a woman in King County in her 50s who had recently traveled to South Korea, authorities said. Neither patient was seriously ill.

Associated Press writers Rachel La Corte in Olympia, Washington; and Gillian Flaccus in Lake Oswego,

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 51 of 63

Oregon, contributed to this report.

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AP FACT CHECK: Trump's viral spin on virus; Dem oversteps

By CALVIN WOODWARD and HOPE YEN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump has not proved to be the bearer of reliable information when calamity threatens and people want straight answers about it. That's happening again as he addresses the prospect of a coronavirus outbreak in the U.S.

With numbers still low, but the first death in the U.S. now reported, the infectious disease risks not only public health but the economy he holds up to voters for his reelection. To date, his comments have largely seemed intended to put a positive spin on hard information from the scientists, as if he were wishing the problem away.

Trump's comment Friday night, characterizing Democratic criticism of the administration's response to the virus as a "hoax," lent weight to the perception that he's minimizing the potential for harm in search of political gain. He emphasized Saturday that he does not consider the coronavirus threat a hoax — only the pushback from Democrats.

Trump has a record of unreliability on this front. In one hurricane episode, he displayed a map doctored to reflect his personal and ill-founded theory that Alabama would take it on the chin. In another, he dismissed the Puerto Rico death toll as a concoction by Democrats.

He was fast off the mark to describe the injuries suffered by U.S. service members from an Iranian missile attack as little more than headaches, when it turned out scores suffered traumatic brain injury.

For their part, Democrats have been quick to criticize the Trump administration — at times too quick. Several presidential candidates described the federal response as hampered by Trump budget cuts, which have not happened, and by a decimated public-health bureaucracy, despite the top-of-class scientists steering the effort.

Here are the facts behind some of the political rhetoric of the past week, on the virus and more.

VIRUS OUTBREAK

TRUMP: "We are rapidly developing a vaccine. ... The vaccine is coming along well, and in speaking to the doctors, we think this is something that we can develop very rapidly." — news conference Wednesday.

THE FACTS: No vaccine is imminent for the coronavirus.

A candidate vaccine for the virus causing COVID-19 is approaching first-step safety tests, but federal experts say anything widely usable is probably more than a year away.

"We can't rely on a vaccine over the next several months," said Dr. Anthony Fauci, the top infectious disease chief at the National Institutes of Health.

TRUMP: "The level of death with Ebola — you know, at the time, it was a virtual 100%. ... There's a very good chance you're not going to die. It's very much the opposite. You're talking about 1 or 2%, whereas in the other case, it was a virtual 100%. Now they have it; they have studied it. They know very much. In fact, we're very close to a vaccine." — news conference Tuesday in New Delhi.

THE FACTS: "Close" is not correct. A vaccine has already been developed for Ebola. The FDA approved an Ebola vaccine in December. Even before its U.S. approval, it was being used in Congo to help stem the current outbreak.

TRUMP, on U.S. coronavirus cases: "We're going down, not up. We're going very substantially down, not up." — news conference Wednesday.

THE FACTS: That was false assurance. He was referring to the fact that most of the people he cited as having COVID-19 in the U.S. are getting better. But that is not indicative of the spread or containment of

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 52 of 63

the disease since most victims, by far, recover.

Cases in the U.S. are almost certain to increase, his own officials have said repeatedly, and he acknowledged as much Saturday.

TRUMP: "Unfortunately, one person passed away overnight. She was a wonderful woman, a medically high-risk patient in her late 50s." — news conference Saturday.

THE FACTS: The patient who died of the disease was a man. Dr. Robert Redfield, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, said the CDC mistakenly told Trump and Vice President Mike Pence that the victim was female.

TRUMP: "The flu in our country kills from 25,000 people to 69,000 people a year; that was shocking to me. And so far, if you look at what we have with the 15 people, and they are recovering."

THE FACTS: His remarks on the coronavirus risks are misleading. Scientists don't know enough about how deadly the new virus actually is, and so far it hasn't infected nearly as many people as the flu. Of the cases cited by Trump, they are not "all recovering." One died and four others are "very ill," he said Saturday.

Flu deaths fluctuate depending on which strain is circulating and how well each year's vaccine is working, but Trump's cited range is in the ballpark. Two flu seasons ago, the CDC estimated there were 80,000 U.S. deaths, the highest death toll in at least four decades. This year's flu season isn't as deadly; so far this season, the CDC estimates there have been 16,000 to 41,000 deaths from the flu.

As to COVID-19, an illness characterized by fever and coughing and in serious cases shortness of breath or pneumonia, there are now at least 60 cases in the U.S. In addition to the ones Trump cited, 45 were among groups the U.S. government evacuated and quarantined either from China or the Diamond Princess cruise ship.

In the hardest-hit part of China, the death rate from the new coronavirus was between 2% and 4%, while in other parts of China it was 0.7%. In contrast, the death rate from seasonal flu on average is about 0.1%, said Fauci, of the U.S. National Institutes of Health. That's far lower than what has been calculated so far for COVID-19. But millions of people get the flu every year around the world, leading to a global annual death toll in the hundreds of thousands.

MIKE BLOOMBERG: "There's nobody here to figure out what the hell we should be doing. And he's defunded — he's defunded Centers for Disease Control, CDC, so we don't have the organization we need. This is a very serious thing." — Democratic presidential debate Tuesday.

JOE BIDEN, comparing the Obama-Biden administration with now: "We increased the budget of the CDC. We increased the NIH budget. ... He's wiped all that out. ... He cut the funding for the entire effort."

THE FACTS: They're both wrong to say the agencies have seen their money cut. Bloomberg is repeating the false allegation in a new ad that states the U.S. is unprepared for the virus because of "reckless cuts" to the CDC. Trump's budgets have proposed cuts to public health, only to be overruled by Congress, where there's strong bipartisan support for agencies such as the CDC and NIH. Instead, financing has increased.

Indeed, the money that government disease detectives first tapped to fight the latest outbreak was a congressional fund created for health emergencies.

Some public health experts say a bigger concern than White House budgets is the steady erosion of a CDC grant program for state and local public health emergency preparedness — the front lines in detecting and battling new disease. But that decline was set in motion by a congressional budget measure that predates Trump.

The broader point about there being "nobody here" to coordinate the response sells short what's in place to handle an outbreak.

The public health system has a playbook to follow for pandemic preparation — regardless of who's president or whether specific instructions are coming from the White House. Public-health experts outside government have praised the CDC's work so far and noted that its top scientific ranks have remained stable

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 53 of 63

during the past three years.

HEALTH CARE

BERNIE SANDERS: "What every study out there — conservative or progressive — says, 'Medicare for All' will save money." — Democratic debate.

THE FACTS: Not true. Some studies say that, some don't.

Sanders, a Vermont senator, cites a recent medical journal article in *The Lancet*, which estimated "Medicare for All" would save more than \$450 billion annually, or about 13%.

But other studies have found a Sanders-like single-payer plan would cost more, partly because free health care would increase the demand for services.

A study last fall from the Commonwealth Fund and the Urban Institute estimated that such a plan would increase national health spending by about \$720 billion. A Rand study estimated spending would increase 1.8% under a national single-payer plan.

GUN CONTROL

JOE BIDEN: "A hundred and fifty million people have been killed since 2007, when Bernie voted to exempt the gun manufacturers from liability." — Democratic debate.

THE FACTS: Biden vastly overstated gun deaths. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports about 413,000 gun deaths from 2007 to 2018, a far cry from 150 million, which equates to close to half the U.S. population. More than half of the gun deaths in 2018 were from suicide, says the CDC. His campaign acknowledged he misspoke.

AMY KLOBUCHAR: "I am the author of the bill to close the boyfriend loophole that says that domestic abusers can't go out and get an AK-47."

BIDEN: "I wrote that law."

KLOBUCHAR: "You didn't write that bill, I wrote that bill."

BIDEN: "I wrote the bill, the Violence Against Women Act, that took (guns) out of the hands of people who abused their wife."

KLOBUCHAR: "OK we'll have a fact check look at this." — Democratic debate.

BIDEN: "No, let's look at the fact check. The only thing (is) that that boyfriend loophole was not covered, I couldn't get that covered. You, in fact, as a senator tried to get it covered and Mitch McConnell is holding it up on his desk right now."

THE FACTS: Klobuchar, a Minnesota senator, correctly called out the former vice president for seeming to take credit for legislation closing the "boyfriend loophole." Biden conceded the point, then correctly pointed out that the loophole has not been eliminated in law.

In short, Biden did write the legislation that became the Violence Against Women Act, one of his most prominent achievements. The 1994 law sets out services and specific protections for victims of domestic violence.

Klobuchar took the lead in the Senate on legislation passed by the House that would extend the law's protections to help women who are threatened by abusive partners who are not a spouse, ex-spouse or parent of a common child — in other words, boyfriends or dating partners. But that effort, opposed by the National Rifle Association, has been hung up in the Senate.

WOMEN IN THE WORKPLACE

BLOOMBERG, responding to Elizabeth Warren's demand that he lift non-disclosure agreements for all women who signed them: "We are doing that, senator." — Democratic debate.

THE FACTS: He hasn't done that.

Bloomberg agreed to release three women from non-disclosure agreements in situations where they specifically identified an issue with him. But many more former Bloomberg employees have signed such

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 54 of 63

agreements, having to do with the culture and work environment at his company. He hasn't freed them from their obligation to stay quiet about their complaints.

WARREN: "At least I didn't have a boss who said to me 'kill it' the way that Mayor Bloomberg is alleged to have said to one of his pregnant employees."

BLOOMBERG: "I never said that." — Democratic debate.

THE FACTS: The woman who made the allegation against Bloomberg recounted it in a legal filing.

Former Bloomberg employee Sekiko Sekai Garrison, 55, filed a complaint against Bloomberg and his company with the New York Division of Human Rights in 1995. In Garrison's written complaint, she recounted several personal interactions with Bloomberg when she worked at the company.

In one incident, Garrison said Bloomberg approached her near the office coffee machines and asked if she was still married, according to the complaint.

Garrison says she responded that her marriage was great and that she was pregnant with her first child, and alleged that Bloomberg replied: "Kill it." Bloomberg has denied that the exchange happened, but in her complaint, she transcribed a voicemail she says Bloomberg later left on her voicemail, apologizing and saying he meant the "kill it" remark as a joke. Her complaint was eventually settled as part of a lawsuit with no admission of guilt, and she resigned from the company.

INDIA

TRUMP: "Now, India has more people than any country, a little bit more than China." — news conference Tuesday in New Delhi.

THE FACTS: He's getting ahead of population projections.

India is projected to overtake China as the world's most populous country around 2027, according to the U.N.'s World Population Prospects report.

TRUMP, on India's leader, Narendra Modi: "Under Prime Minister Modi, for the first time in history, every village in India now has access to electricity." — rally Monday in Ahmedabad, India.

THE FACTS: That's false. The Indian government says a village is considered electrified if at least 10% of homes and public buildings have electricity. According to the World Bank, about 99 million people, or 7% of India's population, still live in the dark.

TRUMP: "Six hundred million more people have access to basic sanitation." — rally Monday.

THE FACTS: It's true that India has built more than 110 million new toilets since Modi's government came to power in 2014, leading to increased access to basic sanitation. But implementation has been spotty in a country where venturing into the fields to defecate has been widespread and accepted.

More than 60% of India's 1.3 billion people live in more than 600,000 villages. Poor villagers who couldn't build toilets in their homes chose open fields, forests, ditches and other open spaces for defecation — and that cultural practice has been slow to change.

A 2018 study conducted by the non-profit Research Institute for Compassionate Economics, for instance, found 44% of the rural population across four large states still defecate in the open. Nearly one-quarter of people in households with toilets also continued to defecate in the open, a figure unchanged from 2014, according to the study.

After becoming India's prime minister, Modi promised to make India free of open defecation. He's acknowledged the task is not over.

The World Bank previously said about 1 in every 10 deaths in India is linked to poor sanitation.

CHINA

BLOOMBERG, on China's president, Xi Jinping: "In terms of whether he's a dictator, he does serve at the behest of the Politburo, their group of people. There's no question he has an enormous amount of power. But he does play to his constituency." — Democratic debate.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 55 of 63

THE FACTS: He's minimizing Xi's broad powers in China.

Xi serves as the head of the ruling Communist Party's Politburo Standing Committee and is also head of state and leader of the party's military wing, the People's Liberation Army. The Politburo and its standing committee aren't generally viewed as a check on his power. Although Xi's moves to accumulate power have been criticized by some non-party intellectuals, he faces no clear rivals or constraints on his power.

However, a faltering economy and the knock-on effects of the coronavirus outbreak that originated in China are seen as placing him under greater pressure than he has previously faced.

Associated Press writers Luran Neergaard, Ricardo Alonso-Zaldivar and Matthew Daly in Washington, Alexandra Jaffe in Charleston, South Carolina, Amanda Seitz in Chicago, and Emily Schmall in New Delhi contributed to this report.

EDITOR'S NOTE — A look at the veracity of claims by political figures.

Trump says getting rid of "bad" people made him successful

By DARLENE SUPERVILLE Associated Press

OXON HILL, Md. (AP) — President Donald Trump said Saturday that his "journey" in the nation's highest office would have been a failure had he not be able to rid the government of people he says are "bad."

Trump came into office railing against what he and his allies call the "deep state" — career government employees and political appointees held over from prior administrations — claiming it was out to undermine him.

He said he has been replacing them with "people who love our country."

"We have such bad people and they're not people who love our country," Trump told several thousand cheering and chanting supporters at the the annual Conservative Political Action Conference. "We're getting people who really love our country and it's so important," he said.

"And if I wasn't able to fulfill that, no matter what other things we've done, I would not consider this journey to be a success," he said. "So just remember that."

Trump didn't call anyone out by name in his remarks, but he has spoken negatively about the previous FBI leaders during other public appearances. Since being acquitted on two articles of impeachment and being allowed to stay in office, he has reassigned individuals who testified against him during the proceedings or whom he perceives as disloyal to him.

He also has brought back to the White House trusted aides who had departed earlier in the administration.

The Republican president, who is seeking reelection, sought to fire up his audience during the wide-ranging, nearly 90-minute speech with talk against state and local policies that shield undocumented immigrants, the number of conservative federal judges who've been confirmed by the Senate, his increased spending on the U.S. military and creation of a new branch of the military known as the Space Force.

Trump also touched on an agreement signed Saturday between the U.S. and the Taliban aimed at ending war in Afghanistan, and he pledged to protect the health and safety of Americans "with vigor" amid an outbreak of coronavirus, which overnight had claimed its first victim in the U.S.

Trump flew to a Maryland hotel to address the annual gathering of conservatives after he called a news conference at the White House to announce a ban on travel to Iran in response to the virus outbreak. He also announced elevated U.S. travel warnings to affected regions of Italy and South Korea.

The president closed with a promise to his fawning supporters to "be here next year, OK?"

In a reprise of his appearance at last year's conservative conference, Trump then hugged and kissed an American flag before he left the stage.

Bev Banks contributed to this report.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 56 of 63

US-based pro sports leagues monitoring coronavirus outbreak

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Sports Writer

Major North American professional sports leagues are talking to health officials and informing teams about the coronavirus outbreak that has led to the first reported death in the U.S.

Officials from the National Basketball Association, National Hockey League and Major League Baseball say they are all consulting with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and other organizations on a regular basis about COVID-19. Washington State reported Saturday that a man in his 50s died from the virus.

There are no immediate plans to cancel or postpone games or have them held in empty stadiums or arenas. Some of those contingencies have been taken in other countries, including Italy, where soccer matches were postponed until May.

Pro sports in the U.S. for now are going on as scheduled, though leagues are closely monitoring the situation. The NBA and NHL are in their regular seasons and MLB in spring training in Arizona and Florida with Opening Day less than a month way.

"The health and safety of our employees, teams, players and fans is paramount," the NBA said in a statement. "We are coordinating with our teams and consulting with the CDC and infectious disease specialists on the coronavirus and continue to monitor the situation closely."

The new virus that first emerged in China in December has infected more than 85,000 people and caused more than 2,900 deaths. There have been 62 reported cases in the U.S., compared to 1,128 in Italy.

The NHL, which has seven teams based in Canada, is in contact with personnel from the CDC and Public Health Canada. Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly said by email the NHL has not considered any cancellations.

"We are in regular communication with our clubs on the issue and have passed along best practices being recommended by CDC and Public Health Canada medical experts," Daly said. "Most of these steps are common sense precautions, but there definitely involves consciousness raising."

An NHL spokesman added the league "will implement all necessary safety measures as required." Teams have been getting information from the league about COVID-19 since late January.

MLB has also been actively monitoring the outbreak for some time and been in touch with the CDC and Health and Human Services. It is providing guidance to clubs, staff members and players that are mirror CDC recommendations.

Churchill Downs is using the time left before the Kentucky Derby in early May to watch as the situation develops before hosting horse racing's biggest event.

"We still have a great deal of time to monitor and react," Churchill Downs said in a statement. "We also will learn from others as they hold events over the next number of weeks. We are consulting with relevant authorities and will take any and all necessary steps to ensure the safety of all who attend and participate."

AP Pro Basketball Writer Tim Reynolds and AP Baseball Writer Ron Blum contributed.

Empty streets, economic turmoil as virus alters daily life

By DAVID KLEPPER and MARI YAMAGUCHI Associated Press

TOKYO (AP) — The coronavirus claimed its first victim in the U.S. Saturday as the number of cases shot up in Iran, Italy and South Korea and the spreading outbreak continued to shake the global economy.

The virus altered daily life around the world as governments moved to combat the contagion. Islam's holiest sites were closed to foreign pilgrims, while professional baseball teams played in deserted stadiums in Japan and officials in France advised residents to forgo customary greeting kisses.

The list of countries touched by the virus climbed to nearly 60, with Ireland and Ecuador among the countries reporting their first cases Saturday. More than 85,000 people worldwide have contracted the virus, with deaths topping 2,900.

A man in his 50s with underlying health conditions became the first coronavirus death on U.S. soil. Officials say they aren't sure how the man in suburban Seattle acquired the virus, as he had not traveled to

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 57 of 63

any affected areas.

"Additional cases in the United States are likely, but healthy individuals should be able to fully recover," President Donald Trump said at a Saturday briefing, where officials announced heightened warnings about travel to certain regions of Italy and South Korea as well as a ban on travel to Iran.

Many cases of the virus have been relatively mild, and some of those infected are believed to show no symptoms at all. But that can allow for easier spread, and concern is mounting that prolonged quarantines, supply chain disruptions and a sharp reduction in tourism and business travel could weaken the global economy or even cause a recession.

South Korea, the second hardest hit country after China, reported 813 new cases Saturday — the highest daily jump since confirming its first patient in late January and raising its total to 3,150.

Italian authorities say the country now has more than 1,100 coronavirus cases, with 29 deaths so far.

Iran is preparing for the possibility of "tens of thousands" of people getting tested for the virus as the number of confirmed cases spiked again Saturday, an official said. So far, the virus and the COVID-19 illness it causes have killed 43 people out of 593 confirmed cases in Iran.

As governments scrambled to control the spread and businesses wrestled with interruptions, researchers working to better understand the disease reported that the death rate may be lower than initially feared as more mild cases are counted.

A study by Chinese researchers published Friday in the New England Journal of Medicine analyzing 1,099 patients at more than 500 hospitals throughout China calculated a death rate of 1.4%, substantially lower than earlier studies that focused on patients in Wuhan, where it started and has been most severe.

Assuming there are many more cases with no or very mild symptoms, "the case fatality rate may be considerably less than 1%," U.S. health officials wrote in an editorial in the journal.

That would make the new virus more like a severe seasonal flu than a disease similar to its genetic cousins SARS, severe acute respiratory syndrome, or MERS, Middle East respiratory syndrome.

Evidence of the virus' economic toll continued to mount Saturday, with a new report showing a sharp decline in Chinese manufacturing in February after efforts to contain the virus shut down much of the world's second-largest economy.

The survey, coming as global stock markets fall sharply on fears that the virus will spread abroad, adds to mounting evidence of the vast cost of the disease that emerged in central China in December and its economic impact worldwide.

The monthly purchasing managers' index issued by the Chinese statistics agency and an industry group fell to 35.7 from January's 50 on a 100-point scale on which numbers below 50 indicate activity contracting.

Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced a 270 billion yen (\$2.5 billion) emergency economic package to help fight the virus. Abe said at a news conference that Japan is at critical juncture to determine whether the country can keep the outbreak under control ahead of the Tokyo summer Olympics.

Abe, whose announcement this past week of a plan to close all schools for more than a month through the end of the Japanese academic year sparked public criticism, said the emergency package includes financial support for parents and their employers affected by the closures.

"Frankly speaking, this battle cannot be won solely by the efforts of the government," Abe said Saturday. "We cannot do it without understanding and cooperation from every one of you, including medical institutions, families, companies and local governments."

Even in isolated, sanctions-hit North Korea, leader Kim Jong Un called for stronger anti-virus efforts to guard against COVID-19, saying there will be "serious consequences" if the illness spreads to the country.

China has seen a slowdown in new infections and on Saturday morning reported 427 new cases over the past 24 hours along with 47 additional deaths. The city at the epicenter of the outbreak, Wuhan, accounted for the bulk of both. The ruling party is striving to restore public and business confidence and avert a deeper economic downturn and politically risky job losses after weeks of disruptions due to the viral outbreak.

In other areas caught up in the outbreak, eerie scenes met those who ventured outside.

Streets were deserted in the city of Sapporo on Japan's northernmost main island of Hokkaido, where a

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 58 of 63

state of emergency was issued until mid-March. Tokyo Disneyland and Universal Studios Japan announced they would close, and big events were canceled, including a concert series by the K-pop group BTS.

In France, the archbishop of Paris advised parish priests not to administer communion by placing the sacramental bread in worshippers' mouths. Instead, priests were told to place the bread in their hands. The French government cancelled large indoor events.

Saudi Arabia closed off Islam's holiest sites in Mecca and Medina to foreign pilgrims, disrupting travel for thousands of Muslims already headed to the kingdom and potentially affecting plans later this year for millions more ahead of the fasting month of Ramadan and the annual hajj pilgrimage.

Tourist arrivals in Thailand are down 50% compared with a year ago, and in Italy — which has the most reported cases of any country outside of Asia — hotel bookings are falling and Premier Giuseppe Conte raised the specter of recession.

The head of the World Health Organization on Friday announced that the risk of the virus spreading worldwide was "very high," while U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the "window of opportunity" for containing the virus was narrowing.

Economists have forecast global growth will slip to 2.4% this year, the slowest since the Great Recession in 2009, and down from earlier expectations closer to 3%. For the United States, estimates are falling to as low as 1.7% growth this year, down from 2.3% in 2019.

Despite anxieties about a wider outbreak in the U.S., Trump has defended measures taken and lashed out at Democrats who have questioned his handling of the threat.

At a political rally Friday night in North Charleston, South Carolina, Trump asserted that Democratic complaints about his handling of the virus threat are "their new hoax," echoing similar past complaints by the president about the Russia investigation and his impeachment.

Trump accused Democrats of "politicizing" the coronavirus threat and boasted about preventive steps he's ordered in an attempt to keep the virus from spreading across the United States.

Klepper reported from Providence, R.I. Associated Press writers Joe McDonald in Beijing, Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, John Leicester in Paris, Deb Riechmann and Darlene Superville in Washington, Adam Geller, Joseph Pisani and Edith M. Lederer in New York, Hyung-jin Kim and Tong-hyung Kim in Seoul, South Korea, Renata Brito and Giada Zampano in Venice, Italy, Frances D'Emilio in Rome, Paul Wiseman, Christopher Rugaber in Washington, Marilyn Marchione in Milwaukee and Frank Jordans in Berlin contributed to this report.

Chicago mayor: Police shooting video 'extremely disturbing'

By DON BABWIN Associated Press

CHICAGO (AP) — Chicago's mayor said video footage of police shooting and wounding a suspect inside a downtown Chicago train station is "extremely disturbing" and that she supports the interim police superintendent's request for prosecutors to be sent directly to the scene — an unusual or perhaps unprecedented action in the nation's third largest city.

After watching what she called the "widely shared footage" of the Friday afternoon shooting inside the Red Line L station, Mayor Lori Lightfoot tweeted that although "one perspective does not depict the entirety of the incident, the video is extremely disturbing and the actions by these officers are deeply concerning."

"To ensure full transparency and accountability, I support Superintendent (Charlie) Beck's decision to contact the State's Attorney due to the potential criminal nature of this incident," she tweeted.

Deputy Superintendent Barbara West told reporters on Friday that the police department was conducting concurrent criminal and administrative investigations into the shooting.

Police spokesman Anthony Guglielmi told The Associated Press on Saturday that although Beck "doesn't want to rush to judgment," the cellphone footage that has been widely shared on social media and footage from Chicago Transit Authority cameras raises "significant tactical concerns" about the actions of the two officers who were involved. He said that he doesn't know of any superintendent calling prosecutors

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 59 of 63

to the scene as Beck did.

The shooting happened shortly after 4 p.m. Officers who were dispatched to the scene after receiving a call that another officer needed assistance spotted a man jumping from one car to another, which violates a city ordinance. Officers chased and ultimately grabbed the man.

The video shows a male officer lying on top of the suspect at the base of an escalator and struggling to keep the man still. The man can be heard saying, "I didn't do nothing to you," as the officer on top of him says, "Stop resisting," a number of times. As they stand up, a female officer appears to try to pepper spray the man's face before telling the man to show his hands, presumably to allow the other officer to handcuff him.

The man refuses to be handcuffed and as he stands, stun guns that the officers apparently used on the man can be seen on the floor. With the man still struggling to get away, the female officer shouted, "Give him your hands," and a gunshot rang out. As the man fled up the escalator with the officers in pursuit, a second shot was fired out of view of the camera, though it's unclear which officer fired the shots.

West told reporters that only one of the officers shot the man, striking him twice.

Police have not released the name of the man. Guglielmi said that as far as he knew, the man was still hospitalized in critical but stable condition.

Attorney Gloria Schmidt Rodriguez, who said she has been retained by the man's family, said the man underwent surgery after he was shot in the abdomen and buttocks, and that he will likely need more operations.

Schmidt Rodriguez, who also represents two brothers involved in the case of actor Jussie Smollett, said the family hired her, in part, because they anticipate the 33-year-old man might be charged with a crime and they are not getting any information from authorities. She did not reveal his name.

"They're kind of scared about what's going down, and they're not getting any information whatsoever," Schmidt Rodriguez said.

Guglielmi said investigators were examining station surveillance video and witnesses' cellphone footage. Neither of the officers involved were wearing body cameras, which have been issued to patrol officers but not yet to officers in the police department's mass transit unit.

"They will be getting them soon but every inch of the CTA is covered by surveillance cameras," so the department's priority was to get body cameras for all the patrol officers first, he said.

The Civilian Office of Police Accountability will investigate the shooting, as it does all officer-involved shootings. The officers were placed on administrative duty pending the outcome of the investigations, which is also routine.

Also, the Cook County State's Attorney's office issued a statement saying it was working with the FBI to investigate the shooting.

The shooting came on the same day that the department and the mayor announced that in response to a spike in crime on the city's rail system, dozens more officers would be assigned to CTA trains and platforms, a team of detectives would investigate nothing but CTA crimes and a Strategic Decision Support Center would be opened so that police can monitor the system's 32,000 cameras.

Beck's decision to immediately involve prosecutors comes amid police department efforts to win the public's trust following a series of police misconduct cases that have cost the city hundreds of millions of dollars in payouts. Perhaps the most notorious scandal was the 2014 killing of a black teenager, Laquan McDonald, who was shot 16 times by a police officer who was later convicted of murder. McDonald's death and the city's efforts to keep the public from seeing dashcam video of it sparked outrage that led to protests and the firing of the city's top cop.

What if they played the games and nobody came?

By Jim Litke AP Sports Writer

What if they played a game and nobody came?

Pro sports leagues in places as far-flung as Italy and South Korea are about to find out. With government approval, both Serie A soccer and the Korean Basketball League are opting to broadcast regularly scheduled games played in empty stadiums and arenas rather than postponing or canceling them — and the list of events is expanding — in response to the growing coronavirus threat.

The length of the experiment hinges on the progress of the virus. But if it's a success, both in terms of public safety and the leagues' bottom lines, it's not hard to imagine the first made-for-television-only Summer Olympics, with normally bustling Tokyo less a backdrop than a sound stage.

"It could be a viable option, and depending on the situation, maybe the only safe option by then," said Dae Hee Kwak, an associate professor and director of the Center for Sports Marketing Research at the University of Michigan.

"Say the virus lingers on and on. And governments continue banning mass-audience events and people go along with some version of self-quarantine. ... Will the games look and feel different on TV? Will people be disappointed, especially in places where attending games is part of their identity? Of course.

"But in this case, the trade-off is hardly worth it," Kwak concluded. "The fear of endangering your family and friends and community should always be greater than the fear of any lasting harm it could do to sports."

Games have been played and televised from empty stadiums before for varying reasons. But they've always been exceptions.

The Baltimore Orioles played host to Chicago White Sox in an empty Camden Yards in April, 2015, with the city still simmering outside the locked stadium gates several days after a 25-year-old black man named Freddie Gray suffered a fatal spinal-cord injury while in police custody.

Spanish soccer giant Barcelona played Las Palmas behind closed doors in October 2017 to register its protest against the government's attempt to block a vote over independence for Catalonia. The team's Camp Nou stadium, among Europe's largest with a capacity approaching 100,000, has long been a rallying point for Catalan nationalists.

The first round of the (now-defunct) North Atlantic Conference tournament was played in a nearly vacant Hartford Civic Center in March 1989 after one outbreak of measles at Siena College and another at the University of Hartford persuaded organizers to bar spectators. A win over Boston University at the buzzer gave Siena its first NCAA Tournament bid and a subsequent upset of Stanford in the first round of the big dance put the small school on the college basketball map.

"Over the long run, the way things happened made us even more famous," recalled Steve McCoy, who rebounded a missed shot and hit the game-winning layup against BU.

"I live in Boston now and I'm in church the other day, on Ash Wednesday, and I run into a Siena guy at the end of the mass. We wind up talking for an hour about '89 and how it was one of the greatest experiences of our lives. ...

"As soon as somebody finds out I played there," Mc Coy concluded, "the first thing they usually say is 'Siena had that measles team.'"

"It's not like we drew big crowds at the time, but our last two regular-season home games were empty because of the measles. So at least we had some experience with it," said Tom Huerter, McCoy's teammate at Siena back then.

"The first time you walk into an empty gym for a real game, it feels like a high school scrimmage. You can hear the coaches screaming — every word — and there's no other energy to feed off, so you've got to rely on each other," he added. "We were lucky to have a tough-minded team."

Fear of the virus spreading further in Italy forced Serie A, the top Italian league, to postpone five matches this weekend — they were scheduled to be played in empty stadiums until Saturday morning. In the biggest match, not far from the epicenter of the virus outbreak in northern Italy, league-leading Juventus was to host third-place Inter Milan in Turin — the so-called "Derby d'Italia."

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 61 of 63

"Soccer needs the crowd, to hear the atmosphere around it," Inter Milan coach Antonio Conte said. "That's the best thing about the game, the atmosphere around the soccer being played. These decisions have been taken with public health in mind but I hope that everything returns to normal as soon as possible."

That's unlikely, but sports-marketing experts say the television-only model could have staying power.

"Look at it this way: the 'gate,' has been a declining share of revenue for big-time teams and leagues for some time now," said Marc Ganis, president and founder of Chicago-based SportsCorp, a leading business consulting firm with deep ties to Chinese sports dating back more than a decade.

"Empty stadiums can only go on for so long, but for big-time enterprises — international soccer, the NFL and NBA, and especially the Olympics, say — it makes economic sense to show them in the meantime. They're essentially TV properties. Way more of their revenue is generated from broadcasting rights than ticket and concession sales.

"And right now, the biggest threat to that model is uncertainty — government mandates, public acceptance ... and at some point, while I hate to bring it up, we're going to have to add legal liability to this discussion," he said. "So far, we've been very fortunate in the United States.

"But what happens if an athlete or fan or support-staff member gets infected with the coronavirus?" he asked, then answered his own question. "Lawsuits won't be far behind."

US and Taliban sign deal aimed at ending war in Afghanistan

By **MATTHEW LEE** and **KATHY GANNON** Associated Press

DOHA, Qatar (AP) — Acknowledging a military stalemate after nearly two decades of conflict, the United States on Saturday signed a peace agreement with the Taliban that is aimed at ending America's longest war and bringing U.S. troops home from Afghanistan more than 18 years after they invaded in the wake of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The historic deal, signed by chief negotiators from the two sides and witnessed by Secretary of State Mike Pompeo, could see the withdrawal of all American and allied forces in the next 14 months and allow President Donald Trump to keep a key campaign pledge to extract the U.S. from "endless wars." But it could also easily unravel, particularly if the Taliban fail to meet their commitments.

At the White House, Trump told reporters the U.S. deserves credit for having helped Afghanistan take a step toward peace. He spoke cautiously of the deal's prospects for success and cautioned the Taliban against violating their commitments.

"We think we'll be successful in the end," he said, referring to all-Afghan peace talks and a final U.S. exit. He said he will be "meeting personally with Taliban leaders in the not-too-distant future," and described the group as "tired of war."

He did not say where or why he plans to meet with Taliban leaders. He said he thinks they are serious about the deal they signed but warned that if it fails, the U.S. could restart combat.

"If bad things happen, we'll go back" in with military firepower, Trump said.

Pompeo was similarly cautious.

"Today, we are realistic. We are seizing the best opportunity for peace in a generation," Pompeo said in the Qatari capital of Doha. "Today, we are restrained. We recognize that America shouldn't fight in perpetuity in the graveyard of empires if we can help Afghans forge peace."

Under the agreement, the U.S. would draw its forces down to 8,600 from 13,000 in the next three to four months, with the remaining U.S. forces withdrawing in 14 months. The complete pullout would depend on the Taliban meeting their commitments to prevent terrorism, including specific obligations to renounce al-Qaida and prevent that group or others from using Afghan soil to plot attacks on the U.S. or its allies.

The deal sets the stage for intra-Afghan peace talks to begin around March 10, with the aim of negotiating a permanent cease-fire and a power-sharing agreement between rival Afghan groups. It's perhaps the most complicated and difficult phase of the plan. It does not, however, tie America's withdrawal to any specific outcome from the all Afghan talks, according to U.S. officials.

Pompeo said that "the chapter of American history on the Taliban is written in blood" and stressed

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 62 of 63

that while the road ahead would be difficult, the deal represented "the best opportunity for peace in a generation."

At a parallel ceremony in Kabul, U.S. Defense Secretary Mark Esper and Afghan President Ashraf Ghani signed a joint statement committing the Afghan government to support the U.S.-Taliban deal, which is viewed skeptically by many war-weary Afghans, particularly women who fear a comeback of repression under the ultra-conservative Taliban.

President George W. Bush had ordered the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in response to 9/11. Some U.S. troops currently serving there had not yet been born when al-Qaida hijackers flew two airliners into the twin towers of the World Trade Center, crashed another into the Pentagon and took down a fourth in Pennsylvania, killing almost 3,000 people.

It only took a few months to topple the Taliban and send Osama bin Laden and top al-Qaida militants scrambling across the border into Pakistan, but the war dragged on for years as the U.S. tried to establish a stable, functioning state in one of the least developed countries in the world. The Taliban regrouped, and currently hold sway over half the country.

The United States has spent nearly \$1 trillion in Afghanistan, two-thirds of that on defense, most of it for its own soldiers but also for the Afghan Security Forces. More than 3,500 U.S. and coalition soldiers have died in Afghanistan, more than 2,400 of them Americans.

But the conflict was also frequently ignored by U.S. politicians and the American public as the memory of the attacks on that crisp, sunny morning faded, despite having changed how many Americans see the world.

While Pompeo attended the ceremony in Qatar, he appeared to avoid any direct contact with the Taliban delegation. The deal was signed by U.S. peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad and Taliban leader Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, who then shook hands. Members of the Taliban shouted "Allahu Akhbar" or "God is greatest." Others in attendance, including the Qatari hosts, applauded politely.

"We are committed to implementing this agreement," Baradar said in brief comments. "I call on all Afghans to honestly work for peace and gather around the table for peace negotiations."

Some Taliban celebrated the deal as a victory. "Today is the day of victory, which has come with the help of Allah," said Abbas Stanikzai, one of the Taliban's lead negotiators.

Meanwhile in Kabul, in a rare show of unity, Ghani sat beside his chief political rival Abdullah Abdullah at a ceremony with Esper and NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg that included a declaration between the Afghan government and the United States intended to show U.S. support for Afghanistan.

For Afghanistan's government which has been deeply criticized by its political opponents, including Abdullah, the real job ahead will be cobbling together a negotiating team to sit across from the Taliban. The talks are to determine the face of a post-war Afghanistan.

Those negotiations, to be held in Oslo, Norway, are expected to begin around March 10. The Taliban have made it clear they expect the Afghan government to release their 5,000 prisoners before the start of negotiations. Around that time, the Taliban are to release 1,000 government security forces. Until now the government has not agreed to the prisoner release which could unravel intra-Afghan negotiations before they even get started.

Esper warned the road ahead was a long one and would not be without its challenges. "This is a hopeful moment, but it is only the beginning, the road ahead will not be easy."

Trump has repeatedly promised to get the U.S. out of wars in the Middle East, and the withdrawal of troops could boost his re-election bid in a nation weary of involvement in distant conflicts. Last September, on short notice, he called off what was to be a signing ceremony with the Taliban at Camp David after a series of new Taliban attacks. But he has since been supportive of talks.

It's not clear what will become of gains made in women's rights since the toppling of the Taliban, which had repressed women and girls under a strict brand of Sharia law. Women's rights in Afghanistan had been a top concern of both the Bush and Obama administration, but it remains a deeply conservative country, with women still struggling for basic rights.

Groton Daily Independent

Sunday, March 1, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 243 ~ 63 of 63

There are currently more than 16,500 soldiers serving under the NATO banner, of which 8,000 are American. Germany has the next largest contingent, with 1,300 troops, followed by Britain with 1,100.

In all, 38 NATO countries are contributing forces to Afghanistan. The alliance officially concluded its combat mission in 2014 and now provides training and support to Afghan forces.

The U.S. has a separate contingent of 5,000 troops deployed to carry out counter-terrorism missions and provide air and ground support to Afghan forces when requested.

Since the start of negotiations with the Taliban, the U.S. has stepped up its air assaults on the Taliban as well as a local Islamic State affiliate. Last year the U.S. air force dropped more bombs on Afghanistan than in any year since 2013.

Seven days ago, the Taliban began a seven-day "reduction of violence" period, a prerequisite to the peace deal signing.

Gannon reported from Kabul, Afghanistan. Associated Press writers Rahim Faiez and Tameem Akhgar in Kabul, Lorne Cook in Brussels, Robert Burns in Washington and Joseph Krauss in Jerusalem contributed.

Today in History By The Associated Press undefined

Today in History

Today is Sunday, March 1, the 61st day of 2020. There are 305 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 1, 1974, seven people, including former Nixon White House aides H.R. Haldeman and John D. Ehrlichman, former Attorney General John Mitchell and former assistant Attorney General Robert Mardian, were indicted on charges of conspiring to obstruct justice in connection with the Watergate break-in. (These four defendants were convicted in Jan. 1975, although Mardian's conviction was later reversed.)

On this date:

In 1781, the Continental Congress declared the Articles of Confederation to be in force, following ratification by Maryland.

In 1790, President George Washington signed a measure authorizing the first United States Census. (Census Day was Aug. 2, 1790.)

In 1893, inventor Nikola Tesla first publicly demonstrated radio during a meeting of the National Electric Light Association in St. Louis by transmitting electromagnetic energy without wires.

In 1914, National Baseball Hall of Fame announcer Harry Caray was born in St. Louis, Mo.

In 1932, Charles A. Lindbergh Jr., the 20-month-old son of Charles and Anne Lindbergh, was kidnapped from the family home near Hopewell, New Jersey. (Remains identified as those of the child were found the following May.)

In 1954, four Puerto Rican nationalists opened fire from the spectators' gallery of the U.S. House of Representatives, wounding five members of Congress. The United States detonated a dry-fuel hydrogen bomb, codenamed Castle Bravo, at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

In 1957, "The Cat in the Hat" by Dr. Seuss was released to bookstores by Random House.

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy signed an executive order establishing the Peace Corps.

In 1966, the Soviet space probe Venera 3 impacted the surface of Venus, becoming the first spacecraft to reach another planet; however, Venera was unable to transmit any data, its communications system having failed.

In 1971, a bomb went off inside a men's room at the U.S. Capitol; the radical group Weather Underground claimed responsibility for the pre-dawn blast.

In 1981, Irish Republican Army member Bobby Sands began a hunger strike at the Maze Prison in Northern Ireland; he died 65 days later.

In 1996, President Bill Clinton slapped economic sanctions on Colombia, concluding that Colombian authorities had not fully cooperated with the U.S. war on drugs. The Food and Drug Administration ap-