

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 1 of 75

- [2- School Board Story](#)
- [4- Superintendent's Report to the BOE](#)
- [5- MS/HS Principal's Report to the BOE](#)
- [6- Sump Pump Reminder](#)
- [7- School Board Photo](#)
- [7- Sunsent photo from last night](#)
- [8- Pappas earns third at State Speech and Debate Contest](#)
- [9- Obit: Norman Townsend](#)
- [10- Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs](#)
- [11- Weather Pages](#)
- [14- Daily Devotional](#)
- [15- 2020 Groton Events](#)
- [16- News from the Associated Press](#)



Click here to view the video of the school board meeting from last night

## School Board

Monday, March 9, 2020

**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

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 2 of 75

## Board adopts 2020-21 School Calendar

There was discussion on the 2020-21 school calendar. Superintendent Joe Schwan proposed a start date of August 20th. Board members Deb Gengerke and Kara Pharis were in favor of the the later start date of August 25. The board agreed with the August 25th start date and the final day of school will be May 17th.

Schwan also mentioned that McLaughlin has forfeited its football season for this fall. Groton Area will pick up Stanley County. There will be five home games this year and three away games. Homecoming will be September 25th with Redfield.

### 2020-2021 Groton Area School District

Amended 2/10/2020

August 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						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					

August	
18 - Faculty Inservice	
19 - Open House/Picnic (5:00-7:30)	
19 - Faculty Inservice	
25 - 1st Day of School	

Student Contact: 5 ; Inservice: 2

January 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
					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						

January	
1 - Christmas Break - NO SCHOOL	
4 - School Resumes	
15 - NCSEC Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL	

Student Contact: 19 ; Inservice: 1

September 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		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			

September	
4 - NO SCHOOL	
7 - Labor Day - NO SCHOOL	
21 - Homecoming Coronation (7:30)	
25 - Homecoming FB vs. Redfield	

Student Contact: 20; Inservice: 0

February 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	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						

February	
11 - Parent/Teacher Conferences - (1:30 - 8:30)	
12 - Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL	
15 - President's Day - NO SCHOOL	

Student Contact: 18; Inservice: 2

October 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				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

October	
8 - Parent/Teacher Conferences (1:30 - 8:30)	
9 - Lake Region Marching Festival	
9 - Faculty Inservice - NO SCHOOL	
22 - End of 1st Quarter (40)	

Student Contact: 21 ; Inservice: 2

March 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
	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			

March	
10 - End of 3rd Quarter (45)	
18-19 - Spring Break - NO SCHOOL	

Student Contact: 21; Inservice: 0

November 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
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					

November	
11 - Veterans Day Program	
25-27 - Thanksgiving - NO SCHOOL	

Student Contact: 18 ; Inservice: 0

April 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
				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	

April	
2 - Good Friday - NO SCHOOL	
5 - Easter Monday - NO SCHOOL	
11 - Pops Concert (2:00 & 5:00)	
24 - PROM	
29 - Middle School Spring Concert (7:00)	

Student Contact: 20; Inservice: 0

December 2020						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
		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		

December	
10 - MS/HS Christmas Concert (7:00)	
22 - Elementary Christmas Concert (1:00)	
22 - Early Dismissal (2:00)	
22 - End of 1st Semester (40/80)	
23-31 Christmas Break - NO SCHOOL	

80 Student Contact: 16 ; Inservice: 0

May 2021						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
						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					

May	
4 - Elementary Spring Concert (7:00)	
6 - HS Concert/Awards Night (7:00)	
16 - Graduation (2:00)	
17 - End of 2nd Semester (44/89)	
18 - Faculty Inservice	
31 - Memorial Day	

89 Student Contact: 11 ; Inservice: 1

- Faculty Inservice
- No School
- Important Dates
- End of Quarter/Semester
- Early Dismissal

All make-up days will be added to the end of the school calendar.

For this year, it was voted to amend this school year to end May 21st with faculty last day to be May 22nd.

A bill waiting for the governor's signature would allow school districts to have a maximum amount of Capital Outlay set from \$2,800 per student to \$3,400 per student. Business Manager Mike Weber said that would increase the district's revenue by \$200,000 to \$250,000 in Capital Outlay.

Weber reported that there will be a school board election on April 14th with voter registration deadline set for March 30th.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 3 of 75

Sarah Schuster presented her project for filling water bottle stations - one in the Arena and one in the concessions stand area. Schuster has received over \$4,000 in donations for the filling stations. The board granted approval of allowing logos on the filling stations and they should be installed by the start of the next school year. Schuster has had overwhelming support for this project.

The resignation/retirement of Darlyne Johnson was approved effective by the end of this school year. Schwan also reported that there are four applications for her position.

The bus bid from Harlow's of Webster was approved for \$82,156.13. The district was approved for a 25 percent grant for eliminating a diesel bus with a maximum of \$21,000 for the grant.

Two mower bids were opened from RDO and Green Iron Equipment. The board accepted Green Iron's bid of \$20,018.62 with a trade-in value of \$10,000.

The board decided to secure bids for work comp and property liability insurance with bids to be opened first meeting in April.

The health food service inspection for February was 100 percent for the elementary school and 99 percent for the MS/HS (something was spilled on the freezer door).

Hannah Gustafson was hired a student custodian at a rate of \$9.45 an hour.

The board gave Mike Nehls permission to run for Brown County Commissioner.

A lane change for Carrie Weisenburger was approved from MS to MS+15

All administrative contacts were turned in signed.

- Paul Kosel



**Sarah Schuster talking to the Board of Education about the water bottle filling stations.**

(Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)



**Mike Nehls talked to the Board of Education about his running for Brown County Commissioner. School employees need to get permission from the board before they can for public office.** (Photo lifted from GDILIVE.COM video)

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 4 of 75

## Superintendent's Report to the Groton Area School District 06-6 Board of Education

March 9, 2020

**HS Mathematics Position.** The mathematics position created by the retirement of Mrs. Johnson was posed on February 19 and is scheduled to close on Friday, March 13. We currently have four applicants for this opening and will begin to schedule interviews by mid-week.

**Coronavirus.** Like everyone else, we've been getting updates from the Department of Health regarding the spread of the COVID-19 virus. Current guidance is mostly around preventive measures such as effective hand washing and staying home if and when you are sick. We have a good supply of the appropriate cleaners and hand sanitizer in each building.

**Legislative Session.** The final day of legislative session is March 12 (veto day is March 30). There is still no consensus on the level of funding that will be available for K-12 schools. The Senate seems to be of the mindset that they need to fund education with a 2% increase as required by law. The House seems to be of the mindset that they'd like to provide increases of 1% each to K-12 schools, Medicaid providers, and state employees. Just today, the Governor held a press conference announcing that a plan has been developed that will allow for a 2% increase to K-12 schools, Medicaid providers, and state employees.

HB1175. Define dyslexia for the purposes of special education and related services. [Awaiting Governor's Signature]

HB1206. Revise certain provisions regarding the commitment of a delinquent child to the Department of Corrections. [Due for consideration by Senate]

HB1228. Include children with a hearing loss in the reporting criteria required for deaf and hard-of-hearing children. [Due for consideration by Senate]

HB1255. Remove the requirement for a mandatory appraisal in exchanges of land between school districts. [Awaiting Governor's Signature]

SB39. Establish the Jobs for SD Graduates program and the special donation fund. [Due for consideration by House]

SB142. Establish certain restrictions regarding the state subsidized dual credit program. [Amended and passed by House]

SB170. Revise certain provisions regarding school district capital outlay funds. [Awaiting Governor's Signature]

SB174. Revise the purposes for which a school district's capital outlay fund may be used. [Awaiting Governor's Signature]

**Board Meetings.** Just a reminder that we will have two meetings in March (3/9/2020 and 3/23/2020) and April (Tuesday, 4/14/2020 and 4/27/2020).

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 5 of 75

Principal's Report

MS/HS Building, Mrs. Sombke

March 9, 2020

- 1) **SDCNA (SD Comprehensive Needs Assessment) Progress**- Please see Red Folder
  - A) **Red Folder Contents:**
    - a) **White** Form/Contact Hours- Staff that participate in the School Improvement Trainings/Meetings will be able to earn credit
    - b) **Yellow** Summary Page- this page is actually the summary that shows the results of the different survey and data collections. Looking on the back of the yellow sheet under "Emerging Needs by Component" is where our group started this past Friday, March 6th when beginning the **Root Cause Analysis Work** when meeting in Watertown to continue the Comprehensive Needs Assessment
    - c) **Pink** Summary Page-this shows the summary from the parent, student, and teacher surveys for the component "Effective Leadership"
    - d) **Blue** Summary Page- this shows the data summary from Stephanie Wiedeman Teacher Observations and the Teacher Survey Summary for the component "Curriculum and Instruction"
    - e) **Green** Summary Page- this shows the summary from the Teacher survey and Non-Certified Staff Survey for the component "Talent Development"
    - f) **Purple** Summary Page- this shows the summary from the student, parent, and teacher survey for the component "Family, Culture, and Climate"
    - g) **White "Asking Powerful Questions" Worksheet**-inside front Cover- this was the tool our teams used to establish the "Root Cause" as evidenced through the data that has been collected. Our MS/HS Team has identified two "Root Causes" and will meet to finish the necessary work before we again meet in Watertown on March 27<sup>th</sup> to begin work on the "Action Plan". On the back of the Root Cause Worksheet you will find the Evidence-Based Intervention Resource Page that was handed out for us to refer to as we begin our work of creating an Action Plan.
    - h) **Cream and Hot Pink Quantitative Data**-This shows the Data Collected from various sources for the MS/HS buildings
  - B) **Dual Credit Update/Postcard**
    - a) **Postcard:** Mrs. Schwan has mailed out post cards reminding and informing students and parents of the upcoming Dual Credit Meeting on March 31<sup>st</sup> @ 6:00pm in the HS Library Conference Room
    - b) **Dual Credit Registration-** Registration for Dual Credit will be April 1-2; please see Mrs. Schwan with questions or information
  - C) **ACT Test**
    - a) **April 4<sup>th</sup>**- next testing date; Please see Mrs. Schwan with questions or for more information
  - D) **SPED 593: 2020 Beyond Zero Tolerance: Finding What Works in School Discipline**
    - a) Mrs. Sombke will be attending this training offered through USD on three different days in March, April, and May
    - b) The purpose of this training is to provide training and assistance to SD educators and administrators who are seeking to learn more about the implementation of restorative practices and finding what works best when enforcing student discipline. The course will delve into alternative disciplinary practices beyond zero tolerance, discovering practical strategies and developing a school-wide approach when responding to challenging student behavior.

## Just A Reminder



Sump Pumps  
Must Be  
Discharged  
Outside (NOT In The  
Sanitary Sewer)!

Thanks For Your  
Immediate Compliance!

If You Are Already Pumping Outside  
Please Disregard This Notice.

*Groton City Council*

Failure To Comply Will Result In Fines

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 7 of 75



**The Groton Area Board of Education is made up of the following: In front, Board President Steve Smith, Vice-President Marty Weismantel; in back, left to right, are Kara Pharis, TJ Harder, Tigh Flihs, Grant Rix and Deb Gengerke. It could be mentioned that Grant is a third generation board member. His grandfather, Jerry Rix, and his dad, Roger Rix, were past board members. (Photo by Paul Kosel)**



**It was a pretty sunset last night in this photo taken by Julianna Kosel.**



**Samantha Pappas  
Third at State**  
(Courtesy Photo)

## **Pappas earns third at State Speech and Debate Contest**

GHS Junior Samantha Pappas earned 3rd place in Domestic Extemp at the SDHSAA State Speech and Debate Contest March 6-7 in Huron, SD. Also participating at state were juniors Sage Mortenson (Public Forum Debate and Original Oratory) and Hailey Monson (Public Forum). The speech season will come to a conclusion on March 12th with the Congressional Debate national qualifying contest in Aberdeen.



**Pictured are  
Hailey Monson,  
Sage Mortenson,  
Samantha Pappas  
and Coach  
Kristen Gonsoir.  
The Groton team  
competed in the  
state speech and  
debate contest.**

(Courtesy Photo)



## The Life of Norman Townsend

Services for Norman Townsend, 85, of Andover were held Monday, March 9, 2020 at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Groton. The Rev. Charlie Bunk officiated. Burial with military honors followed in Sunset Memorial Gardens, Aberdeen under the direction of Paetznick-Garness Funeral Chapel, Groton.

Norman passed away March 2, 2020 at his home.

Norman Howard was born on June 28, 1934 in rural Pierpont to Howard and Marie (Torguson) Townsend. He attended and graduated from Pierpont High School. Norman enlisted in the US Army in November of 1955 and was honorably discharged in November of 1957. He returned home and worked for several years hauling gravel for Stanton Hammer. Norman was also employed at the local filling station in Pierpont. On May 6, 1962 he was united in marriage with Doris Hauck in Aberdeen. Together they farmed side by side for 55 years.

Norman was a member of Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Groton. He was also a member of Eastern Star Diana Chapter #83 and served many roles in the OES Grand Family. Norman began as a Mason in the Pierpont Veritas #196, later transferring to Andover Corinthian #82 and more recently, Groton #65. In earlier years, he enjoyed bowling, playing cards, and enjoyed many trail rides as a member of the Silver Spurs Saddle Club. Together, he and Doris took many bus trips and enjoyed meeting new friends along the way.

Norman made it a priority to attend as many lutefisk suppers as he could and more importantly, he enjoyed the company and conversation of others. One of his greatest joys was his grandchildren and great grandchildren. He always enjoyed hearing about their many activities and adventures.

Celebrating his life are his children, Brian Townsend of Brookings, Dean (Kellie) Townsend of Andover, Jane (Wade) Gubrud of Gary and Gaylon (Nichol) Townsend of Warner, nine grandchildren: Kayla (Jordan) Martens, Collin Townsend, Cassandra & Travis Townsend, Grant, Kaitlyn and Nolan Gubrud, Colton and Kya Townsend, three great-grandchildren, Rylee, Owen and Mya Martens. Norman is also survived by his sisters, Dee Herrick of California, Velma (Mel) Pibal of Minnesota, sister-in-law, Marjorie Townsend and brother-in-law, Luke Auen.

Preceding him in death were his parents, his wife, one brother, Russell, two sisters, Anna Lou Auen, Elaine (Harold) Herr, and brother-in-law, Robert Herrick.

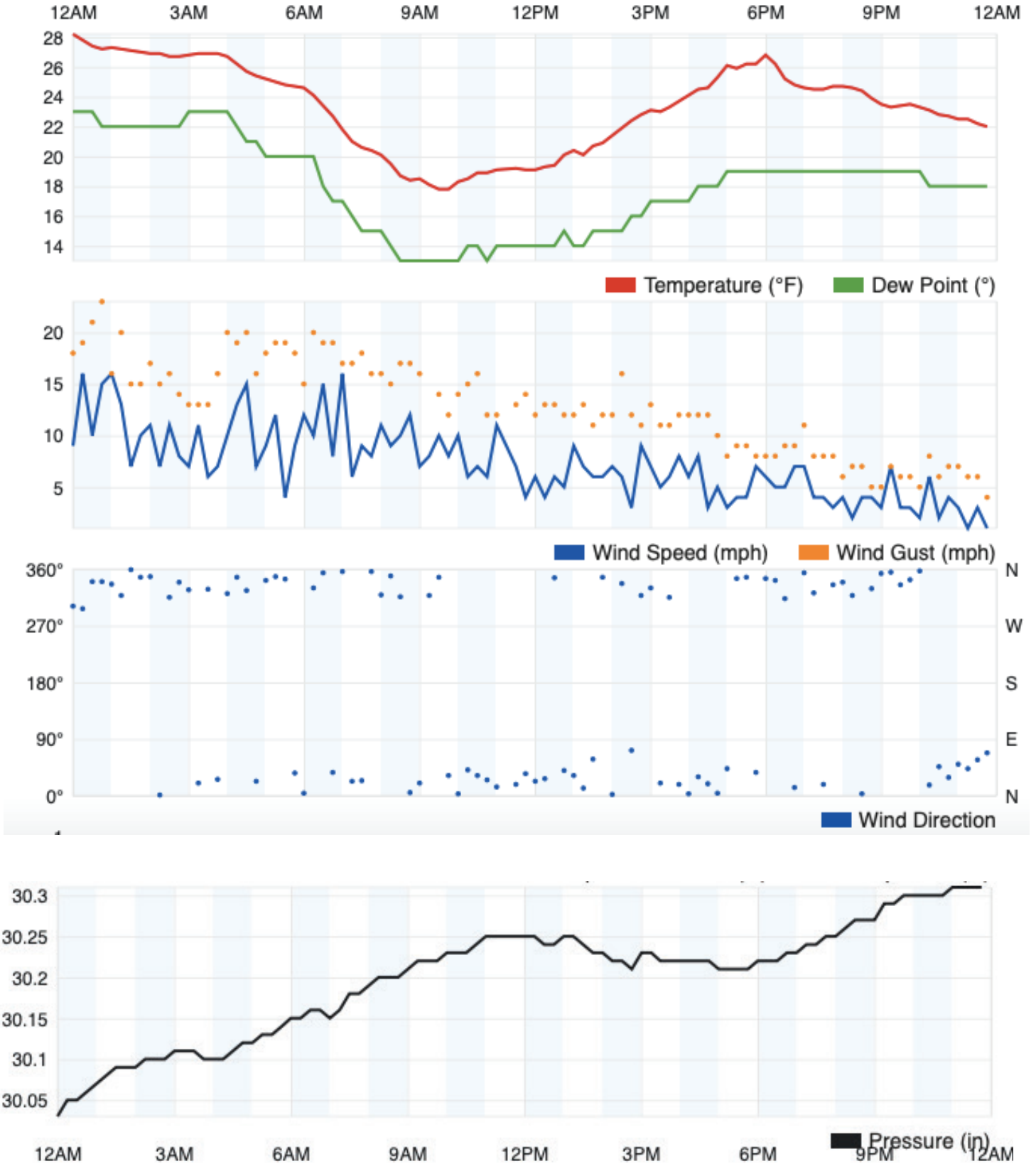
Casketbearers were Norman's grandchildren.



# Groton Daily Independent






Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 10 of 75

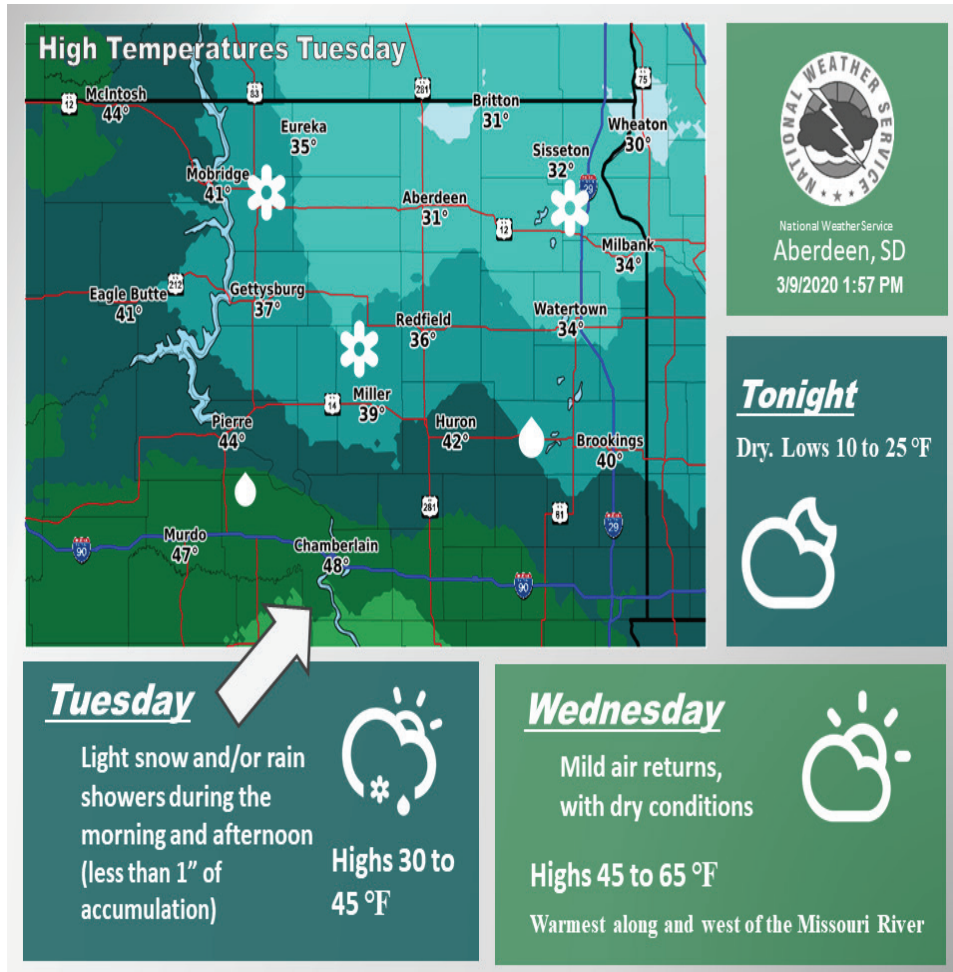
## Yesterday's Groton Weather Graphs



# Broton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 11 of 75

Today	Tonight	Wednesday	Wednesday Night	Thursday
				
Cloudy then Chance Snow	Slight Chance Snow then Mostly Cloudy	Mostly Cloudy	Slight Chance Rain then Chance Rain/Snow	Chance Snow then Mostly Sunny
<b>High: 34 °F</b>	<b>Low: 20 °F</b>	<b>High: 47 °F</b>	<b>Low: 31 °F</b>	<b>High: 41 °F</b>



Light snow is possible this morning and afternoon, but accumulations will be light. Milder air returns Wednesday, but it should be the warmest day of the week.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 12 of 75

## Today in Weather History

March 10, 2005: High winds of 35 to 45 mph with gusts to near 70 mph occurred across all of central and northeast South Dakota from early morning to early evening. The high winds overturned a semi-truck near Mound City; knocked a large branch down onto a pickup truck in Selby; blew a glass door of a store in Clark off; tore a sign down in Aberdeen, and ripped the roof off a mobile home in South Shore.

March 10, 2009: A low-pressure system tracking across the panhandle of Oklahoma into the Great Lakes region produced moderate to heavy snow across northeast South Dakota from the morning to the evening of the 10th. Strong north to northwest winds gusting to 45 mph resulted in blizzard conditions. Travel became difficult, if not, impossible across northeast South Dakota. Interstate 29 between Watertown and the North Dakota border was closed for several hours. Several minor accidents occurred, along with some injuries. Snowfall amounts included; 3 inches near Milbank; 4 inches near Columbia, Summit, and at Sisseton; 5 inches at Waubay and Wilmot; 6 inches 10 miles northeast of Sisseton, Britton, and Roy Lake; 7 inches in Webster and Westport.

Bitter cold air filtered in behind the low-pressure system bringing record cold to the area. On the 11th, Aberdeen and Sisseton broke their record low highs for the date with afternoon highs only reaching zero. The record at Aberdeen had been in place since 1896. Sisseton also set a record low of 14 degrees below zero on March 12th.

1884: John Park Finley issued the first experimental tornado prediction. Finley had studied the atmospheric parameters that were present during previous tornadoes. Many of these same criteria are still used by operational forecasters today. But the use of tornado forecasts would be banned just a few years later and would remain banned until 1952.

1986: Severe thunderstorms and tornadoes hit Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. A total of 19 tornadoes occurred. Three of the tornadoes in Indiana reached F3 intensity. A densely populated subdivision of Southeast Lexington, Kentucky, was heavily damaged by a tornado. Twenty people were injured, and 900 homes were destroyed or demolished. A very strong thunderstorm downburst hit the Cincinnati area. At the Greater Cincinnati Airport, windows were blown out of the control tower, injuring the six controllers on duty. At Newport, Kentucky, 120 houses were destroyed from winds estimated from 100 to 140 mph. Click [HERE](#) for more information about the Lexington, Kentucky tornado from the NWS Office in Louisville.

1989: Thirty-four cities in the central and southwestern U.S. reported new record high temperatures for the date. The high of 85 degrees at Hanksville, Utah, was a record for March, and Pueblo, Colorado, equaled their March record of 86 degrees. Hill City, Kansas warmed from a morning low of 30 degrees to an afternoon high of 89 degrees.

1912 - The barometric pressure reached 29.26 inches at Los Angeles, CA, and 29.46 inches at San Diego CA, setting all-time records for those two locations. (David Ludlum)

1922 - Dodge City, KS, reported a record 24 hour total of 17.5 inches of snow. (The Weather Channel)

1987 - Strong northwesterly winds ushered arctic air into the eastern U.S. Gales lashed the middle and northern Atlantic coast. Winds gusted to 50 mph at Manteo NC and Cape Hatteras NC. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

1988 - A winter storm produced snow and high winds in the Central Rocky Mountain Region. Snowfall totals in Utah ranged up to 42 inches at Alta, with 36 inches reported at the Brian Head Ski Resort in 24 hours. Winds gusted to 72 mph at La Junta CO and Artesia NM. (The National Weather Summary) (Storm Data)

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 13 of 75

## Yesterday's Groton Weather Today's Info

**High Temp: 28 °F at 12:00 AM**

**Low Temp: 18 °F at 9:31 AM**

**Wind: 23 mph at 12:36 AM**

**Snow**

**Record High: 65° in 1936**

**Record Low: -20° in 1951**

**Average High: 37°F**

**Average Low: 18°F**

**Average Precip in March.: 0.27**

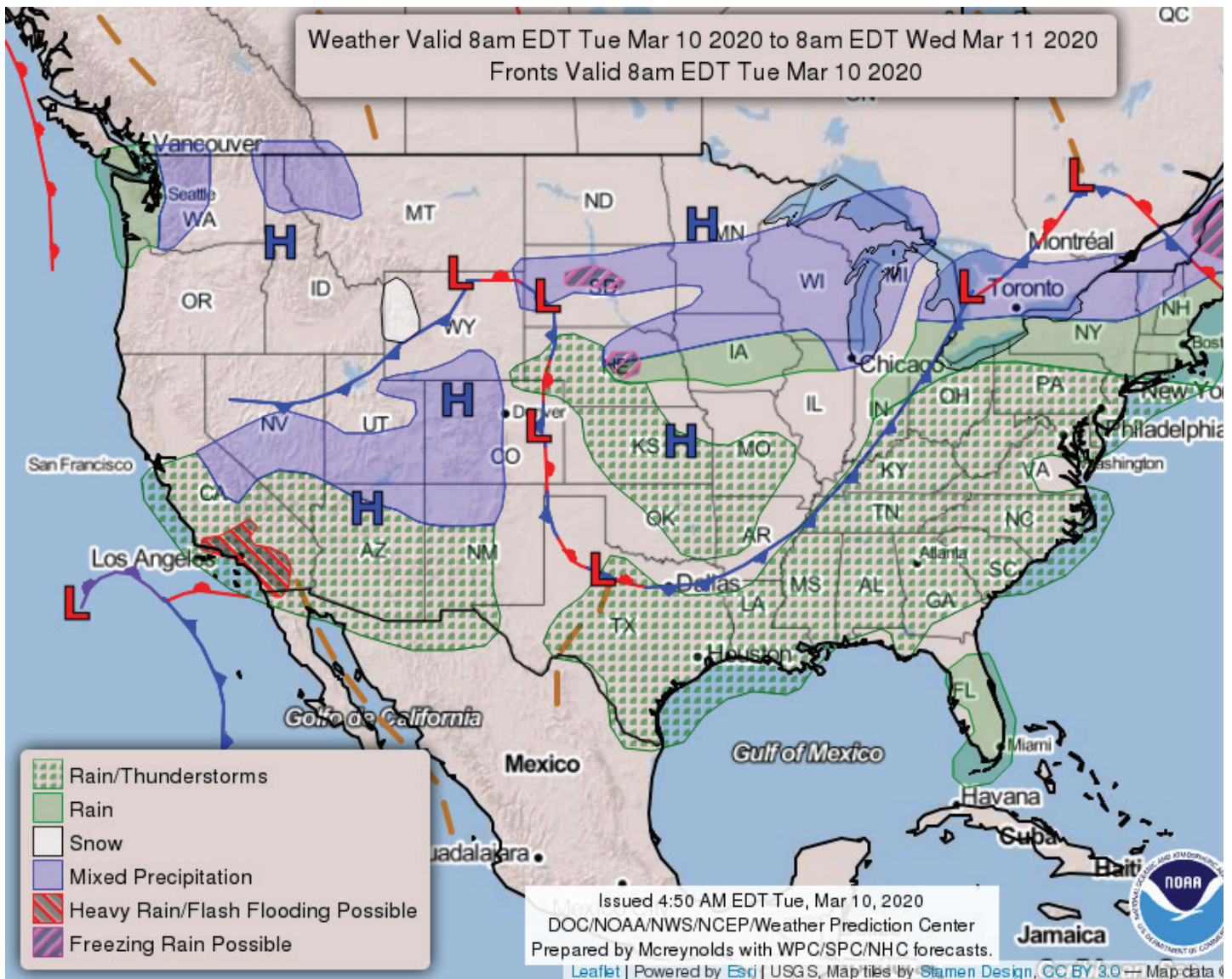
**Precip to date in March.: 0.00**

**Average Precip to date: 1.29**

**Precip Year to Date: 0.35**

**Sunset Tonight: 7:34 p.m.**

**Sunrise Tomorrow: 7:53 a.m.**



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 14 of 75



## DECISIONS, DECISIONS

A farmer in rural Georgia was getting behind in his work so he hired a man to help him. The first day he asked him to dig a row of holes for a new fence. After he explained how to use the "digger," he left the man to do his work. The hired hand completed digging the holes for the new fence in record time, and as a reward, the farmer gave him the rest of the day off.

The next day he gave him a much easier job: sorting good potatoes from bad ones. Halfway through the morning, he went to the farmer and said, "I've got to lie down. I have developed a horrible headache from making all of those decisions."

Some of us look for excuses to escape the more difficult responsibilities that God gives us. We'd rather not take the time to develop our minds or make the effort to sharpen our skills and accept the opportunities to develop the gifts that God gives. We look for the "easy way" out. Life's tough enough!

However, we must always remember one critical fact: God will never give us any skill or talent or gift unless He has something special for us to do. His gifts are unique for the work He has for us to do, and are designed to meet His expectations for the plan and purpose He has for our lives. No matter what He asks us to do, He will enable and empower us to do what only we are called to do. Finally, God will not ask us to do what we cannot do. When He calls us, He'll equip us to succeed.

Prayer: Lord, we thank You for the gifts You have given us. May we take Your gifts and use them to bring You honor and glory by serving others. Thank You for calling us to be Your partners. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Scripture For Today: Galatians 5:22-23 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 15 of 75

## 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

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 16 of 75

## News from the Associated Press

### **N. Dakota advances to Summit final after 73-56 win**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Kienan Walter scored 20 points with nine rebounds and sixth-seeded North Dakota beat No. 7 Purdue Fort Wayne 73-56 in Monday night's Summit League Conference tournament semifinal.

The Fighting Hawks (15-17) face No. 1 North Dakota State in Tuesday's championship game.

Marlon Stewart had 15 points, scoring in double figures for his 25th straight game to set a North Dakota Division I record. Filip Rebraca scored 14 points with 10 rebounds and De'Sean Allen-Eikens added 10 points.

Matt Holba scored 17 points for the Mastodons (14-19), Jarred Godfrey added 13 and Dylan Carl had 10.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and [http://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](http://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

### **Monday's Scores** By The Associated Press

#### GIRLS PREP BASKETBALL

Class A SoDak 16

State Qualifier

Aberdeen Roncalli 47, McCook Central/Montrose 35

Flandreau 60, West Central 55

Hamlin 46, Mt. Vernon/Plankinton 36

Hill City 45, Crow Creek 43

Lennox 55, Miller 20

Red Cloud 60, Pierre 41

St. Thomas More 64, Tri-Valley 43

Winner 67, Redfield 38

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

### **Ward lifts NDSU past Oral Roberts in Summit League tourney**

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Tyson Ward had 21 points as top-seeded North Dakota State topped Oral Roberts 75-69 in the Summit League Conference tournament semifinals on Monday night.

NDSU is looking for its fourth league tournament title in seven years and its fifth NCAA Tournament appearance in school history.

Vinnie Shahid had 17 points and six rebounds for North Dakota State (24-8). Cameron Hunter added 12 points and Sam Griesel had seven rebounds.

Kevin Obanor had 27 points and 10 rebounds for the No. 4 seed Golden Eagles (17-14). R.J. Fuqua scored a career-high 23 points and had eight rebounds. Deondre Burns had 13 points and eight rebounds. Emmanuel Nzekwesi, whose 16 points per game coming into the contest led the Golden Eagles, had two points on 1-of-10 shooting.

For more AP college basketball coverage: <https://apnews.com/Collegebasketball> and [http://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](http://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

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# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 17 of 75

## With deadlines looming, budgets and bills enter final stages

By STEPHEN GROVES Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — With deadlines looming, lawmakers scrambled on Monday to decide on several high-profile initiatives, including legalizing industrial hemp, Gov. Kristi Noem's streamlining of county permits for feedlots and allowing written driver's license exams to be taken in Spanish.

Lawmakers met for extended hours, and budget negotiations entered final stages. As lawmakers pushed to meet a deadline to get proposals cleared by both the House and Senate on Monday, here's a look at what survived.

### HEMP

Lawmaker's push to legalize industrial hemp entered a state of flux as the Senate rewrote the 26-page bill that Noem's office had helped craft with one placeholder sentence stating that lawmakers will implement a plan for hemp.

Senators who supported the rewrite insisted that the hemp bill is not dead.

Senate Majority Leader Kris Langer, a Dell Rapids Republican, said the rewrite process will give them more time to "promote ongoing discussions."

Langer and other Senators in favor of hemp said they expect the hemp bill to come back the way it was written, just with the governor's figures for funding included in the bill.

Noem and lawmakers appeared to take one more step towards resolving their year-long dispute hours before the Senate meeting as the governor announced a proposal to allot \$3.5 million in the state budget.

The Republican governor has argued the hemp program will change the way the state enforces its marijuana laws and wants \$3.5 million in the state budget for 15 new staff positions, testing equipment, drug storage and beefed-up law enforcement.

"It had to be done in a responsible manner," Noem told reporters on Monday.

Lawmakers in the House have argued that those cost estimates are excessive and the program could be implemented under the Department of Agriculture at a much lower price.

### SPANISH LANGUAGE TESTS

The House passed a proposal to allow South Dakotans the option to take the written-portion of driver's license examinations in Spanish.

A coalition of business groups and members of the Latino community pushed the proposal as an important boost to helping Spanish-speakers get driver's licenses that help them get to work and attend school.

Several Republican lawmakers opposed to the bill argued that offering Spanish exams would discourage people from learning English and assimilating into communities. They also raised concerns over paying for the exams.

"This is a no tax, no cost bill," said Rep. Jess Olson, a Rapid City Republican who pushed the bill. She said a private donor has offered to pay for the costs of offering written tests in Spanish.

She also argued that learning to drive would help people integrate into communities.

### RIOT BILL TWEAK

The Senate passed a "companion bill" to clean up some of the language in Noem's proposal to revive the state's riot laws.

The companion bill gets rid of the term "riot boosting," which refers to civil penalties for people or groups that incite rioting. It also strikes a phrase in the bill that would allow a "third party" to seek civil damages from people who incite a riot and clarifies that civil penalties can only be levied for "damages," not "liabilities."

Sen. Red Dawn Foster, a Pine Ridge Democrat who opposed both bills, said this proposal "is a bit better, but it still has the same intent" as the original bill.

Noem has argued her proposal ensures peaceful protests are protected. The Legislature already cleared that bill.

### STREAMLINED PERMITTING

The South Dakota Legislature cleared Noem's proposal to streamline the decision-making process for

county permits.

The governor pitched the bill to lawmakers this year as a way to “set the rules of the game” for permit decisions and encourage economic growth in rural communities. The bill paves the way for feedlots and other projects like wind farms and makes it more difficult for people to contest permit decisions once they are made.

The House amended one line of the bill to stipulate that permit decisions have to be made by a majority of the county board, not just those who are present at the meeting.

The House passed the bill on Monday, and it will next proceed to Noem’s desk to be signed into law.

## STATEWIDE CRISIS HOTLINE

The House passed a proposal to require the statewide expansion of a crisis hotline designed for people in a mental crisis or struggling with addiction issues, but the House and Senate are at odds over who should pay for the bulk of its funding.

The Senate passed a version that would require the state to pay for counties to establish hotlines, but the House version puts most of the financial burden on counties, pitching in 50 cents of state funding for every dollar that counties put towards their hotline.

Rep. Linda Duba, a Sioux Falls Democrat, said the funding was important to expanding the hotline to rural counties.

The difference will be settled this week.

The bill is part of a series of bills looking to bolster the state’s mental health resources.

## House and Senate at odds over expanding crisis hotline

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota House passed a proposal on Monday to require the statewide expansion of a crisis hotline designed for people in a mental crisis or struggling with addiction issues, but the House and Senate are at odds over who should pay for the bulk of its funding.

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Rep. Linda Duba, a Sioux Falls Democrat, said the funding was important to expanding the hotline to rural counties.

The difference will be settled this week.

The bill is part of a series of bills looking to bolster the state’s mental health resources.

## Senators want more time to negotiate hemp funding

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Lawmakers in the Senate on Monday pushed a proposal to legalize industrial hemp to the negotiating table rather than send it straight to Gov. Kristi Noem’s desk.

As the Legislature nears its final days, it is not clear if lawmakers will meet demands from Noem to allot \$3.5 million for the program. Republican senators initiated a legislative maneuver to rewrite the 26-page bill with a single placeholder sentence. The move sends the bill into negotiations with House lawmakers.

Senate Majority Leader Kris Langer, a Dell Rapids Republican, said the rewrite process will give them more time to “promote ongoing discussions.”

Langer and other senators in favor of hemp said they expect the bill to come back the way it was written, just with the governor’s figures for funding.

Noem and lawmakers appeared to take one more step towards resolving their year-long dispute hours before the Senate meeting, as the governor announced a proposal to allot \$3.5 million in the state budget for hemp.

The Republican governor has argued the hemp program will change the way South Dakota enforces its marijuana laws and wants \$3.5 million in the budget for 15 new staff positions, testing equipment, drug storage and beefed-up law enforcement.

“It had to be done in a responsible manner,” Noem told reporters on Monday.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 19 of 75

Lawmakers in the House have argued that those cost estimates are excessive and that the program could be implemented under the Department of Agriculture at a much lower cost.

When asked last week by The Associated Press if she would veto the bill if it did not meet her funding requirements, Noem said she expects legislators to fully fund the program.

## Legislature clears Noem's change to county permit decisions

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — The South Dakota Legislature cleared a proposal on Monday from Gov. Kristi Noem to streamline the decision-making process for county permits.

The Republican governor pitched the bill to lawmakers this year as a way to "set the rules of the game" for permit decisions and encourage economic growth in rural communities. The bill paves the way for feedlots and other projects like wind farms and makes it more difficult for people to contest permit decisions once they are made.

The House amended one line of the bill to stipulate that permit decisions have to be made by a majority of the county board, not just those who are present at a meeting. Lawmakers then passed the bill.

The House will negotiate with senators this week on whether the amendment will stay in the bill when it goes to Noem's desk.

## No. 17 South Dakota women roll past Oral Roberts in Summit

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — Taylor Frederick scored 16 points, Hannah Sjerven added a double-double with seven blocks and No. 17 South Dakota coasted past fourth-seeded Oral Roberts 65-43 in the Summit League semifinals on Monday.

The Coyotes (29-2) were tied with the Golden Eagles (15-16) after one quarter before dominating the second quarter en route to their 18th-straight win.

Sjerven, who had 15 points and matched her career high with 13 rebounds, scored the first seven points in a quarter-opening 14-0 run, and South Dakota closed with nine-straight points to lead 35-15 at the half. The Coyotes were 10 of 16 from the field and limited Oral Roberts to one banked in 3-pointer on 20 shots plus two free throws.

South Dakota advanced to its third straight league title game, facing second-seeded South Dakota State on Tuesday.

Frederick, the Summit sixth-woman of the year, was 8-of-10 shooting, the two misses coming in the first quarter when South Dakota was 5 of 20. League player of the year Ciara Duffy added 10 points. Sjerven, the defensive player of the year, matched her career high for blocked shots and pushed her season total to 63. She moved into fourth on the school career list with 126.

Oral Roberts, which has lost 12 straight in the series, was led by Keni Jo Lippe with 18 points and 13 rebounds.

South Dakota was up 65-29 when it scored its last basket with 5 1/2 minutes to play. The Golden Eagles, which only lost by two at home in their last meeting, the only conference game South Dakota didn't win by double figures, scored the last 14 points of the game.

More AP women's basketball: <https://apnews.com/Womenscollegebasketball> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Top25](https://twitter.com/AP_Top25)

## Governor: Budget proposal has room for pay raises and hemp

By **STEPHEN GROVES** Associated Press

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — Gov. Kristi Noem announced Monday that the state will have sufficient room in her proposed budget to raise pay for teachers and state employees, as well as to launch an industrial hemp program.

The Republican governor said increases in tax revenue and cuts to other programs will provide enough

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 20 of 75

money to give a 2% bump to funding for pay increases. Noem will also get the \$3.5 million she said is necessary to “responsibly” start an industrial hemp program.

With Republicans who control the Legislature on board, the budget items are practically a done deal and clear up a couple major questions as budget negotiations enter final stages. Lawmakers have until the end of the week to pass a budget, which will take effect in July.

Noem told reporters that she asked state agencies to tighten their budgets to clear room for the other items. Some of the money will come from programs at the Department of Social Services and Human Services that Noem said are underused, citing fewer people in nursing homes and declining Medicaid enrollment. She also requested deferment of a planned increase in maintenance and repair of state government buildings.

When Noem proposed the budget in December, she told lawmakers there was no room for the pay increases. Tax revenue was running behind projections as the state recovered from flooding. But in the last few months, revenue rebounded and the Legislature predicted they would have \$19 million more than what Noem predicted.

It will cost about \$55 million for the pay raises for state employees, service providers and educators.

Democrats, who hold a handful of seats, said they were pleased with the funding for pay increases, which has been their top priority this year.

Noem’s announcement on hemp funding likely resolves a year-long dispute with legislators. She conceded to lawmakers that she would not veto a hemp bill like she did last year, but only if it met her requirements, including funding. The \$3.5 million will cover the cost of 15 full-time positions, new testing equipment, four police dogs and expanded drug storage space for the state’s drug lab and Highway Patrol.

Lawmakers had argued those costs were excessive, but accepted the governor’s demands on Monday.

“It will make it a better product because we did this,” said Republican House Majority Leader Lee Qualm, who introduced the hemp bill.

## Wyoming tribe to vote; medical marijuana backers press case

FORT WASHAKIE, Wyo. (AP) — Advocates for legalizing medical marijuana have been pressing their case in the days before a possible vote this weekend on Wyoming’s Wind River Reservation.

The Eastern Shoshone, who share the central Wyoming reservation with the Northern Arapaho Tribe, could vote on the issue Saturday during a meeting of the tribe’s General Council, the Casper Star-Tribune reports.

Legal medical marijuana and industrial hemp production could diversify the reservation economy, create jobs and offer another medical treatment option, advocates have said.

A number of U.S. tribes have legalized marijuana and industrial hemp in pursuit of economic and medical benefits. On Tuesday, the Oglala Sioux Tribe plan to vote on whether to allow medical and recreational marijuana.

Eastern Shoshone officials have said they do not plan to legalize recreational marijuana.

Wyoming law prohibits medical or recreational marijuana and marijuana remains illegal under federal law. But the U.S. Department of Justice since 2014 has treated tribes similarly to states and has not interfered with loosened tribal cannabis laws.

Recent public informational events have sought to win over skeptics on the Wyoming reservation.

“New faces are out there talking about it on a positive note,” said Bobbi Shongutsie, an Eastern Shoshone member leading an effort to research the issue and draft proposals. “If we bring these people here, and they hear it and they see it for themselves, they’re going to believe us.”

The Eastern Shoshone General Council voted in September to create a group to research the issue and present proposals for a vote. Legalization of medical marijuana and industrial hemp cultivation was on the General Council agenda in January but the lack of a quorum prevented a vote.

Lack of a quorum also prevented a vote when medical marijuana and hemp cultivation were on a Northern Arapaho General Council agenda in December. The council may consider the issue again later this month.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 21 of 75

The general councils, made up of all of the tribes' adult members, oversee all tribal affairs including the tribes' business councils, which consist of elected officials charged with day-to-day governing.

## Oglala ban tribal employee travel, urge public to stay away

RAPID CITY, S.D. (AP) — The Oglala Sioux president is suspending all travel for tribal employees and is urging people who don't live on the reservation to stay away from it because of the international outbreak of coronavirus.

Julian Bear Runner has called an emergency meeting for Monday morning to address the travel ban he's enacted for tribal employees effective immediately.

Bear Runner is also discouraging the general public from coming onto the Pine Ridge Reservation to visit, according to the Rapid City Journal.

"In order to further protect the health and general welfare of the Oglala Lakota Nation, I strongly recommend the general public coming from off the reservation to visit, to postpone your visits until a time deemed necessary that the travel suspension is lifted," he said.

He asked that all tribal members practice good hygiene and take precautions if they travel to areas that have been exposed to the virus, airports and other public places.

## South Dakota can test about 900 for the coronavirus

PIERRE, S.D. (AP) — South Dakota health officials say the state has the ability to test about 900 people for the coronavirus.

To date, no confirmed cases of COVID-19 have surfaced in South Dakota. The Department of Health says it tested five people so far and all were negative.

Department spokesman Derrick Haskins said the state has about 1900 tests for the virus. And since an individual would need to undergo a minimum of two of the tests, including an oral and a nasal swab, the state can test about 900 people.

Anyone who suspects they have been infected should contact their healthcare provider by phone before going to a hospital or clinic, Haskins said.

And since the flu is also circulating, not everyone with respiratory symptoms should be tested, according to the Argus Leader.

Whether a test is ordered depends on several factors, including a patient's travel history, whether they've been exposed to a confirmed case of COVID-19 and their risk for a severe infection, according to health officials.

## Tentacles of Olympic cancellation would reach around globe

By **STEPHEN WADE** and **GRAHAM DUNBAR** AP Sports Writers

TOKYO (AP) — The tentacles of canceling the Tokyo Olympics — or postponing or staging it in empty venues — would reach into every corner of the globe, much like the spreading virus that now imperils the opening ceremony on July 24.

The International Olympic Committee and local organizers say the games are on, but the clock is ticking.

The fate of the Tokyo Games touches 11,000 Olympic and 4,400 Paralympic athletes, coaches and sports officials, local organizers, the Japanese government and national morale, international broadcasters, fans and world sponsors. Add to this hotels, airlines and taxi drivers — and even 80,000 unpaid volunteers who will miss a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

"I've heard things about possibly the Olympics being canceled, and I think that would stink," J'den Cox, a two-time world champion wrestler and an Olympic bronze medalist in Rio de Janeiro, told The Associated Press. "It would probably break everybody's heart if that were to happen."

The Olympic brand could be damaged, although the Switzerland-based International Olympic Committee may be among the least affected parties financially if the games are called off. The IOC has been resolute

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 22 of 75

in its message, although it has a several-month window to decide.

"Hard to imagine this will be defined by the end of May, but it could be," Dr. Ali Khan, an epidemiologist and dean of the College of Public Health at the University of Nebraska, told the AP in an email. "Regardless, numerous sick athletes could not lead to a very interesting games.

"From what we know from numerous other mass-gathering events including sporting events, it is very easy to spread diseases worldwide from such events — from meningitis to Zika," Khan added. "Besides welcoming athletes and spectators with their tiny microbes, there is and may be ongoing disease in Japan."

Kazuhiro Tateda, an expert on infectious diseases and a member of a Japanese government panel, said the virus may not die out quickly.

"Unlike the flu that disappears with warmer weather, the response to the new coronavirus, I think, will have to continue for half a year or a year," Tateda told Japanese broadcaster NHK on Tuesday.

The IOC has ample financial safeguards against cancellation, which has happened only in wartime since the modern Olympics began in 1896. Its latest annual report shows it has almost \$2 billion in reserve that could cover running costs until the 2022 Winter Olympics in Beijing.

The IOC's annual reports show it paid almost \$14.4 million in an insurance premium to protect against canceling the 2016 Rio Olympics and \$12.8 million for a policy to cover the 2018 Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang, South Korea.

IOC President Thomas Bach was asked last week after an executive board meeting if the insurance premium has risen to as much as \$20 million for a Tokyo policy.

"I don't know," he replied. "It wasn't discussed at this EB."

Wolfgang Maennig, an Olympic rowing gold medalist who teaches sports economics at Hamburg University, said the losses will be shared.

"Insurance companies will have to pay a large amount of the losses of the IOC," Maennig said in an email to the AP. "The rest will have to be borne by the IOC."

The IOC controls the Olympics and has wide latitude to act. Its protection is spelled out in the 81-page Host City Contract, signed in 2013 with the city of Tokyo and the Japanese Olympic Committee.

The preamble to the contract states: "the Olympic Games are the exclusive property of the IOC which owns all rights ... to their organization, staging, exploitation, broadcasting, recording, representation, reproduction ... whether now existing or developed in the future, throughout the world in perpetuity."

The contract also specifies that the IOC can terminate and withdraw from the city because of a "state of war, civil disorder, or boycott ... or if the IOC has reasonable grounds to believe, in its sole discretion, that the safety of participants in the games would be seriously threatened or jeopardized for any reason whatsoever."

Victor Matheson, a sports economist at the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts, said athletes are the most vulnerable. The Olympics feature 33 sports, and many of the smaller ones have a limited following until games time.

"For athletes, their career length isn't long and in many sports success in the Olympics is your one shot at a financial return," Matheson told the AP.

Matheson said losses by hotels and other service businesses are unlikely to be insured. The billions on government spending on venues looks like a risky investment. The loss of the Olympics would negate the difficult-to-calculate goodwill that Japan and Tokyo might have won.

An Irish bookmaker is showing odds leaning slightly toward the Olympics not going forward. Odds are 4-6 it will not open on July 24 in Tokyo, and even that it will.

Tokyo is officially spending \$12.6 billion to organize the Olympics, although a national government audit office says it's at least twice that much. The local organizing committee budget of \$5.6 billion is private money, with the rest coming from Japanese taxpayers. About \$1 billion in the local operating budget is to come from ticket sales, which would be lost if the games go ahead without fans in empty stadiums.

"Some combination of the IOC, the broadcasters, and the insurers will lose big," Matheson said. "That loss is coming out of someone's pocket depending on how all of the contracts are written."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 23 of 75

Andrew Zimbalist, who teaches economics at Smith College in Northampton, Massachusetts, said some of the venues, such as the \$1.43 billion national stadium, would have "enduring value."

"But virtually none of it would have made the list of the priority public investments," he said in an email to the AP, adding that if the games were canceled, much of the investment would be "wasted."

The IOC has said repeatedly the games will go on, and says it relies on advice from the World Health Organization. The WHO, the U.N. health agency, has so far resisted describing the crisis as a "pandemic," which could force the IOC's hand. But many experts say that threshold has already been met.

More than 113,000 people have been infected worldwide from the virus, far more than those sickened by SARS, MERS or Ebola in recent years. More than 4,000 have died.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the WHO, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks. Those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 63,000 so far have recovered.

About 73% of the IOC's income of \$5.7 billion in the latest four-year Olympic cycle (2013-2016) was from selling broadcast rights. The U.S. network NBC makes up at least half of the broadcast payments. Another 18% of IOC income is from sponsorships.

NBC parent company Comcast said that because of insurance and the way contracts are written, NBC won't suffer losses if the Olympics are canceled. But Comcast CEO Brian Roberts said the company would miss out on ad-driven profits, which were \$250 million for the 2016 Rio Olympics. The ad profits for 2020 are expected to be larger.

NBC signed a deal to pay \$4.38 billion for four Olympics — 2014 through 2020. It has a new agreement to pay \$7.75 billion for the following six Olympics — 2022 through 2032.

Christopher Chase, an attorney based in New York who specializes in sports, intellectual property and media, said sponsors and broadcasters were unlikely to sue for breach of contracts if the games are not held, or the conditions were changed.

Chase, a partner in the law firm Frankfurt Kurnit, said many such contracts would have "force majeure" or "changed circumstances" clauses that spell out unforeseeable conditions that keep a contract from being fulfilled; these act as a defense for non-performance by either party, but in this case, more likely the event producer.

The IOC, much like other large properties such as FIFA and the NFL, "the last thing they want to do is refund fees or lower the cost of what the sponsorship is," Chase told the AP. "The last thing they want to do is give any money back or charge less. So typically what they try to do is negotiate some kind of make-good or substitute benefits."

Over and above the IOC's major sponsorship deals, local sponsors have paid just over \$3 billion to the organizing committee.

"Any party that has already spent money to put people on the ground, flights and hotel rooms and all those types of things, are most likely going to lose out on that," Chase said. "The sponsorship fee may be the least of their concerns."

Dunbar reported from Lausanne, Switzerland; AP Medical Writer Maria Cheng in London, and AP Sports Writer Eric Olson in Omaha, Nebraska, contributed to this report.

More AP sports: <https://apnews.com/apf-sports> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_Sports](https://twitter.com/AP_Sports)

## Spotty sick leave policies limit options for avoiding virus

**KELVIN CHAN and MAE ANDERSON AP Business Writers**

LONDON (AP) — A barber in Beijing is supporting his wife and child by charging food and other expenses to a credit card while he waits for his employer's shop to reopen. A waiter at a barbecue restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri, washes his hands more often and hopes for the best. A parcel delivery driver in Britain worries about getting sick from the people who sign for their packages.

While white collar workers trying to avoid contagion can work from home or call in sick if they experience symptoms of the virus, that's not an option for the millions of waiters, delivery workers, cashiers, ride-hailing drivers, museum attendants and countless others who routinely come into contact with the public.

Their dilemma is often compounded by spotty sick leave policies or inadequate health insurance coverage, leaving them vulnerable to the fast-spreading coronavirus that has already claimed thousands of lives and put them in a financially precarious position.

"The recommendations on what people should be doing to protect themselves really gives a sharp indication of the divide between white collar and blue collar workers," said Shannon Liss-Reardon, a workers rights attorney in Boston. "Our social safety net is just not equipped at this moment to deal with a crisis like this, and it will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable low wage workers."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the outbreak emerged in December, almost three-fourths of more than 80,000 patients have recovered.

While tech companies like Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft have implemented work-from-home policies, only 29% of U.S. workers have that option, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That means retail workers like Mendy Hughes must fend for themselves. The Walmart cashier in Malvern, Arkansas, serves hundreds of people a day and her big worry is what will happen to her income if she catches the virus or comes in contact with someone who's had it and must self-quarantine for 14 days.

"If I can't go to work, I could try to take a leave but it will be unpaid," said Hughes, who earns \$11.60 an hour. "I don't know what I would be doing about taking care of my family."

Hughes, a diabetic and mother of four, gets 48 hours of sick leave a year but she fears it wouldn't be nearly enough time to recover.

In the United States, about 27% of private sector workers don't have access to paid sick leave, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Some countries, like Britain, are looking into helping out non-permanent workers. There is no federal sick leave policy in the U.S., but 12 of the 50 states and Washington D.C. require employers to offer paid sick leave.

Some House and Senate Democrats have been pushing legislation that would require employers to allow workers to accrue seven days of paid sick leave and to provide an additional 14 days in the event of any public health emergency, including the current coronavirus crisis. President Donald Trump said he was seeking help for hourly-wage workers to ensure they're "not going to miss a paycheck," and he would outline the proposals Tuesday.

In Britain, parcel delivery driver Ed Cross worries about catching the virus from the machine he hands people who sign for their packages.

"People have coughed on their hand and then got hold of my machine and you sort of make a joke of it trying to point it out," Cross, 53, said. "But yeah, it's what we face daily."

"We only have to go to the wrong house and we could catch it, as simple as that," said Cross, who on a recent day handed packages to 110 people on his route in Whitby, northern England.

The British government last week made it easier to collect statutory sick pay and is working on changes to help millions of non-permanent workers like Cross who aren't eligible for it. In a sign the industry is



# Groton Daily Independent

**Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 25 of 75**

waking up to the problem, his parcel company, Hermes, announced a 1 million pound (\$1.3 million) fund to help couriers who need to self-isolate.

Uber, meanwhile, said it would compensate drivers and couriers for up to 14 days if they get sick or have to be quarantined.

The viral outbreak has revealed gaping holes in health care coverage at a time when people may need it most. Most European countries and Canada have universal healthcare systems, but the U.S. relies on a patchwork of public and private insurance. About 69% of private industry workers in the U.S. have access to healthcare benefits, but that drops to 43% of service workers. U.S. employers with 50 or more employees are required to offer health insurance. But the same protection isn't provided to part-time workers or independent contractors.

Waiter Joey Ingham, who works at a barbecue restaurant in Kansas City, Missouri, popular with business travelers, says he doesn't have insurance. His protection? Washing his hands more often.

"If I wasn't able to come into work, it would be hard to make ends meet," said Ingham, who waits on 80 to 120 people a shift. If he felt sick, he'd "probably talk to a manager" about what to do, but noted management hasn't yet outlined any policies.

Liss-Reardon said most gig workers — independent or temporary contractors — she represents don't have health insurance.

"We won't have a fully insured population until we get universal healthcare," he said. "There are going to be these huge gaps. The burden is falling on the poorest and most vulnerable in our society. This is just another example."

The American Academy of Family Physicians recommends workers without insurance contact a local health department or community health center for help. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends emergency room visits only for patients who are very sick.

In France, where people have the right not to work and get full pay when they consider their workplaces to be dangerous, some service staff briefly stayed home because of contagion concerns. Workers at the Louvre, the world's most-visited museum, refused to work for two days and were only coaxed back after management introduced a raft of new anti-virus measures.

"We are asking for gloves. We are asking for disinfectant gels, and masks for the drivers," said Bastien Berthier, of the Paris metro's UNSA union.

In China, where the outbreak has been raging for two months, many service industry workers have it far worse, with business evaporating as people are forced to hunker down at home.

A barber in Beijing who would give only his surname, Long, said he is supporting his wife and child by charging food and other expenses to a credit card while he waits for his employer to reopen.

"I can ask for sick leave or compassionate leave, but I get nothing without working," said Long, 33.

Jiang Yanlin, a tour guide in eastern China's Huangshan region, said she hasn't earned anything since mid-January and doesn't have any social welfare benefits to fall back on. Usually she can earn up 300 yuan (\$42) a day during the normally busy Lunar New Year holiday.

"If I don't work, I don't get paid. Everyone here in the Huangshan tourist zone is like this," said Jiang, 33. "No one is coming to travel. Everyone is so scared."

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The Associated Press receives support for health and science coverage from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

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Anderson reported from New York. Associated Press writers John Leicester in Paris, Jill Lawless in London, AP researcher Yu Bing in Beijing contributed.

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Follow AP's virus coverage at: <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak>

## Xi visits virus' epicenter as fears of recession grip world

By YANAN WANG and MATT SEDENSKY Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's president visited the center of the global virus outbreak Tuesday as Italy began a sweeping nationwide travel ban and people worldwide braced for the possibility of recession.

President Xi Jinping's trip to the coronavirus' epicenter of Wuhan — his first since the start of the outbreak — came as parts of his country return to normalcy, and was a sign of the diminishing threat the illness presents in China as it spreads west.

Nowhere was that more evident than Italy, where travel restrictions previously limited to the country's north were extended everywhere beginning Tuesday, with soldiers and police enforcing bans. Some 9,172 people were infected in Italy and 463 have died and there was a growing sense the numbers would only worsen.

"We're only at the beginning," said Dr. Massimo Galli, head of infectious disease at Sacco Hospital in Milan, where people at the city's main train station were required to sign forms certifying the necessity of their travel.

Outbreaks flared in France, Spain and Germany, and fear grew in the United States, where more than 750 people are infected and even some senior political leaders were quarantined.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The World Health Organization says people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while severe cases may last three to six weeks. In mainland China, where the outbreak emerged in December, almost three-fourths of its more than 80,000 patients have recovered.

Regardless, the virus has shaken global markets, with stocks taking their worst one-day beating on Wall Street since 2008 and oil prices suffering their most brutal losses since the start of the 1991 Gulf War.

Even with Asian markets posting modest gains Tuesday, fear was rampant that economies stood at the brink of recession.

"Right now, it's all-out panic," said Phil Flynn of the Price Futures Group brokerage.

Xi's trip to Wuhan came as the country recorded just 19 new cases of the virus Tuesday. The official Xinhua News Agency said Xi went to a hastily built hospital, visited with patients and encouraged staff to "firm up confidence in defeating the epidemic." He then visited Wuhan residents under quarantine at home, Xinhua reported.

The visit also was likely to be seen as an attempt to bolster views of the ruling Communist Party's handling of the crisis. Xi was conspicuously absent from the public eye during the early days of the outbreak and alarms were not sounded until late January.

Wuhan and nearby cities have been under lockdown since then, though, in a virus-containment measure.

Ying Yong, the party secretary of Hubei province where Wuhan is located, told local officials that preparations should be made for resuming business production and the safe and orderly movement of individuals, according to a notice published on Hubei's government website.

Already, there are signs the lockdown is loosening. Jingzhou, a city in Hubei, has ordered roads and village entrances in low-risk areas to be reopened to restore agricultural production. And Hubei's government said Tuesday it is launching an app-based system in which people who are deemed healthy and not at risk are given green codes to allow them to travel freely within the province.

The edge toward normalcy in China and improving reports from South Korea — where new infections continued to dip — contrasted with a widening problem elsewhere in the world.

Italy's far-reaching restrictions were to last through April 3 and violators risked up to three months in jail or fines of 206 euros (\$225). Schools and universities were remaining closed and pubs, eateries and cafes were to shutter at dusk.

"Our habits must be changed, changed now," Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said.

Conte assured Italians supermarkets would remain open and stocked Tuesday after some 24-hour mar-

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 27 of 75

kets experienced overnight runs.

In Soave, a wine-producing town near Verona, normal bustling streets were nearly deserted.

Cafe owner Valentino Bonturi said he was enforcing new restrictions to ensure patrons weren't bunched too closely, meaning people needed to be seated rather than stand at a counter, as is customary.

"We follow the rules," he said.

In the U.S., President Donald Trump was planning to announce proposals Tuesday aimed at curbing the economic fallout from the outbreak. He said the measures would include payroll tax relief.

Trump dove into handshakes with supporters Monday and flew back from a Florida fundraiser with a lawmaker who later went into a voluntary quarantine because he came into contact with someone who had tested positive for the virus. Trump's incoming chief of staff, too, went into quarantine, also stemming from concerns from a conservative political gathering attended by an infected person.

In California, the cruise ship Grand Princess, which had been forced to idle off the coast, docked at the Port of Oakland, but only a few hundred of some 3,500 passengers and crew had disembarked by early Tuesday.

Worldwide, more than 114,000 cases of the virus have been reported in about 100 countries. The leader of WHO, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, said Monday, "the threat of a pandemic has become very real."

The most recent additions are Panama, adding to a few dozen cases in Latin America, and Mongolia, which borders China. Authorities there said Tuesday the country's first virus patient was a French energy worker who met with colleagues and traveled while he was infected.

Sedensky reported from Bangkok. Contributing to this report were Colleen Barry in Soave, Italy; Nicole Winfield in Rome; Antonio Calanni in Milan; and Ken Moritsugu in Beijing.

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## 10 Things to Know for Today

By The Associated Press undefined

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

1. XI VISITS VIRUS' EPICENTER AS RECESSION FEARS GRIP WORLD China's president visits Wuhan, the center of the global virus outbreak, as Italy begins a nationwide travel ban and people worldwide brace for the possibility of recession.

2. 'EVERYONE WAS HOLLERING AND CLAPPING' Thousands of passengers aboard the virus-stricken Grand Princess cruise ship wait for their chance to leave the vessel in California, even if it meant being quarantined at military bases.

3. VIRUS PUSHES ITALY TO BRINK Italian doctors celebrate one small victory against the virus after Patient No. 1 was moved out of intensive care. But in the rest of hard-hit Lombardy, physicians are choosing who gets the limited number of ICU beds.

4. GLOBAL STOCKS STEADY AFTER HISTORIC PLUNGE World markets rebound from record-setting declines after Trump says he would ask Congress for a tax cut and other measures to counter the spreading coronavirus outbreak.

5. MICHIGAN THE BIG PRIZE IN LATEST PRIMARY The state could either revive Bernie Sanders' presidential campaign or relegate him to the role of protest candidate to front-runner Joe Biden.

6. US TAKES STEP FORWARD IN TALIBAN PEACE DEAL The U.S. military begins withdrawing troops from Afghanistan while the country's president also promises to start releasing Taliban prisoners after a delay.

7. WHAT WEINSTEIN'S LAWYERS WANT Attorneys for the former Hollywood mogul say he only deserves

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 28 of 75

five years in prison for his rape conviction after already suffering a "historic" fall from grace and serious health issues.

8. FIFTH-THIRD ACCUSED OF FRAUD A federal regulator alleges that the Cincinnati-based bank opened fake accounts like Wells Fargo to meet aggressive sales targets.

9. PEARL JAM POSTPONES FIRST LEG OF TOUR The Seattle-based band puts off the North American dates of its Gigaton world tour this spring because of concerns over the new coronavirus.

10. WHO STANDS TO LOSE MOST OVER OLYMPICS CANCELLATION The most affected would be the athletes, broadcasters, sponsors and a Japanese government that has spent billions to organize the Tokyo Games.

## Thousands on virus-hit cruise ship await disembarkation

By **OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ** and **DAISY NGUYEN** Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — Thousands of passengers aboard a cruise ship struck by the novel coronavirus waited anxiously Tuesday for their chance to leave the vessel, even if it meant being shipped to military bases for weeks of quarantine.

After days of being forced to idle off the Northern California coast, the Grand Princess docked Monday at the Port of Oakland with some 3,500 passengers and crew on board.

"Everyone was hollering and clapping" as the giant vessel sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge and entered the harbor, passenger Karen Schwartz Dever said.

About two dozen people who need acute medical care were taken off the ship, although it wasn't clear how many had tested positive for the new virus, said Brian Ferguson, a spokesman for the California Office of Emergency Services.

Many of the nearly 240 Canadians on board left the ship after the critically ill and stood outside two tents displaying Canadian flags. Canada and the UK were among the countries sending chartered flights to retrieve their citizens.

But some 2,000 passengers, including hundreds of Californians, were still aboard by the time disembarkation ended Monday night. It was to resume Tuesday morning, the captain told passengers.

Carolyn Wright, 63, of Santa Fe, New Mexico, could look out of her cabin window as passengers lined up. Around them, she noted, were people in yellow protective clothing, gloves and even a few hazardous materials suits.

For days, passengers aboard the ship had been isolated in their cabins. When they were finally allowed a few minutes on deck, she said, they were warned to wear masks and try to stay 6 feet away from each other.

But after docking, video showed long lines forming for the processing tents. Ambulances were on hand to take some passengers away.

"They were cueing up the passengers like cattle," Wright said. "Everybody was bunched up. They were physically touching each other and they were backed up along the gangplank." Then, she said, they were taken away in chartered buses.

"I'm just totally freaked out by that," said Wright. "It's outrageous. If that's safe, then why were we stuck in our rooms? It's been stressed for the past five days that we're not to have any contact with any other passengers?"

"We're trying to stay calm and were trying to stay positive but it's getting harder and harder. They can't make up their minds how to keep us safe," said Wright's cabin mate, Beryl Ward, 77, of Santa Fe.

"The president didn't even want us to get off the ship. So that didn't make me happy," she added. "Wish you were here, Mr. Trump!"

On Sunday, before the ship docked, Dr. John Redd of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services had urged passengers to remain in their rooms and said: "We're making every effort to get them off the ship as safely and quickly as possible."

He called the elaborate but quickly planned disembarkation process a "really unprecedented and difficult

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 29 of 75

operation.”

The Grand Princess had been held off the coast since Wednesday because of evidence that it was the breeding ground for more than 20 infections tied to a previous voyage.

U.S. passengers will be flown or bused from the port — chosen for its proximity to an airport and a military base — to bases in California, Texas and Georgia for testing and a 14-day quarantine. Some arrived Monday night at Travis Air Force Base in Northern California. The ship carried people from 54 countries, and foreigners were to be whisked home.

But Wright and others said nobody had been told the details. Only about 50 people had been tested for the virus.

“I’m willing to be quarantined,” Wright said. “But I want to know if I’m positive or not. We don’t even know if we’re going to get tested. It’s all rumor and speculation.”

“I’m bored and frustrated,” she added. “All of a sudden a two-week vacation has turned into a five-week vacation.” Passengers need to worry about who is looking after their children or pets, not to mention preparing their taxes before the deadline and earning a living. A professional photographer, she was looking at five weeks without earning a salary.

About 1,100 crew members, 19 of whom have tested positive for COVID-19, the disease caused by the virus, will be quarantined and treated aboard the ship, which will dock elsewhere after passengers are unloaded, California Gov. Gavin Newsom has said.

The California governor and Oakland mayor sought to reassure people that none of the cruise ship passengers would be exposed to the public before completing the quarantine. Officials were trying to decide where the ship and its crew would go next.

Cruise ships have come under scrutiny by those who view them as potential germ factories because they pack thousands of people in close quarters.

Another Princess ship, the Diamond Princess, was quarantined for two weeks in Yokohama, Japan, last month because of the virus. Ultimately, about 700 of the 3,700 people aboard became infected in what experts pronounced a public health failure.

A third vessel, the Caribbean Princess, was supposed to dock in Grand Cayman on Monday but the cruise line said it will keep its thousands of passengers and crews from disembarking until crew members are tested for COVID-19.

Around the world, nations have limited the movements of millions of people in an effort to stop the spread of COVID-19. Italy was to impose travel restrictions and other strict public health measures nationwide starting Tuesday.

In Northern California, Santa Clara County announced a ban of all large gatherings of at least 1,000 people for the rest of the month in response to the coronavirus outbreak. The announcement Monday came hours after the public health department announced the county’s first coronavirus death, a woman in her 60s.

The virus has shaken global markets, with stocks taking their worst one-day beating on Wall Street since 2008 and oil prices suffering their most brutal losses since the start of the 1991 Gulf War. Even with Asian markets posting modest gains Tuesday, fear was rampant that economies stood at the brink of recession.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered.

The virus has infected 600 people in the United States, and at least 26 have died, most in Washington state. Surgeon General Jerome Adams said communities will need to start thinking about canceling large gatherings, closing schools and letting more employees work from home, as many companies have done after an outbreak in the Seattle area.

Pearl Jam on Monday announced it was postponing 17 North American shows on its upcoming tour over coronavirus concerns.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 30 of 75

In Silicon Valley, NASA's Ames Research Center is essentially closed with restricted access because an employee tested positive Sunday for the coronavirus. Workers will be on "mandatory telework status" and three earth science airplane missions are being delayed to later this year, the county said.

Several universities have begun online-only courses, including the University of Washington, Stanford University and Columbia University.

Rodriguez reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Janie Har, Jocelyn Gecker and Juliet Williams in San Francisco and Robert Jablon in Los Angeles also contributed to this report.

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This story has been corrected to identify an Offices of Emergency Services spokesman as Brian Ferguson.

## 'Odd' quirk raises delegate stakes in Tuesday's elections

By SETH BORENSTEIN Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — A quirk in how delegates are won under Democratic Party rules is raising the stakes for Tuesday's elections, allowing a candidate to make up ground in the race quickly — or fall further behind.

Five states — Michigan, Washington, Missouri, Mississippi and Idaho — hold Democratic primaries on Tuesday, while North Dakota has a caucus. All told, there are 352 delegates up for grabs. A candidate needs 1,991 delegates to win the Democratic presidential nomination.

That makes for only the fourth-largest delegate night on the primary calendar. But the intricate arithmetic of how delegates are won under Democrats' rules makes it possible for a candidate to reap a bigger haul of delegates with a smaller margin of victory on this Tuesday than on any other night.

For Bernie Sanders, it's an opportunity to catch up to Joe Biden, who enters the day ahead by 96 delegates. For Biden, it's a chance to open up what could become an insurmountable lead.

How this happens may seem complicated, but it's nothing more than some basic math and an "odd" quirk of how delegates are won under party rules.

Most delegates awarded Tuesday — 65% — will be won based on how the candidates perform in individual congressional districts. Think of each district as holding a bucket of delegates. There are also two buckets of delegates in each state awarded based on the overall statewide vote.

On Tuesday, that makes for 51 buckets of delegates across the six states. A candidate needs to win at least 15% of the overall vote in a bucket to be "viable" — or to qualify to win delegates. (That 15% threshold means it's all but assured that only Biden and Sanders win any delegates from this point forward.)

First, the math. Party rules say each viable candidate wins a proportion of the delegates in each bucket based on his share of the votes cast for the viable candidates in that bucket.

Second, the quirk. Buckets that have an odd number of delegates are impossible to split evenly, meaning either Sanders or Biden is guaranteed to win at least one more than the other.

Say, for example, there are seven delegates in a bucket, and Sanders gets 51% and Biden gets 49% of the viable votes. In delegates, that's 3.57 to 3.43 — a difference of just 0.14 delegates. But thanks to rounding, Sanders gets four and Biden gets three.

Nearly two-thirds of the 352 delegates at stake on Tuesday are in buckets with an odd number of delegates — more than on any other night with more than one primary.

Democratic National Committee member Elaine Kamarck, who was Walter Mondale's delegate hunter during his campaign for president in 1984, said it's "odd" how the odd-even districts work out, but it all adds up to whoever does best on Tuesday waking up Wednesday with "a comfortable haul."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 31 of 75

But wait: It gets better — or worse, if you're the candidate who ends up behind. After the primaries on March 17, most of the delegates to be won come from buckets with an even number of delegates.

Why does that matter? It means Biden or Sanders will need to win far more than 50% of the vote in a bucket to win more delegates than his rival. From a bucket holding six delegates, a candidate needs more than 58.3% to win four delegates. In a district with eight delegates, the leader needs 56.3% to get five.

Put another way, a candidate could keep coming in second in the overall vote, but so long as he keeps the race relatively close, he'll still end up with the same number of delegates in an "even" bucket as the candidate who finishes first.

And that means whoever does best on Tuesday, and next week when Arizona, Florida, Ohio and Illinois get their turn, could end up with a delegate lead that can't be beat.

"It's just funny how the numbers just work out," Kamarck said Monday, and that means Tuesday night is "a big deal."

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

## Global stocks steady after plunge on virus, oil crash

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Global stock markets rebounded Tuesday from record-setting declines after President Donald Trump said he would ask Congress for a tax cut and other measures to ease the pain of the spreading coronavirus outbreak.

Oil prices also recovered some of their losses in Monday's record-setting plunge.

London opened 1.8% higher and Frankfurt advanced 1%. China's main stock index rose 1.8% and Tokyo closed up 0.9%.

On Wall Street, which suffered its biggest one-day drop since the 2008 global crisis on Monday, futures for the benchmark S&P 500 index picked up 3.9% and the contract for the Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 3.8%.

Monday's global selloff reflected alarm over economic damage from the coronavirus that emerged in China in December. Anti-disease controls that shut down Chinese factories are spreading as the United States and European countries close schools, cancel public events and impose travel controls.

Anxiety mounted after Italy, the hardest-hit place in Europe, said travel controls imposed earlier on its north would be extended nationwide. Ireland canceled St. Patrick's Day parades and Israel ordered visitors quarantined ahead of Passover and Easter, one of the busiest travel periods of the year.

The mounting losses and a flight by investors into the safe haven of bonds have fueled warnings the global economy, which already was showing signs of cooling, might be headed into a recession.

The drop in U.S. stock prices was so sharp that it triggered Wall Street's first trading halt in more than two decades. But Trump's comment that he will seek relief for workers as ripple effects of the outbreak spread gave some investors an excuse to resume buying.

"This is not like the financial crisis where we don't know the end is in sight," said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. "This is about providing proper tools and liquidity to get through the next few months."

In early trading, London's FTSE 100 rose to 6,074.85 and Frankfurt's DAX advanced to 10,724.35. The CAC 40 in France gained 1.4% to 4,776.31.

The Shanghai Composite Index rose to 2,996.76 and the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo advanced to 19,867.12. Hong Kong's Hang Seng climbed 1.4% to 25,392.51.

The Kospi in Seoul added 0.4% to 1,962.93 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 rose to 5,939.60.

Singapore, Bangkok and Jakarta advanced by more than 2%, while New Zealand declined.

Benchmark U.S. crude gained 3.2%, or \$1.00 to \$32.13 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 25% on Monday to \$31.13 per barrel.

Brent crude, the standard for international oil prices, gained 5.1%, or \$1.68 to \$36.04 per barrel in London.

But the spat over oil output and pricing was overshadowed by the virus outbreak. While the crisis is

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 32 of 75

easing in China, where the virus was first detected, fast-growing clusters have turned up in South Korea, Japan, Iran and Italy, and the caseload is growing in the United States.

For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover from the virus, as has already happened with about three-quarters of those infected in China.

Oil prices plunged 25% on Monday after Russia refused to roll back production in response to virus-depressed demand. Saudi Arabia signaled it will ramp up its own output.

Stock markets usually welcome lower energy costs for consumers and businesses. But the decline cuts into revenue for producers, including the United States. And the abrupt drop, coming amid virus fears, rattled investors.

On Wall Street, the S&P 500 index fell 7.6% in biggest one-day drop since Dec. 1, 2008. The Dow lost 7.8% and the Nasdaq composite gave up 7.3%.

The S&P dropped 7.4% in the first few minutes of trading, triggering an automatic 15-minute market-wide trading halt. That has happened only once before, in 1997.

The S&P 500 has fallen 18.9% from its Feb. 19 record and has lost \$5.3 trillion in value. U.S. stocks are close to entering a bear market, defined as a drop of 20% from their peak.

European stock indexes already are in a bear market after recording their biggest declines since the 2008 crisis.

Central banks in the United States, China and other countries have cut interest rates to try to shore up economic activity. But economists warn that while rate cuts might help to buoy consumer demand, they cannot reopen factories that are closed due to quarantines or lack of workers and raw materials.

"Even coordinated policy responses are not a tried and tested panacea and by no means guarantee the ability to durably pull markets back from the brink of bear territory," Vishnu Varathan of Mizuho Bank said in a report.

The yield on U.S. Treasury bonds edged up to 0.67% after falling as low as 0.5% as investors shifted money into safe haven assets. It had never been below 1% until last week.

The yield, or the difference between the market price and what investors will receive if they hold the bond to maturity, is seen as a measure of economic confidence. Investors shift money into bonds if they expect economic growth and stock prices to weaken. That pushes up the bond's market price and narrows the yield.

In currency trading, the dollar rose to 104.28 Japanese yen from 102.37 late Monday. The euro slipped to \$1.1369 from \$1.1439.

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## AP Interview: Billionaire bids anxious farewell to Picasso

By JOHN LEICESTER Associated Press

MONACO (AP) — Billionaire art collector David Nahmad can't fully recall why he bought "Nature Morte," a charmingly simple oil on canvas that Pablo Picasso painted in 1921.

Given that Nahmad owns about 300 of the Spanish genius' works, his forgetfulness is perhaps understandable. With such a princely trove — Nahmad says his Picasso collection is the world's largest in private hands — details sometimes get lost.

"We bought so many Picassos now, I don't remember the specific reason," Nahmad said in an exclusive and rare interview with The Associated Press in his luxury home in Monaco.

"It's the smallest painting that I have."

Not for much longer.

A very lucky someone, somewhere, will soon be joining Nahmad in the privileged club of Picasso owners,



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 33 of 75

when "Nature Morte" is raffled off for charity this month.

Tickets, sold online, are 100 euros (\$113) each. The winner of a similar raffle in 2013 was a 25-year-old fire sprinkler worker from Pennsylvania.

Nahmad, one of the art world's most influential dealers, will receive 1 million euros (\$1.1 million) for "Nature Morte" but says it is worth "at least two, three times" that.

"This raffle would not have succeeded if the name was not Picasso. I tried to propose other artists' names. But it would not work, because they wanted a name that would appeal to everybody. It has to be Picasso. Picasso is the magic name," he told the AP.

Other paintings in Nahmad's vast collection of modern and impressionist art are more valuable and celebrated. Accumulated over decades, the stockpile is said by Forbes to be worth \$3 billion. Nahmad himself won't say.

"I don't think people care about the number of works, but about their quality," he said.

But Nahmad says the prospect of parting with "Nature Morte" has made him more appreciative of the small still life, which is signed "Picasso" and shows a newspaper and a glass of absinthe on a wood table.

The artist was a new father, to Paulo, with his Russian first wife Olga Khokhlova and was months shy of his 40th birthday when he completed the painting in June 1921.

"I think this painting is extremely chic," Nahmad said. "And the fact that it is small, it makes it not pretentious. A small jewel."

The raffle draw is being held in Paris on March 30. Organizers Péri Cochin, a television producer, and Arabelle Reille, an art historian, aim to sell 200,000 tickets, raising millions to provide water for villagers in Cameroon, Madagascar and Morocco.

They decided to pay Nahmad for the painting, rather than push for a free donation, because they hope to encourage other collectors or galleries to also part with Picasso works for future charity raffles.

"David first said, 'I don't think I have a painting for a million euros. I have really beautiful paintings that are worth much more than that. But you know what? Let's go together to my book, my collection book, and we'll try to find something together,'" Reille recalled.

"For a million euros, usually you can get a nice drawing, a water color, a beautiful print. But it's extremely rare to find a painting, and we did find this one in the end," she said.

Nahmad, 72, started dealing art with his brothers in the 1960s, paying as little as \$5,000 for pieces by Picasso and building the hoard of works that made them into billionaires. Nahmad's sumptuous apartment in Monaco is in one of the principality's most sought-after addresses for the rich and famous, with spectacular Mediterranean vistas. Sculptures by Alberto Giacometti grace the home and works by French cubist painter Fernand Léger and other artists decorate Nahmad's walls.

He says his artworks are as dear to him as children and that parting with them is difficult. He recalled early purchases of works by René Magritte, the Belgian surrealist, Irish-born painter Francis Bacon and others when they could still be bought cheaply. Nahmad said his ambition "before I die" is to keep improving his already fabulous collection, describing it as "a living thing."

"You learn every day," he said. "A statement of a bank, it is so boring. Each time you buy a painting, you want to know more."

Nahmad believes that Picasso, who died in 1973, would have liked the raffling of his work to the public.

"Picasso was very generous. He gave paintings to his driver, his tailor," Nahmad said. "He wanted his art to be collected by all kinds of people, not only by the super-rich."

His hope for "Nature Morte" is that the winner will be someone who appreciates it. If not, "I will be very unhappy" and "would like to buy it back," Nahmad said.

"There's nothing worse than to own something without understanding that thing," he said.

"It's like people: If you don't understand a person — whether it's your wife, your girlfriend or whatever — you can never like them."

## US starts troop pullout, seeks end to Afghan leaders' feud

By KATHY GANNON and RAHIM FAIEZ Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan (AP) — The United States began withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, the U.S. military said Tuesday, taking a step forward on its peace deal with the Taliban while also praising Afghan President Ashraf Ghani's promise to start releasing Taliban prisoners after he had delayed for over a week.

The U.S.-Taliban deal signed on Feb. 29 was touted as Washington's effort to end 18 years of war in Afghanistan. The next crucial step was to be intra-Afghan talks in which all factions including the Taliban would negotiate a road map for their country's future.

But Ghani and his main political rival, Abdullah Abdullah, were each sworn in as president in separate ceremonies on Monday. Abdallah and the elections complaints commission had charged fraud in last year's vote. The dueling inaugurations have thrown plans for talks with the Taliban into chaos, although Ghani said Tuesday that he'd start putting together a negotiating team.

The disarray on the Afghan government side is indicative of the uphill task facing Washington's peace envoy Zalmay Khalilzad as he tries to get Afghanistan's bickering leadership to come together. In an early Tuesday tweet, Khalilzad said he hoped the two leaders can "come to an agreement on an inclusive and broadly accepted government. We will continue to assist."

U.S. military spokesman in Afghanistan Sonny Leggett said in a statement Tuesday that the military had begun its "conditions-based reduction of forces to 8,600 over 135 days."

Currently, the U.S. has about 13,000 soldiers in Afghanistan — 8,000 of whom are involved in training and advising Afghanistan's National Security Forces, while about 5,000 are involved in anti-terror operations and militarily supporting the Afghan army when they are requested.

Ghani had been dragging his feet on releasing some 5,000 Taliban prisoners, something agreed to in the U.S.-Taliban deal. Ghani promised Monday to announce a decree to free the prisoners, after the U.S. and a number of foreign dignitaries appeared to back his claim to the presidency by sending their representatives to his inauguration.

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo released a statement Monday saying, "We also welcome President Ghani's announcement that he will issue a decree March 10 on Taliban prisoner release."

Taliban officials said late Monday that a flurry of biometric identifications were being conducted on Taliban prisoners, hinting at a mass release, according to prisoners currently in lockup. The Taliban officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they weren't authorized to talk to the media.

Pompeo also said he "strongly opposed" the establishment of a parallel government in Kabul, despite the early signs of one emerging. Abdullah had quickly sent his vice-presidents to occupy the official offices on Monday, ahead of Ghani's plan to send his vice presidents to their offices Tuesday.

Pompeo warned against "any use of force to resolve political differences." Both candidates — but particularly Abdullah — are backed by warlords with heavily armed militias, underscoring fears they could use force to back their candidate.

The U.S. has said its partial troop withdrawal over an 18-month period provided for in the deal will be linked to the Taliban keeping their promises to help fight terror in Afghanistan, but not to the success of talks between the Taliban and the Afghan government.

On the weekend, Taliban spokesman Zabihullah Mujahed said the insurgent group was committed to their agreement with the United States and called on Washington to do its part to make sure their prisoners were freed.

The Islamic State claimed responsibility for a rocket attack that took place during Ghani's inauguration ceremony. IS also claimed a brutal attack last week on a gathering of minority Shiites that killed 32 and injured scores more. The U.S. in reaching its deal with the Taliban said they expected the Taliban, which has been battling Afghanistan's IS affiliate, to further aid in the effort to defeat IS.

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Gannon reported from Islamabad. Associated Press writers Matthew Lee in Washington and Tameem Akhgar in Kabul, Afghanistan contributed to this report

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 35 of 75

## Asian stocks steady after plunge on virus, oil crash

By JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — Asian stock markets rebounded Tuesday from record-setting declines after U.S. futures rose following President Donald Trump's announcement he would ask Congress for a tax cut and other measures to ease the pain of the spreading coronavirus outbreak.

Oil prices also recovered some of their losses in Monday's record-setting plunge.

China's main stock index rose 1.7% and Tokyo advanced 0.9%. Hong Kong advanced 1.9% and Sydney gained 3.1%.

On Wall Street, which suffered its biggest one-day drop since the 2008 global crisis on Monday, stock futures rose following Trump's announcement.

Monday's global selloff reflected alarm over mounting economic damage from the coronavirus that emerged in China in December. Anti-disease controls that shut down Chinese factories are spreading as the United States and European countries close schools, cancel public events and impose travel controls.

Anxiety mounted after Italy, the hardest-hit place in Europe, said travel controls imposed earlier on its north would be extended nationwide. Ireland canceled St. Patrick's Day parades and Israel ordered visitors quarantined ahead of Passover and Easter, one of the busiest travel periods of the year.

The mounting losses and a flight by investors into the safe haven of bonds have fueled warnings the global economy, which already was showing signs of cooling, might be headed into a recession.

The drop in U.S. stock prices was so sharp that it triggered Wall Street's first trading halt in more than two decades. But Trump's comment that he will seek relief for workers as ripple effects of the outbreak spread gave some investors an excuse to resume buying.

"This is not like the financial crisis where we don't know the end is in sight," said Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin. "This is about providing proper tools and liquidity to get through the next few months."

On Tuesday, the Shanghai Composite Index rose to 2,994.03 and the Nikkei 225 in Tokyo advanced to 19,867.12. Hong Kong's Hang Seng climbed to 25,519.11.

The KOSPI in Seoul added 0.4% to 1,962.93 and Sydney's S&P-ASX 200 rose to 5,939.60.

Singapore, Bangkok and Jakarta advanced by more than 2%, while New Zealand declined.

Benchmark U.S. crude gained 7.5%, or \$2.33, to \$33.46 per barrel in electronic trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange. It lost 25% on Monday to \$31.13 per barrel.

Brent crude, the standard for international oil prices, gained 8%, or \$2.75 to \$37.10 per barrel in London.

While the crisis is easing in China, where the virus was first detected, fast-growing clusters have turned up in South Korea, Japan, Iran and Italy, and the caseload is growing in the United States.

For most people, the coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia. The vast majority of people recover from the virus, as has already happened with about three-quarters of those infected in China.

Oil prices plunged 25% after Russia refused to roll back production in response to virus-depressed demand. Saudi Arabia signaled it will ramp up its own output.

Stock markets usually welcome lower energy costs for consumers and businesses. But the decline cuts into revenue for producers, including the United States. And the abrupt drop, coming amid virus fears, rattled investors.

On Wall Street, the S&P 500 index fell 7.6% to 2,746.56 for its biggest one-day drop since Dec. 1, 2008. The Dow Jones Industrial Average lost 7.8% to 23,851.02. The Nasdaq composite gave up 7.3% to 7,950.68.

The S&P dropped 7.4% in the first few minutes of trading, triggering an automatic 15-minute market-wide trading halt. That has happened only once before, in 1997.

The S&P 500 has fallen 18.9% from its Feb. 19 record and has lost \$5.3 trillion in value. U.S. stocks are close to entering a bear market, defined as a drop of 20% from their peak.

"Right now, it's all-out panic," said Phil Flynn of Price futures Group. "I think the situation is going to improve when cooler heads prevail, but it's going to be a rocky road for the next couple of weeks."

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 36 of 75

European stock indexes already are in a bear market after recording their biggest declines since the 2008 crisis.

Central banks in the United States, China and other countries have cut interest rates to try to shore up economic activity. But economists warn that while rate cuts might help to buoy consumer demand, they cannot reopen factories that are closed due to quarantines or lack of workers and raw materials.

"Even coordinated policy responses are not a tried and tested panacea and by no means guarantee the ability to durably pull markets back from the brink of bear territory," Vishnu Varathan of Mizuho Bank said in a report.

The yield on U.S. Treasury bonds edged up to 0.67% after falling as low as 0.5% as investors shifted money into safe haven assets. It had never been below 1% until last week.

The yield, or the difference between the market price and what investors will receive if they hold the bond to maturity, is seen as a measure of economic confidence. Investors shift money into bonds if they expect economic growth and stock prices to weaken. That pushes up the bond's market price and narrows the yield.

In the United States, a cruise ship with a cluster of coronavirus cases that forced it to idle off the California coast for days docked at Oakland as officials prepared to start bringing passengers to military bases for quarantine or return them to their home countries.

The Grand Princess had more than 3,500 people aboard, 21 of them infected. Japan's handling of a similar situation involving a cruise ship that docked in Yokohama is seen as a major factor behind the spread of the virus in that country.

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## Patient No. 1 is out of ICU as virus pushes Italy to brink

By NICOLE WINFIELD Associated Press

ROME (AP) — Italian doctors celebrated one small victory in their battle against the coronavirus after a 38-year-old man was moved out of intensive care for the first time since he tested positive Feb. 21 and opened Italy's health care crisis as Patient No. 1.

But in the rest of hard-hit northern Italy, the virus' spread was growing so exponentially that doctors were making comparisons to war-time triage medics deciding who lives, who dies and who gets access to the limited number of ICU beds.

"It's a reasoning that our colleagues make," Dr. Guido Giustetto, head of the association of doctors in northern Piedmont, said Monday. "It becomes dramatic if, rather than doing it under normal situations, they do it because the beds are so scarce that someone might not have access to medical care."

The Italian society of anesthesiology and intensive care published 15 ethical recommendations to consider when deciding on ICU admissions during the virus crisis and the ICU shortage. The criteria include the age of the patient and the probability of survival, and not just "first come first served."

The Lombardy government has been scrambling to increase its ICU capacity, converting operating and recovery rooms into isolated wards to treat the 440 critical virus patients currently in need. It has cobbled together 150 more beds in the last two weeks and expects another 150 in the coming week.

But it may not be enough.

"Unfortunately we're only at the beginning," said Dr. Massimo Galli, head of infectious disease at Milan's Sacco hospital. Speaking to SkyTg24, Galli noted that the numbers of infections registered in Lombardy last week were similar to those in Wuhan, China in late January.

Galli noted that Wuhan, the center of China's outbreak that infected more than 80,000 people nationwide, is a concentrated metropolis of 11 million and Lombardy is spread out. But the numbers "tell you that the diffusion is a real possibility," he warned.

On Monday, the government took broad new measures to restrict Italians' movements nationwide and

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 37 of 75

prevent social gatherings, realizing that limited restrictions weren't containing the spread. For example, the region surrounding the capital Rome — Lazio — saw its cases jump from 87 to 102 in a day, a sign that the virus was propagating far from the northern concentrations.

Also alarming was Italy's high fatality rate: With 463 dead and 9,172 infected, Italy's fatality rate is running at 5% nationwide and 6% in Lombardy, far higher than the 3%-4% estimates elsewhere.

Dr. Giovanni Rezza, head of infectious disease at the National Institutes of Health, attributed the high rate to the fact that Italy has the world's oldest population after Japan, and the median age of its virus-related dead is 80.

But there are young people who are infected too. Some have been in intensive care, including the first person to test positive in the north who hadn't been to China, a 38-year-old Unilever worker named Mattia. He came to be known in Italy as Patient No. 1.

At the San Matteo hospital in Pavia, there was a sigh of relief after Mattia began breathing on his own Monday with just a small amount of oxygen assistance, said Dr. Francesco Mojoli, head of intensive care. He was moved out of the ICU to a sub-ICU unit and was speaking with doctors.

"This disease has a long life," Mojoli told RAI state television. "Now we hope that the fact that he was young and in good shape will help him get back to his normal life."

Mattia first went to the hospital in Codogno on Feb. 18 complaining of flu-like symptoms. He was sent home but came back the next day after his condition worsened dramatically. He was only tested for coronavirus after doctors learned that in early February he had met with a man who had been to China.

By then, however, he had infected his wife and several doctors, nurses and patients at the Codogno hospital, creating what was thought initially to have been Italy's main cluster. Since his China contact turned out to be negative, though, experts now believe that the virus had been circulating widely and quietly in northern Italy since at least the second half of January.

The epidemic has exposed the impact of drastic cuts to Italy's public health system over the past few years, and prompted calls for the government to authorize hiring of thousands of doctors and nurses. In Lombardy, nursing students were allowed to graduate a month early so they could be put to work immediately.

Over the weekend, a nurse named Doris Bia posted on Facebook that after taking a leave for several years to be a full-time mother, she was going back to work at the Oglio Po hospital in hard-hit Cremona.

"Starting tomorrow I'll be beside those who are untiringly fighting this god-forsaken virus," she wrote. "I'm doing it because I can't ignore their sacrifice."

## Michigan primary could make or break Sanders' campaign

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Bernie Sanders proved his 2016 presidential bid was serious with an upset victory in Michigan powered by his opposition to free trade and appeal among working-class voters. Four years later, the same state could either revive the Vermont senator's campaign or relegate him to the role of protest candidate.

Michigan and five other states hold presidential contests on Tuesday at a critical point in the Democratic race.

Former Vice President Joe Biden is looking to quash Sanders' hopes and cement his own front-runner status just a week after resurrecting his beleaguered White House bid with a delegate victory on Super Tuesday. He played up his underdog story on Monday as he campaigned across Michigan, reflecting on his stutter as a child and the deaths of his first wife and young daughter.

And Biden wasn't alone. The former vice president courted the state's influential African American voters alongside the two most prominent black candidates previously in the 2020 race, Kamala Harris and Cory Booker, who endorsed Biden in recent days as part of a broader consolidation of support among party leaders.

Sanders is in an urgent fight to turn things around as the primary calendar quickly shifts to other states

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 38 of 75

that could favor Biden and narrow his path to the nomination. The senator countered the parade of Democratic firepower lining up behind Biden by securing the endorsement of the Rev. Jesse Jackson and deploying Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., on his behalf.

Having devoted several days to Michigan, the Vermont senator spent the eve of Tuesday's primaries in Missouri, where he downplayed questions about electability and insisted that the "energy and excitement" of his supporters made him the strongest Democrat to run against President Donald Trump this fall.

Tuesday marks the first time voters will weigh in on the Democratic contest since it effectively narrowed to a two-person race between Sanders and Biden. It will be another test of whether Sanders can broaden his appeal among African Americans. Biden, meanwhile, must show that he can keep momentum going after his surprise Super Tuesday turnaround.

"I like his chances," Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who has endorsed Biden, said of the former vice president in an interview.

"He knows Michigan," Whitmer added. "When our back was up against the wall during the auto struggles of the past, it was Barack Obama and Joe Biden who had our backs."

That's a reference to the Obama administration overseeing federal bailouts that helped the auto industry — the lifeblood of Michigan's economy — weather the 2009 financial crisis. Sanders counters that he, too, voted to save the auto industry. He also says that, unlike Biden, he opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement, which he said prompted thousands of Michigan jobs to move to Mexico since taking effect in 1994.

Biden ticked off the names of six former presidential rivals who have endorsed him just in the past week during a Monday appearance with Booker in Flint, Michigan, a community that has seen auto industry jobs disappear: "They've all come out and endorsed at one time ... the candidate that they think can win."

And later in Detroit, he stood on stage grasping hands with Whitmer, Booker and Harris, a powerful trio of potential vice presidential picks should Biden become the Democrats' presidential nominee.

The large rally was interrupted repeatedly by protesters, however, who railed against Biden's support for the North American Free Trade Agreement and his reluctance to embrace sweeping environmental proposals outlined in the so-called Green New Deal.

In a scuffle with environmental protesters in the midst of Biden's remarks, senior adviser Symone Sanders was knocked to the ground. She was not hurt. Less than a week ago she tackled a protester who rushed the stage as Biden spoke in California.

Other economic challenges emerged on Monday as fears about the spread of the new coronavirus shook financial markets, slicing 7.8% from the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Sanders held a roundtable with health experts in Detroit, and Biden said he would defer to health experts about whether campaign events could continue, given concerns about the spread of the virus.

Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious disease expert, stopped short of calling on candidates to put a pause on political rallies. Instead, he said he wouldn't criticize someone seeking office for putting a pause on big gatherings.

"If you're talking about a campaign rally tomorrow in a place where there is no community spread, I think the judgment to have it might be a good judgment," Fauci said Monday at a White House briefing. "If you want to talk about large gatherings in a place where you have community spread, I think that's a judgment call."

An outstanding question going into Tuesday is whether Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who dropped out of the race last week, will endorse Biden or Sanders. So far, she's declined to back either, an especially frustrating development for Sanders, who could use Warren's help in unifying progressives in much the same way Biden has been able to rally moderates.

Sanders has scoffed at suggestions he could drop out if he doesn't win Michigan, but his travel schedule underscores its importance. He canceled a trip to Mississippi and instead made five campaign stops across Michigan since Friday.

Sanders won't say if he's personally lobbying Warren for her endorsement. He did manage to secure the

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 39 of 75

backing of Jackson, who said it was no time for centrist compromise.

He jabbed Biden during a Monday appearance in downtown St. Louis, reminding a largely young crowd of the former vice president's long record in Washington. Sanders noted that unlike Biden, he opposed the war in Iraq, Wall Street bailouts after the 2008 collapse and any talk of cuts to Social Security.

"In a general election, which candidate can generate the enthusiasm and the excitement and the voter turnout we need?" Sanders asked. "If you want to defeat Trump, which all Democrats do and the majority of independents do and some Republicans do, we are that campaign."

One of Sanders' highest-profile supporters, Ocasio-Cortez, struck a far more conciliatory tone the day before addressing 10,000-plus on the campus of the University of Michigan on Sunday night, saying, "In order for us to win, we have to grow."

"We must be inclusive. We must bring more people into this movement," she said, urging Sanders supporters to shed "cynicism and exclusion" and "turn with an embracing posture, where all people are welcome in a people's movement."

Sanders is optimistic about Washington state on Tuesday, but could face hurdles in Mississippi and Missouri. Sanders' team acknowledges he will also struggle in next week's Florida primary, where the senator's past defense of Fidel Castro looms large. He also could face long odds in Ohio and Illinois — especially if he underperforms in Michigan. Both of those states also vote March 17.

The wild card next week could be Arizona, where Sanders will be counting on strong Latino support, which lifted him to victory in California.

Sanders advisers are aware that Biden could build an insurmountable delegate lead if he runs up the score in the upcoming contests. They hope to continue doing well in the West before picking up momentum in places like delegate-rich New York, which holds its primary next month.

There's no guarantee Sanders could last that long this time, however, given the higher expectations he now faces. Even some of those attending Sanders rallies are beginning to feel it, although his St. Louis audience was optimistic.

Alec McAulay, a 19-year-old college student from St. Louis County, said Sanders has proved that he's a true alternative to the president.

"I think Biden agrees with Trump too much, more than any Democrat should," McAulay said.

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Associated Press writers Seth Borenstein in Washington and Steve Peoples in Flint, Mich., contributed to this report.

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

## Trump plans payroll tax relief in response to coronavirus

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump says his administration will ask Congress to pass payroll tax relief and other quick measures as a public health and economic maelstrom brought on by the coronavirus drew closer to him personally.

Intending to calm the fears of financial markets over the impact of the epidemic, Trump told reporters Monday he is seeking "very substantial relief" to the payroll tax. Trump also said he was seeking help for hourly-wage workers to ensure they're "not going to miss a paycheck" and "don't get penalized for something that's not their fault."

He stepped forward with the contours of an initiative after markets dropped sharply and as the outbreak spread. Several Trump confidants in Congress disclosed they were isolating themselves after potential exposure to the virus; one traveled with the president from Florida on Air Force One on Monday; another was his just-tapped new chief of staff.

Trump said he would hold a press conference Tuesday to outline the proposals, saying his administration and Congress would be "discussing a possible payroll tax cut or relief, substantial relief, very substantial

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 40 of 75

relief, that's big, that's a big number. We're also going to be talking about hourly wage earners getting help so that they can be in a position where they're not going to ever miss a paycheck."

As Trump grappled with an epidemic whose consequences he has repeatedly played down, the White House asserted it was conducting "business as usual." But the day's business was anything but normal. Lawmakers pressed for details on how the Capitol could be made secure, handshakes on the Hill were discouraged and a Pentagon meeting was broken into sub-groups to minimize the number of people in the same room.

The president himself dove into handshakes with supporters earlier in the day, when arriving to headline a fundraiser in Longwood, Florida, that raised approximately \$4 million for his reelection campaign and the Republican Party.

On his flight back to Washington he was accompanied by Florida Rep. Matt Gaetz, who later went into a voluntary quarantine. He was one of several GOP lawmakers who were exposed to a person at last month's Conservative Political Action Conference who tested positive for the virus. His office said he was "mid-flight" on Air Force One when CPAC informed his staff that he had been in contact with the attendee who had the virus.

Once the plane landed, Gaetz was immediately tested.

Vice President Mike Pence, who also spoke at CPAC, said he has not been tested for the virus. White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said Trump has not been tested because he has not had "prolonged close contacts" with any patients and "does not have any symptoms."

In Monday morning tweets, Trump vented about the market drop and news that large public gatherings were being called off because of the virus.

"At this moment there are 546 confirmed cases of CoronaVirus, with 22 deaths," Trump tweeted, comparing it to seasonal influenza and the thousands of deaths that causes. "Think about that!"

Scientists at this stage don't know what the death rate of the new coronavirus actually is and whether it will wind up being about the same as flu or worse.

At the same time, administration officials were insistent that they weren't trying to dismiss public concerns. "This is a very serious health problem," Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar told Fox News.

At the Pentagon, officials have begun "social distancing" measures.

On Monday, Defense Secretary Mark Esper's regular meeting with senior staff, which normally would be held face-to-face in a single room with 40 to 50 participants, was broken up into three rooms, with videoconferencing among the rooms, according to the Pentagon's chief spokesman, Jonathan Hoffman. He said Esper and the 15 to 20 people in his room, including Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sat at least six feet apart, in line with health guidance.

Trump was delegating much of the virus response to Pence, who convened a video teleconference to give an update on the federal government's virus response Monday afternoon with the nation's governors. Trump met his top economic advisers before emerging to disclose he'll seek the payroll tax break.

The White House has been convening meetings with an array of travel and healthcare industry representatives, and was set to host Wall Street executives at the White House on Wednesday to discuss the economic fallout of the epidemic.

Futures in the S&P 500 index, which can indicate how Wall Street will open Tuesday, were up more than 2.5% late Monday after the administration's news conference.

On Capitol Hill, where many lawmakers are older and have frequent contact with the public, leaders were fielding questions from members and staff about how the complex will be secured. Leaders have so far shown little willingness to close the Capitol, but meetings were scheduled throughout the day to discuss preparations.

On Monday, Rep. Doug Collins, R-Ga., and Gaetz put themselves in voluntary quarantine because of their contacts with someone at the Conservative Political Action Conference.

Both said they did not have any symptoms but would wait out the remainder of the 14 days since the contact at home. Gaetz last week wore a gas mask to the House vote on the emergency funding bill for the virus response and said he wanted to highlight how Congress could become "petri dish" for the virus.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 41 of 75

Collins had met with Trump last Tuesday night at the White House and shook hands with him Friday when the president visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Atlanta headquarters.

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., whom Trump named Friday as his incoming chief of staff, also went into self-quarantine. "A precautionary test came back negative & he feels great," his spokesman tweeted late Monday. Meadows has not yet resigned his congressional seat and has not yet assumed his new role at the White House, but he is a frequent visitor.

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., also placed themselves in quarantine after coming in contact with the same person at the conservative conference.

Rep. Julia Brownley, D-Calif., said she met last week with a person who has since been diagnosed with the virus. She closed her office and said she and her staff are "self-monitoring and maintaining social distancing practices."

Vast numbers of visitors come to the Hill, especially at this time of year when advocacy groups arrange "fly-in" trips to lobby and speak to lawmakers, and school groups descend for tours.

One Republican who said he was informed he had been exposed at the conservative conference, Rep. Louie Gohmert of Texas, tweeted that he was cleared to return to Washington. He was spotted leading a Capitol tour for more than 100 visitors late Monday evening.

In one manifestation of lawmaking in the age of the coronavirus, Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass., approached a Republican colleague on the House floor Monday for a routine congratulatory handshake after the chamber approved a bill expanding a visa program. "Shake or bump?" Neal asked Rep. Kelly Armstrong, R-N.D.

The two men bumped elbows.

Offices on Capitol Hill also advertised they were holding "no contact meetings" and asked guests to refrain from shaking hands.

The chairman of the Democratic caucus, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, said the House's chief administrative officer and the sergeant at arms are expected to brief Democrats at their regular caucus meeting Tuesday. The discussion was expected to address whether the Capitol will be restricted to visitors, he said.

It was not immediately clear how Trump was aiming to provide assistance to employees weighing whether to stay home because of illness — a crucial aim of public health officials seeking to curtail the spread of the virus.

One mechanism, backed by the Trump-allied National Association of Manufacturers, involves a proposed tax credit for employers who pay employees who are quarantined.

Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and Larry Kudlow, the director of the national economic council, were expected to bring the White House proposal to Senate Republicans on Tuesday afternoon, at which point officials planned to release more publicly.

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill had barely started to contemplate the economic implications of the spread of the virus and what might be needed to stimulate the economy as people cancel vacations and business trips and stay away from stores. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley told reporters that "everything's on the table."

But members of the Senate Republican leadership, including Texas Sen. John Cornyn played down the need for an economic stimulus package of any kind, be it tax cuts or aid for workers. "It's premature to be talking about that," Cornyn told reporters. "I usually love tax cuts but I think it's a little premature."

Democrats panned — for now — Trump's proposed payroll tax cut. They said it was not specific enough to the core problem and are preparing their own package of aid, including affordable testing, unemployment benefits and paid leave for working families affected by the virus.

"Unfortunately at the president's press conference today, he really did not address the coronavirus issue," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, standing alongside Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer after a late meeting at the Capitol. "This is about the kitchen table of America's working families."

A House vote could come as soon as this week, Pelosi said, but more likely would shift to April.

While they did not completely oppose Trump's proposed payroll tax cut, they said they prefer their approach as a better way to instill confidence in families and the economy.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 42 of 75

"Unless you deal with the pandemic the stock market's going to keep getting worse and worse and worse," Schumer said. "If there's going to be relief it ought to be aimed at the families that are most affected."

A day after saying it was "proceeding as normal," Trump's campaign canceled a three-day Women for Trump bus tour across Michigan that included Mercedes Schlapp, the former White House aide who is married to the American Conservative Union chairman, Matt Schlapp.

Schlapp is under self-quarantine after he, too, was exposed to the infected person at CPAC. He introduced Trump and greeted him with a handshake on stage before the president's spoke on Feb. 29.

Associated Press writers Luran Neergaard, Andy Taylor, Kevin Freking, Jill Colvin, Bob Burns, Lisa Mascaro and Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

The Associated Press receives support for health and science coverage from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **NBA, MLB, NHL, MLS closing locker rooms amid virus scare**

**By TIM REYNOLDS AP Basketball Writer**

MIAMI (AP) — The NBA, NHL, Major League Baseball and Major League Soccer are closing access to locker rooms and clubhouses to all nonessential personnel, including media, in response to the coronavirus crisis, the leagues announced in a joint statement Monday night.

They said they made the decision "after consultation with infectious disease and public health experts." The NBA, in a call with teams earlier Monday, stressed that the move is not to ban reporters but to ensure the safety of players and staff in those areas.

The statement, in part, read: "Given the issues that can be associated with close contact in pre- and post-game settings, all team locker rooms and clubhouses will be open only to players and essential employees of teams and team facilities until further notice. Media access will be maintained in designated locations outside of the locker room and clubhouse setting."

The changes, which the leagues say are temporary, will begin Tuesday — though some NHL teams began putting them into use this past weekend and the Buffalo Sabres did the same on Monday night. The NBA said interviews with players would continue in different settings, stressing a gap of 6-to-8 feet between reporters and interview subjects.

"I don't know that we have our arms around how significant of an issue this is at this point, so if the league is recommending or their policy is we want to take step by step type precautions, then we want to go along with that," Texas Rangers general manager Jon Daniels said.

It is unclear how long the new policies will last.

"No disrespect, but that's the last thing I'm worried about," Nuggets coach Michael Malone said prior to Denver's NBA game against Milwaukee on Monday night.

"I think it's dangerous for everybody," Rangers pitcher Edinson Volquez said. "Somebody could have it, you talk to a guy, you go home, maybe you transfer that to your kids and wife and family. So I think it's a good idea for now. Probably later, hopefully we can get together again. But for now, we have to take care of that."

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered.

"Roses are red, Violets are blue, Wash your hands! WASH YOUR HANDS!" Enes Kanter of the Boston Celtics wrote on Twitter.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 43 of 75

Meanwhile, there is already a clear sense of the new normal in the U.S.

The Miami Heat held their annual gala at a theater in Miami Beach on Monday night, albeit a bit differently than usual. The team's three NBA championship trophies were near the entrance — with someone standing by with a bottle of hand sanitizer. And guests, when they arrived, were offered champagne by some attendants, more hand sanitizer by others.

"Until the league says something else, we are business as usual with a tremendous amount of caution and prevention to make sure everybody's safe," Heat President Pat Riley said Monday night. "But also, educating them that they've got to do the same thing."

The NBA held a call with team medical staffs later Monday night and scheduled a Wednesday call between league officials and team owners to discuss next steps. The NBA told teams last week to prepare for the possibility of playing games in empty arenas, something the game's biggest star — Los Angeles Lakers forward LeBron James — insists he does not want to see.

"I doubt that that's going to happen," Riley said. "But you have to be prepared."

It could happen in at least one NHL arena. Late Monday, California's Santa Clara County announced a ban of all large gatherings of at least 1,000 people for the rest of the month. The policy would affect three San Jose Sharks home games, and the Sharks said in a statement they are reviewing their options. The team could play the games without fans, find a neutral site or play the games on the road.

MLB officials, like the NBA, held a conference call with all 30 of their franchises on Monday to discuss the new policies. All four leagues — and the NFL, which has been involved in the talks but isn't part of this policy since no teams are currently holding practices — are collecting information from the CDC and Canadian health officials, even as the situation changes almost on an hour-by-hour basis.

"We are regularly conveying the guidance from these experts to clubs, players, and staff regarding prevention, good hygiene practices and the latest recommendations related to travel," MLB said in a statement. "We are continuing to monitor developments and will adjust as necessary. While MLB recognizes the fluidity of this rapidly evolving situation, our current intention is to play Spring Training and regular season games as scheduled."

More than 113,000 people worldwide have tested positive for the disease and over 3,900 people with the virus have died, most of them in China. More than 62,000 people have already recovered. The virus has infected 600 people in the United States — including the director of the agency that runs the airports in New York and New Jersey — and at least 26 have died, most in Washington state.

The Pro Basketball Writers Association quickly responded to the leagues' announcement by saying its membership "believes the safety of fans, players, team employees, arena workers and the media who cover the league must be protected. Our thoughts are with all people who already have been adversely impacted by the virus.

"Therefore, we understand the NBA's decision to temporarily close locker rooms to everyone but players and essential team personnel with the NBA's promise that once the coronavirus crisis abates, the league will restore full access to the journalists who cover the league."

Some NCAA Division III men's basketball games this past weekend were played without crowds because of concerns over the virus. At least one college hockey playoff series this coming weekend in Troy, New York, between RPI and Harvard also will be played without fans.

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AP Baseball Walker Ben Walker in New York; AP Hockey Writer John Wawrow in Buffalo, New York; and AP Sports Writers Josh Dubow in San Jose, California; Arnie Stapleton in Denver; and Jake Seiner in Surprise, Arizona, contributed.

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## Pearl Jam postpones first leg of tour over virus concerns

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Pearl Jam is postponing the North American leg of its Gigaton world tour because of concerns over the new coronavirus, the band announced Monday.

Seventeen U.S. and Canadian performances, beginning on March 18 in Toronto through April 19 in Oakland, California, were indefinitely postponed, according to the band's website.

Pearl Jam said it was announcing the postponements "with deep frustration and regret."

"The levels of risk to our audience and their communities is simply too high for our comfort level," a band statement said. "Add to that we also have a unique group of passionate fans who travel far and wide. We've always been humbled by this and respect their energies and devotion. However in this case, travel is something to avoid."

New dates will be determined and current tickets will be honored for those dates, the band said.

For now, the European shows from June 23 to July 23 are still scheduled along with two September shows in Asbury Park in New Jersey, and Dana Point in California, according to the band's website.

Band members said they were personally being affected by the COVID-19 health fears. The band is from Washington state, where two dozen people have died, most of them at a Seattle-area nursing home.

"As residents of the city of Seattle, we've been hit hard and have witnessed firsthand how quickly these disastrous situations can escalate," the band said. "Our kids' schools have closed along with universities and businesses. It's been brutal."

Band members also criticized a lack of clarity from the government when it comes to staying safe and going to work, saying they didn't believe the virus would be controlled in the coming weeks.

"The tour we've been busy planning for months is now in jeopardy," the band said. "We have and will always keep the safety and well-being of our supporters as top priority."

## Infected cruise ship unloads passengers in California

By **OLGA R. RODRIGUEZ** and **DAISY NGUYEN** Associated Press

OAKLAND, Calif. (AP) — The cruise ship forced to idle for days off the California coast because of a cluster of coronavirus cases aboard arrived in port Monday, and dozen of passengers began to leave for military bases where they would be quarantined or to return to their home countries.

The Grand Princess pulled into the Port of Oakland with more than 3,500 people aboard — 21 confirmed to be infected with the new virus. Passengers lining the balconies waved and some left the cabins where they had been in isolation to go on deck.

As the ship sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge to enter the harbor, passenger Karen Schwartz Dever said "everyone was hollering and clapping."

Twenty-three people who needed acute medical care had been taken off the ship by late Monday afternoon, but it was not clear how many of them had tested positive for the virus, said Brian Ferguson, a spokesman for the California Office of Emergency Services.

Live TV footage showed at least one passenger, an older man wearing a face mask, climbing onto a stretcher and being lifted into the back of an ambulance. Officials have said the unloading will take up to three days.

"Our intent is to basically disembark about half the passengers today. Everyone will be screened initially today," said Robert Kadlec, assistant secretary of Health and Human Services Services.

Many of the nearly 240 Canadians on board left the ship after the critically ill and stood outside two tents displaying Canadian flags. Canada and the UK were among the countries sending chartered flights to retrieve their citizens.

U.S. passengers will be flown or bused from the port — chosen for its proximity to an airport and a military base — to bases in California, Texas and Georgia for testing and a 14-day quarantine. The ship is carrying people from 54 countries, and foreigners will be whisked home.

About 1,100 crew members, 19 of whom have tested positive for COVID-19, will be quarantined and treated aboard the ship, which will dock elsewhere after passengers are unloaded, California Gov. Gavin

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 45 of 75

Newsom has said.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered.

In an effort to stop the virus from spreading, Italy will impose travel restrictions and other strict public health measures nationwide starting Tuesday. And a combination of coronavirus fears and plunging oil prices sent stocks on Wall Street plummeting Monday.

The virus has infected 600 people in the United States, and at least 26 have died, most in Washington state. Surgeon General Jerome Adams said communities will need to start thinking about canceling large gatherings, closing schools and letting more employees work from home, as many companies have done after an outbreak in the Seattle area.

In Silicon Valley, NASA's Ames Research Center is essentially closed with restricted access because an employee tested positive Sunday for the coronavirus. Workers will be on "mandatory telework status" and three earth science airplane missions are being delayed to later this year, the county said.

Several universities have begun online-only courses, including the University of Washington, Stanford University and Columbia University. The largest school district in Northern California, with 64,000 students, canceled classes for a week when it was discovered a family in the district was exposed to COVID-19. Georgia's fourth-largest school district, which has more than 93,000 students, closed its schools for at least one day after a teacher at two middle schools was confirmed to have the coronavirus.

The Grand Princess had been held off the coast since Wednesday because of evidence that it was the breeding ground for more than 20 infections tied to a previous voyage.

Passengers from the previous voyage have tested positive in California and other states. Six Canadians who were on the Grand Princess from Feb. 11 to 21 were also confirmed to have the virus.

The California governor and Oakland mayor sought to reassure people that none of the cruise ship passengers would be exposed to the public before completing the quarantine. Officials were trying to decide where the ship and its crew would go next.

The State Department warned against travel on cruise ships because of "increased risk of infection of COVID-19 in a cruise ship environment."

Another Princess ship, the Diamond Princess, was quarantined for two weeks in Yokohama, Japan, last month because of the virus. Ultimately, about 700 of the 3,700 people aboard became infected in what experts pronounced a public health failure, with the vessel essentially becoming a floating germ factory.

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Rodriguez reported from San Francisco. Associated Press writers Janie Har, Jocelyn Gecker and Juliet Williams in San Francisco also contributed to this report.

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The Associated Press receives support for health and science coverage from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

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Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

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This story has been corrected to identify an Offices of Emergency Services spokesman as Brian Ferguson.

## Stakes rise for Sanders heading into Michigan primary

By WILL WEISSERT Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Bernie Sanders proved his 2016 presidential bid was serious with an upset victory in Michigan powered by his opposition to free trade and appeal among working-class voters. Four years later, the same state could either revive the Vermont senator's campaign or relegate him to the role of protest candidate.

Michigan and five other states hold presidential contests on Tuesday at a critical point in the Democratic race.

Former Vice President Joe Biden is looking to quash Sanders' hopes and cement his own front-runner status just a week after resurrecting his beleaguered White House bid with a delegate victory on Super Tuesday. He played up his underdog story on Monday as he campaigned across Michigan, reflecting on his stutter as a child and the deaths of his first wife and young daughter.

And Biden wasn't alone. The former vice president courted the state's influential African American voters alongside the two most prominent black candidates previously in the 2020 race, Kamala Harris and Cory Booker, who endorsed Biden in recent days as part of a broader consolidation of support among party leaders.

Sanders is in an urgent fight to turn things around as the primary calendar quickly shifts to other states that could favor Biden and narrow his path to the nomination. The senator countered the parade of Democratic firepower lining up behind Biden by securing the endorsement of the Rev. Jesse Jackson and deploying Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, D-N.Y., on his behalf.

Having devoted several days to Michigan, the Vermont senator spent the eve of Tuesday's primaries in Missouri, where he downplayed questions about electability and insisted that the "energy and excitement" of his supporters made him the strongest Democrat to run against President Donald Trump this fall.

Tuesday marks the first time voters will weigh in on the Democratic contest since it effectively narrowed to a two-person race between Sanders and Biden. It will be another test of whether Sanders can broaden his appeal among African Americans. Biden, meanwhile, must show that he can keep momentum going after his surprise Super Tuesday turnaround.

"I like his chances," Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who has endorsed Biden, said of the former vice president in an interview.

"He knows Michigan," Whitmer added. "When our back was up against the wall during the auto struggles of the past, it was Barack Obama and Joe Biden who had our backs."

That's a reference to the Obama administration overseeing federal bailouts that helped the auto industry — the lifeblood of Michigan's economy — weather the 2009 financial crisis. Sanders counters that he, too, voted to save the auto industry. He also says that, unlike Biden, he opposed the North American Free Trade Agreement, which he said prompted thousands of Michigan jobs to move to Mexico since taking effect in 1994.

Biden ticked off the names of six former presidential rivals who have endorsed him just in the past week during a Monday appearance with Booker in Flint, Michigan, a community that has seen auto industry jobs disappear: "They've all come out and endorsed at one time ... the candidate that they think can win."

And later in Detroit, he stood on stage grasping hands with Whitmer, Booker and Harris, a powerful trio of potential vice presidential picks should Biden become the Democrats' presidential nominee.

The large rally was interrupted repeatedly by protesters, however, who railed against Biden's support for the North American Free Trade Agreement and his reluctance to embrace sweeping environmental proposals outlined in the so-called Green New Deal.

In a scuffle with environmental protesters in the midst of Biden's remarks, senior adviser Symone Sanders was knocked to the ground. She was not hurt. Less than a week ago she tackled a protester who rushed the stage as Biden spoke in California.

Other economic challenges emerged on Monday as fears about the spread of the new coronavirus shook financial markets, slicing 7.8% from the Dow Jones Industrial Average. Sanders held a roundtable with

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 47 of 75

health experts in Detroit, and Biden said he would defer to health experts about whether campaign events could continue, given concerns about the spread of the virus.

Anthony Fauci, the nation's leading infectious disease expert, stopped short of calling on candidates to put a pause on political rallies. Instead, he said he wouldn't criticize someone seeking office for putting a pause on big gatherings.

"If you're talking about a campaign rally tomorrow in a place where there is no community spread, I think the judgment to have it might be a good judgment," Fauci said Monday at a White House briefing. "If you want to talk about large gatherings in a place where you have community spread, I think that's a judgment call."

An outstanding question going into Tuesday is whether Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, who dropped out of the race last week, will endorse Biden or Sanders. So far, she's declined to back either, an especially frustrating development for Sanders, who could use Warren's help in unifying progressives in much the same way Biden has been able to rally moderates.

Sanders has scoffed at suggestions he could drop out if he doesn't win Michigan, but his travel schedule underscores its importance. He canceled a trip to Mississippi and instead made five campaign stops across Michigan since Friday.

Sanders won't say if he's personally lobbying Warren for her endorsement. He did manage to secure the backing of Jackson, who said it was no time for centrist compromise.

He jabbed Biden during a Monday appearance in downtown St. Louis, reminding a largely young crowd of the former vice president's long record in Washington. Sanders noted that unlike Biden, he opposed the war in Iraq, Wall Street bailouts after the 2008 collapse and any talk of cuts to Social Security.

"In a general election, which candidate can generate the enthusiasm and the excitement and the voter turnout we need?" Sanders asked. "If you want to defeat Trump, which all Democrats do and the majority of independents do and some Republicans do, we are that campaign."

One of Sanders' highest-profile supporters, Ocasio-Cortez, struck a far more conciliatory tone the day before addressing 10,000-plus on the campus of the University of Michigan on Sunday night, saying, "In order for us to win, we have to grow."

"We must be inclusive. We must bring more people into this movement," she said, urging Sanders supporters to shed "cynicism and exclusion" and "turn with an embracing posture, where all people are welcome in a people's movement."

Sanders is optimistic about Washington state on Tuesday, but could face hurdles in Mississippi and Missouri. Sanders' team acknowledges he will also struggle in next week's Florida primary, where the senator's past defense of Fidel Castro looms large. He also could face long odds in Ohio and Illinois — especially if he underperforms in Michigan. Both of those states also vote March 17.

The wild card next week could be Arizona, where Sanders will be counting on strong Latino support, which lifted him to victory in California.

Sanders advisers are aware that Biden could build an insurmountable delegate lead if he runs up the score in the upcoming contests. They hope to continue doing well in the West before picking up momentum in places like delegate-rich New York, which holds its primary next month.

There's no guarantee Sanders could last that long this time, however, given the higher expectations he now faces. Even some of those attending Sanders rallies are beginning to feel it, although his St. Louis audience was optimistic.

Alec McAulay, a 19-year-old college student from St. Louis County, said Sanders has proved that he's a true alternative to the president.

"I think Biden agrees with Trump too much, more than any Democrat should," McAulay said.

\_\_\_Associated Press writers Seth Borenstein in Washington and Steve Peoples in Flint, Mich., contributed to this report.

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

## Trump wants payroll tax relief to calm virus-spooked markets

By ZEKE MILLER Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Donald Trump said Monday his administration will ask Congress to pass payroll tax relief and other quick measures as a public health and economic maelstrom brought on by the coronavirus drew closer to him personally.

Intending to calm the fears of financial markets over the impact of the epidemic, Trump told reporters he is seeking “very substantial relief” to the payroll tax. Trump also said he was seeking help for hourly-wage workers to ensure they’re “not going to miss a paycheck” and “don’t get penalized for something that’s not their fault.”

He stepped forward with the contours of an initiative after markets dropped sharply and as the outbreak spread. Several Trump confidants in Congress disclosed they were isolating themselves after potential exposure to the virus; one traveled with the president from Florida on Air Force One on Monday; another was his just-tapped new chief of staff.

Trump said he would hold a press conference Tuesday to outline the proposals, saying his administration and Congress would be “discussing a possible payroll tax cut or relief, substantial relief, very substantial relief, that’s big, that’s a big number. We’re also going to be talking about hourly wage earners getting help so that they can be in a position where they’re not going to ever miss a paycheck.”

As Trump grappled with an epidemic whose consequences he has repeatedly played down, the White House asserted it was conducting “business as usual.” But the day’s business was anything but normal. Lawmakers pressed for details on how the Capitol could be made secure, handshakes on the Hill were discouraged and a Pentagon meeting was broken into sub-groups to minimize the number of people in the same room.

The president himself dove into handshakes with supporters earlier in the day, when arriving to headline a fundraiser in Longwood, Florida, that raised approximately \$4 million for his reelection campaign and the Republican Party.

On his flight back to Washington he was accompanied by Florida Rep. Matt Gaetz, who later went into a voluntary quarantine. He was one of several GOP lawmakers who were exposed to a person at last month’s Conservative Political Action Conference who tested positive for the virus. His office said he was “mid-flight” on Air Force One when CPAC informed his staff that he had been in contact with the attendee who had the virus.

Once the plane landed, Gaetz was immediately tested.

Vice President Mike Pence, who also spoke at CPAC, said he has not been tested for the virus. White House Press Secretary Stephanie Grisham said Trump has not been tested because he has not had “prolonged close contacts” with any patients and “does not have any symptoms.”

In Monday morning tweets, Trump vented about the market drop and news that large public gatherings were being called off because of the virus.

“At this moment there are 546 confirmed cases of CoronaVirus, with 22 deaths,” Trump tweeted, comparing it to seasonal influenza and the thousands of deaths that causes. “Think about that!”

Scientists at this stage don’t know what the death rate of the new coronavirus actually is and whether it will wind up being about the same as flu or worse.

At the same time, administration officials were insistent that they weren’t trying to dismiss public concerns. “This is a very serious health problem,” Health and Human Services Secretary Alex Azar told Fox News.

At the Pentagon, officials have begun “social distancing” measures.

On Monday, Defense Secretary Mark Esper’s regular meeting with senior staff, which normally would be held face-to-face in a single room with 40 to 50 participants, was broken up into three rooms, with video-conferencing among the rooms, according to the Pentagon’s chief spokesman, Jonathan Hoffman. He said Esper and the 15 to 20 people in his room, including Gen. Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, sat at least six feet apart, in line with health guidance.

Trump was delegating much of the virus response to Pence, who convened a video teleconference to



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 49 of 75

give an update on the federal government's virus response Monday afternoon with the nation's governors. Trump met his top economic advisers before emerging to disclose he'll seek the payroll tax break.

The White House has been convening meetings with an array of travel and healthcare industry representatives, and was set to host Wall Street executives at the White House on Wednesday to discuss the economic fallout of the epidemic.

Futures in the S&P 500 index, which can indicate how Wall Street will open Tuesday, were up more than 2.5% late Monday after the administration's news conference.

On Capitol Hill, where many lawmakers are older and have frequent contact with the public, leaders were fielding questions from members and staff about how the complex will be secured. Leaders have so far shown little willingness to close the Capitol, but meetings were scheduled throughout the day to discuss preparations.

On Monday, Rep. Doug Collins, R-Ga., and Gaetz put themselves in voluntary quarantine because of their contacts with someone at the Conservative Political Action Conference.

Both said they did not have any symptoms but would wait out the remainder of the 14 days since the contact at home. Gaetz last week wore a gas mask to the House vote on the emergency funding bill for the virus response and said he wanted to highlight how Congress could become "petri dish" for the virus.

Collins had met with Trump last Tuesday night at the White House and shook hands with him Friday when the president visited the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Atlanta headquarters.

Rep. Mark Meadows, R-N.C., whom Trump named Friday as his incoming chief of staff, also went into self-quarantine. "A precautionary test came back negative & he feels great," his spokesman tweeted late Monday. Meadows has not yet resigned his congressional seat and has not yet assumed his new role at the White House, but he is a frequent visitor.

Sen. Ted Cruz, R-Texas, and Rep. Paul Gosar, R-Ariz., also placed themselves in quarantine after coming in contact with the same person at the conservative conference.

Rep. Julia Brownley, D-Calif., said she met last week with a person who has since been diagnosed with the virus. She closed her office and said she and her staff are "self-monitoring and maintaining social distancing practices."

Vast numbers of visitors come to the Hill, especially at this time of year when advocacy groups arrange "fly-in" trips to lobby and speak to lawmakers, and school groups descend for tours.

One Republican who said he was informed he had been exposed at the conservative conference, Rep. Louie Gohmert of Texas, tweeted that he was cleared to return to Washington. He was spotted leading a Capitol tour for more than 100 visitors late Monday evening.

In one manifestation of lawmaking in the age of the coronavirus, Rep. Richard Neal, D-Mass., approached a Republican colleague on the House floor Monday for a routine congratulatory handshake after the chamber approved a bill expanding a visa program. "Shake or bump?" Neal asked Rep. Kelly Armstrong, R-N.D.

The two men bumped elbows.

Offices on Capitol Hill also advertised they were holding "no contact meetings" and asked guests to refrain from shaking hands.

The chairman of the Democratic caucus, Rep. Hakeem Jeffries, said the House's chief administrative officer and the sergeant at arms are expected to brief Democrats at their regular caucus meeting Tuesday. The discussion was expected to address whether the Capitol will be restricted to visitors, he said.

It was not immediately clear how Trump was aiming to provide assistance to employees weighing whether to stay home because of illness — a crucial aim of public health officials seeking to curtail the spread of the virus.

One mechanism, backed by the Trump-allied National Association of Manufacturers, involves a proposed tax credit for employers who pay employees who are quarantined.

Treasury Secretary Steve Mnuchin and Larry Kudlow, the director of the national economic council, were expected to bring the White House proposal to Senate Republicans on Tuesday afternoon, at which point officials planned to release more publicly.

Lawmakers on Capitol Hill had barely started to contemplate the economic implications of the spread of

the virus and what might be needed to stimulate the economy as people cancel vacations and business trips and stay away from stores. Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley told reporters that "everything's on the table."

But members of the Senate Republican leadership, including Texas Sen. John Cornyn played down the need for an economic stimulus package of any kind, be it tax cuts or aid for workers. "It's premature to be talking about that," Cornyn told reporters. "I usually love tax cuts but I think it's a little premature."

Democrats panned — for now — Trump's proposed payroll tax cut. They said it was not specific enough to the core problem and are preparing their own package of aid, including affordable testing, unemployment benefits and paid leave for working families affected by the virus.

"Unfortunately at the president's press conference today, he really did not address the coronavirus issue," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, standing alongside Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer after a late meeting at the Capitol. "This is about the kitchen table of America's working families."

A House vote could come as soon as this week, Pelosi said, but more likely would shift to April.

While they did not completely oppose Trump's proposed payroll tax cut, they said they prefer their approach as a better way to instill confidence in families and the economy.

"Unless you deal with the pandemic the stock market's going to keep getting worse and worse and worse," Schumer said. "If there's going to be relief it ought to be aimed at the families that are most affected."

A day after saying it was "proceeding as normal," Trump's campaign canceled a three-day Women for Trump bus tour across Michigan that included Mercedes Schlapp, the former White House aide who is married to the American Conservative Union chairman, Matt Schlapp.

Schlapp is under self-quarantine after he, too, was exposed to the infected person at CPAC. He introduced Trump and greeted him with a handshake on stage before the president's spoke on Feb. 29.

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Associated Press writers Lauran Neergaard, Andy Taylor, Kevin Freking, Jill Colvin, Bob Burns, Lisa Mascaro and Mary Clare Jalonick contributed to this report.

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The Associated Press receives support for health and science coverage from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## Weinstein lawyers seek mercy after his 'historic' fall

By TOM HAYS and MICHAEL R. SISAK Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — With prosecutors seeking a severe punishment for Harvey Weinstein in his landmark #MeToo case, his lawyers argued on Monday that he deserves mercy for his already "historic fall from grace" and serious health issues.

In a letter filed in advance of Weinstein's sentencing on Wednesday for his New York City rape conviction, his defense team asked Judge James Burke to give him to only five years behind bars — a far cry from the potential 29-year maximum term allowed by law.

A man who was once admired for putting part of his fortune into charitable causes during his rise to one of Hollywood's most powerful producers now "cannot walk outside without being heckled," the papers say. "He has lost his means to earn a living. Simply put, his fall from grace has been historic, perhaps unmatched in the age of social media."

Even if the ailing 67-year-old defendant is given a lesser term, "the grave reality is that Mr. Weinstein may not even outlive that term" making it "a de facto life sentence," the papers say.

From the start, Weinstein's use of a walker to get in and out of court each day at his trial raised questions about his health. After his Feb. 24 conviction, he was sent to Bellevue Hospital amid concerns about high blood pressure and heart palpitations for more than a week before being transferred late last week in an infirmary on the notorious Riker Island jail complex.

In addition to the heart issues, Weinstein's lawyers have said he was also dealing with the ramifications of unsuccessful back surgery stemming from a car crash last summer and a condition that requires shots

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 51 of 75

in his eyes so he does not go blind.

In their own filing last week, prosecutors detailed a litany of allegations starting with a claim by a woman that she woke up in the middle of the night in a Buffalo, New York, hotel room in 1978 to find Weinstein on top of her and "forcing himself sexually on her." They said it fit a pattern that continued for decades: Weinstein getting young women alone in hotel rooms and other settings before sexually attacking them, often while trying to trick them into thinking it was a path to stardom.

The judge had told potential jurors during jury selection that the trial "was not a referendum on the #metoo movement" and to consider only the specific allegations contained in the charges. But prosecutors said that by law, Burke is allowed "to consider all aspects of a defendant's life and characteristics" and a "broad spectrum of information" in considering a proper sentence.

Based on "a lifetime of abuse toward others, sexual and otherwise," the judge should impose a sentence that "reflects the seriousness of the defendant's offenses" and punishes him for "his total lack of remorse for the harm he has done," prosecutors wrote.

On the criminal sex act count, Weinstein faces a minimum of five years in prison and a maximum of 25 years in prison, while the third-degree rape count carries a maximum penalty of four years in prison.

Judges often run sentences concurrently, meaning a defendant can serve both sentences at the same time.

At Weinstein's sentencing hearing, his accusers will again get a chance to confront him in court, and the former producer will be afforded another opportunity to speak. He declined to testify on his behalf at his trial, but at sentencing he wouldn't have to worry about getting grilled by the prosecution like he would've on cross-examination.

Once Weinstein is sentenced, he'll be transferred from the city's jail system to the state prison system. There, he will undergo a thorough evaluation, including a comprehensive medical review, to determine which facility is best for his physical and security needs.

## Italy expands lockdown, Israel tightens entry to halt virus

By COLLEEN BARRY and ADAM GELLER Associated Press

SOAVE, Italy (AP) — The battle to halt the coronavirus brought sweeping new restrictions Monday, with Italy expanding a travel ban to the entire country, Israel ordering all visitors quarantined just weeks before Passover and Easter, and Spain closing all schools in and around its capital.

Even as workers in Beijing returned to their jobs and new infections in China continued to subside, Italians struggled to navigate the rapidly changing parameters of the nation's self-imposed lockdown.

The fears fanned by the virus sent Wall Street stocks tumbling to their biggest drop since 2008, with the Dow Jones Industrial Average down 7.8%. Global oil prices suffered their worst percentage losses since the start of the 1991 Gulf War.

"Now that the virus has a foothold in so many countries, the threat of a pandemic has become very real," said World Health Organization chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus. "The great advantage we have is the decisions we all make as governments, businesses, communities, families and individuals can influence the trajectory of this epidemic."

More than 113,000 people have been infected with the virus, and more than 3,900 have died of the COVID-19 illness it causes. Most of the cases are in China, but its proportion is shrinking as the caseload grows elsewhere. More than 62,000 people have already recovered. But Italy's intensifying struggle to halt the virus' spread emerged as a cautionary tale.

"There won't be just a red zone," Italian Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte said, in announcing that a lockdown covering about 16 million people in the north would be expanded to the entire country starting Tuesday.

Italian doctors celebrated one small victory after the first patient diagnosed with the illness, a 38-year-old Unilever worker, was moved out of intensive care and began breathing on his own. But the virus' rapid spread was forcing them to operate like war-time medics, triaging patients to decide who get access to scarce ICU beds.

# Groton Daily Independent

**Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 52 of 75**

"Unfortunately we're only at the beginning," said Dr. Massimo Galli, head of infectious disease at Milan's Sacco hospital.

Travelers at Milan's main train station had to sign police forms self-certifying that they are traveling for "proven work needs," situations of necessity, health reasons or to return home. Ski lifts were ordered to close after students whose classes were canceled began organizing trips to winter resorts.

Italy's 9,172 cases and 463 deaths are the second-most in the world. China on Tuesday recorded just 19 new cases over the previous 24 hours, its lowest total since it began reporting national figures on Jan. 20.

Inmates at more than two dozen Italian prisons rioted against restrictions on family visits and other containment measures, and six died after they broke into the infirmary and overdosed on methadone.

Pope Francis livestreamed a Mass he celebrated alone but held some meetings.

For most people, the new type of coronavirus first detected in China in December causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. It can progress to serious illness including pneumonia, especially in older adults and people with existing health problems.

China has registered 80,754 cases in total and 3,136 deaths as of Tuesday.

The apparent subsiding of its outbreak came only after Chinese authorities imposed massive quarantines, which are still largely in place. Other virus-hit countries are embracing less strict, but still aggressive measures.

Israel will quarantine anyone arriving from overseas for 14 days, a decision coming barely a month before Easter and Passover.

All St. Patrick's Day parades were canceled in Ireland, including one in Dublin that typically draws half a million to its streets.

All schools in and around Madrid will close for two weeks. The rising number of cases around Spain's capital "imply a change for the worse," the country's Health Minister Salvador Illa said.

Trying to send a message of confidence in the economy, French President Emmanuel Macron and his wife walked on Paris' Champs-Elysees avenue. "I'm shaking hands using my heart," he said as he waved to people while keeping a 1-meter distance from passersby.

In China, the slow emergence from its extreme quarantine measures spotlighted the virus' continued economic impact.

"Our business is one-fifth of what it was before," said Cheng Sheng, who helps run a stand in Beijing that sells sausages and noodles. "There's much less foot traffic. There are no people."

Infections were reported in more than half the world's countries, and flashpoints were erupting around the globe.

"We are working for valuable time, time in which scientists can research medicines and a vaccine" and in which governments can help stock up on protective equipment, said German Chancellor Angela Merkel, whose country has reported over 1,100 cases and, as of Monday, its first two deaths.

Iranian state television reported another 43 deaths, pushing the official toll to 237, with 7,161 confirmed cases. But many experts fear the scope of the illness in Iran is far wider than reported. South Korea reported 35 more cases, bringing its total to 7,513.

In the United States, where more than 600 infections and 26 deaths have been reported, the Grand Princess cruise ship docked in Oakland, California, after days idling at sea while dozens of those aboard were tested.

Fleets of buses and planes were ready to whisk the more than 2,000 passengers to military bases or their home countries for a 14-day quarantine. At least 21 people aboard have been confirmed to have the infection.

In Washington, the Capitol's attending physician's office said "several" members of Congress had contact with a person who attended a recent political conference and subsequently developed COVID-19. They "remain in good health," the office said. Three members of Congress, Sen. Ted Cruz and Reps. Doug Collins and Paul Gosar, said they are quarantining themselves after determining they had contact with the person.

After earlier closing its land borders, Saudi Arabia cut off air and sea travel to and from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Italy, Kuwait, Lebanon, South Korea, Syria and the United Arab Emirates. All Saudi schools and uni-

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 53 of 75

versities closed beginning Monday.

Qatar cut off travel to 15 countries and said it would shut down schools and universities beginning Tuesday. Organizers of the annual Holocaust remembrance march in southern Poland postponed it this year due to coronavirus fears, and soccer authorities said at least four major matches — in France, Germany and Spain — would take place with no fans.

Geller reported from New York. Associated Press writers Ken Moritsugu in Beijing; Lori Hinnant in Paris; Maria Cheng and Carlo Piovano in London; Nicole Winfield in Rome; and Jon Gambrell in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, contributed to this report.

Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

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## 'Exorcist' actor Max von Sydow dies at age 90

By JAN M. OLSEN Associated Press

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP) — Max von Sydow, the self-described "shy boy"-turned-actor known to art house audiences through his work with Swedish director Ingmar Bergman and later to moviegoers everywhere when he played the priest in the horror classic "The Exorcist," has died. He was 90.

His agent Jean Diamond said Monday the actor, who was born in Sweden but became a French citizen in 2002, died the previous day in France.

"It is with a broken heart and with infinite sadness that we have the extreme pain of announcing the departure of Max von Sydow," Diamond said.

From his 1949 screen debut in the Swedish film "Only a Mother," von Sydow starred in close to 200 film and TV productions, remaining active well into his 80s. He received two Academy Award nominations — for best actor in 1988 for his gripping portrayal of an impoverished farmer in "Pelle the Conqueror," and best supporting actor in 2012 for his role as a mute in "Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close." More recently, he received an Emmy nomination for his work as the Three-Eyed Raven in HBO's "Game of Thrones."

The Swede was a mainstay of nearly a dozen classic, angst-ridden films by Bergman, including "Wild Strawberries," "Shame" and the 1957 release "The Seventh Seal," in which he featured in one of Bergman's most memorable scenes, as the medieval knight who plays a game of chess against the grim reaper.

Actress Inga Landgre, 92, who appeared with him in "The Seventh Seal" told Sweden's news agency TT that "there was a sense of security in his radiance" adding, "his presence was his strength."

"Max Von Sydow was something like a consummate actor, with a pride in his art and a dedication to his craft that I've encountered in very few people in my life," recalled Martin Scorsese, who co-starred in the director's "Shutter Island." "On the set he was remarkable, and off the set he a complete gentleman."

Von Sydow made his Hollywood debut as Jesus in the 1965 film "The Greatest Story Ever Told," but gained widespread international fame as the devil-evicting priest in William Friedkin's controversial 1973 film "The Exorcist."

Tall and lanky, with sullen blue eyes, a narrow face, pale complexion and a deep and accented speaking voice, von Sydow was often typecast in Hollywood as the sophisticated villain.

"What I as an actor look for is a variety of parts. It is very boring to be stuck in more or less one type of character," he once said in an interview.

In 1980, von Sydow starred as the evil emperor Ming the Merciless in "Flash Gordon." He turned down the role as the sinister Dr. No in the first James Bond film with the same name, but later appeared as the cat-stroking villain Ernst Blofeld in the 1983 "Never Say Never Again," starring Sean Connery as Bond.

He also played a tormented painter in Woody Allen's "Hannah and Her Sisters" and portrayed the devil

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 54 of 75

in "Needful Things," a 1991 horror film based on a novel by Stephen King. In 2015, he appeared briefly in the blockbuster "Star Wars: The Force Awakens."

While his characters were often sinister, tormented or evil, the soft-spoken von Sydow said he became an actor to overcome his own shyness.

"I was a very shy boy when I was a kid," he said in an Associated Press interview. "When I started acting in an amateur group in high school, although I wasn't aware of it at the time, I suddenly got a tool in my hand that was wonderful. I was allowed to express all kinds of strange things that I never dared to express before. Now I could do it with the character as a shield, as a defense, and as an excuse.

"I think that for many years I used my profession as some kind of a mental therapy."

Von Sydow was born April 10, 1929, into a family of academics in the southern Swedish city of Lund. He was baptized Carl Adolf von Sydow, but later changed his first name to Max. His given name, he said, was "not a good name" after World War II.

Although his family was not interested in theater, he said his father was a master of telling adventure stories that fueled his imagination as a child. He decided he wanted to be an actor and formed a theater society with his friends after seeing his first play, William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," at age 14.

He studied at the Royal Dramatic Theater in Stockholm and acted in small municipality theaters in Sweden for eight years — an experience he later described as crucial for his career.

"I'm very grateful to the schooling I had in Sweden because in order to learn acting you have to work, work, work," he said. "I think I owe very much to those years."

It was during this period he first met Bergman. In addition to "The Seventh Seal," he would star in 10 other Bergman films, including "The Magician," "The Virgin Spring" and "Wild Strawberries," and develop a close relationship with Sweden's most famous moviemaker.

"I can't say exactly what influence he's had on me, but it must be enormous," he said of Bergman. "We did most of that work when we were much younger. We were free — he hadn't yet become world famous and I was just a regular stage actor with a few film roles to my credit. We worked hard and had a lot of fun."

Von Sydow married Swedish actress Christina Olin in 1951 and had two sons, Clas and Henrik. The couple later divorced and he married French filmmaker Catherine Brelet in 1997, with whom he had two more sons, Yvan and Cedric.

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Former AP writer Malin Rising contributed biographical material.

## Italian premier locks down entire country to stop virus

By COLLEEN BARRY and ANTONIO CALANNI Associated Press

MILAN (AP) — Italian Premier Giuseppe Conte put his entire country on lockdown Monday to combat the coronavirus, banning all but the most important travel and putting the final kibosh on social gatherings after Italians failed to take previous warnings to heart amid skyrocketing infections.

Two days after imposing the same strict measures on a quarter of the country, in the hard-hit north, Conte urged all 60 million Italians to stay home. The only travel allowed will be for proven work reasons, for health conditions or other cases of necessity.

"Our habits must be changed, changed now. We all have to give up something for the good of Italy. When I speak of Italy, I speak of our dear ones, of our grandparents and of our parents," Conte said. "We will succeed only if we all collaborate and we adapt right away to these more stringent norms."

The nationwide restrictions take effect Tuesday until April 3 and include extending the closures of schools and universities and closing pubs, eateries and cafes at dusk.

Conte took to task young people who continued to gather socially as the virus spread, saying "this night life ... we can't allow this any more."

Italy registered 1,807 more confirmed cases as of Monday evening, for a national total of 9,172. The

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 55 of 75

number of dead in Italy also increased by 97 to 463 — most of them elderly with previous ailments.

For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

The vast majority of people recover from the new virus. According to the World Health Organization, people with mild illness recover in about two weeks, while those with more severe illness may take three to six weeks to recover. In mainland China, where the virus first exploded, more than 80,000 people have been diagnosed and more than 58,000 have so far recovered."

Despite registering the largest number of cases outside of China, Italy has seen only superficial compliance with measures aimed at reducing social contact, including closing cinemas and theaters and banning fans from soccer games. The government gradually expand the so-called red zones.

Restrictions on movement initially applied to 11 towns in northern Italy with a total population of around 50,000 people before being expanded Sunday to all of Lombardy and 14 provinces in the neighboring regions of Veneto, Piedmont and Emilia Romagna.

On the first business day since the government locked down a broad swath of the north, confusion reigned over who could go where and under what circumstances Monday.

Streets in Milan, Italy's financial hub and the main city in Lombardy, were unseasonably quiet. For the first time, checkpoints were set up at the city's main train station to screen travelers. People at Milan Central Station were required to sign a police form, self-certifying why they were traveling.

"Until a few days ago, the thinking was the alarm would pass in some weeks, we just need to follow the rules. Now we need to explain to citizens that the situation is very, very serious, our hospitals are at the point of collapse," the mayor of the Lombardy city of Bergamo, Giorgio Gori, told RAI state television.

People circulating inside the city and in the provinces were subjected to spot checks to ensure they had valid reasons for being out. Violators risked up to three months jail or fines of 206 euros (\$225).

Earlier Monday, civil protection authorities shut down all ski areas nationwide after one tried to tempt kids who are locked out of school to the slopes. That signaled an end to patience with the sort of wheeling-and-dealing that is often admired in Italy.

Under the extended measures, casual errands are out. The time-honored Italian tradition of an espresso at the corner cafe — gone. Customers now are required to take tables, if possible, the one furthest from the bar. The evening aperitif is also frowned upon; bars close at 6 p.m. Even going to the grocery store is a major expedition.

Sofia Celeste, a single mother of two in Milan, was hoping to avoid going out for groceries by ordering online, but deliveries for Milan are booked solid until next week. "It sounds like we should not go anywhere," she said. "I organized a dinner with the girls' babysitter, and was going to do some shopping, but even then I feel like it's risky."

Her water-delivery man — who has a heart condition — arrived Monday wearing a mask. "He said, 'I have to work,'" Celeste recounted. Her small family in isolation is being sustained by emails from the parish priest saying they are missed and a note from the catechism teacher sending the kids messages and prayers.

The regions affected by the decree are among the most productive in Italy. Industry leaders worried about a perception being created abroad that all business was shut down and commercial deliveries of exports cannot be made.

The civil protection agency has emphasized that commercial freight is not affected by the crackdown.

Sportscar maker Ferrari, in Modena province, which went on lockdown Sunday, said that production was continuing after the company "activated all of the measures necessary" to allow employees to keep working. But it noted that continued production "is subject to that of our suppliers, with whom we are in constant contact."

Pirelli tire maker said there would be no immediate impact on its Italian production, 7.5% of the group's total, split between one plant inside the containment area and one outside. Pirelli said that precautions were being taken to safeguard the health of workers, and it did not anticipate issues transporting goods.

For travelers and commuters, procedures at Milan's main train station were tightened significantly. Police

officers in masks backed by pairs of masked armed soldiers checked tickets and documents of people arriving and departing.

Patrizia Peluso arrived at the station Monday from a five-day holiday with her two children in Lapland, Finland. They had to reroute their return flight through Rome after airlines canceled flights to Milan. They grabbed a Naples-Turin train in Rome, connecting two cities not subject to the quarantine, and were among the few passengers to get off in Milan.

Before letting them pass the gates, soldiers confirmed their residence in Milan and asked their reason for traveling.

"I explained we were away on holiday, and I have to return to work. If not, I wouldn't have come back at all," Peluso said.

A study of epidemics in the last 25 years in France indicates that closing schools and public transport helps slow the spread of viruses and is economically efficient if a disease is significantly more lethal than the common flu, as the coronavirus appears to be, said Jerome Adda, dean for research at Bocconi University in Milan.

This epidemic, he said, will prove to be critical training not only for the medical profession but for the general population.

"It is a constant struggle between humankind and viruses," Adda said. "We have to learn how to deal with this. This is not the first time we get a viral epidemic, and it won't be the last."

Barry reported from Soave, Italy. Associated Press writers Nicole Winfield and Frances D'Emilio in Rome also contributed to this report.

## Schools wrestle with fairness of closures during outbreak

By **MICHELLE R. SMITH** and **COLLIN BINKLEY** Associated Press

PROVIDENCE, R.I. (AP) — When the new coronavirus surfaced at Saint Raphael Academy after a school group returned from a trip to Italy, officials decided to close the Rhode Island Catholic high school for two weeks.

Instead of cancelling classes, the school in Pawtucket instituted "virtual days" where students are expected to work from home, check for assignments through an online portal and occasionally chat with teachers.

A few miles away, a public charter school also closed after a teacher who attended the same Italy trip awaited test results. But at Achievement First, the two days off were treated like snow days — no special assignments and no expectation that kids keep up their schoolwork.

As more schools across the United States close their doors because of the coronavirus, they are confronted with a dilemma in weighing whether to shut down and move classes online, which could leave behind the many students who don't have computers, home internet access or parents with flexible work schedules. As the closures accelerate, children at some schools, like Saint Raphael, will be able to continue some form of learning, while children at schools with fewer technological or other resources, may simply miss out.

The deep technological and wealth gap that exists nationwide between poor and affluent students has made the coronavirus outbreak even more challenging for school officials, who are wrestling with not only health and safety decisions but also questions about the ethics of school closures.

These deliberations have been playing out in schools all around the country during the outbreak, from urban districts in New York, Seattle and Los Angeles to rural ones in Nebraska and Pennsylvania.

"If we shut down for a week or two weeks, and some of the kids can do it but some can't, what do you do?" said Edward Albert, executive director of the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools. "There are some places that don't even have phone service."

Although widespread closures are a new development in the United States, they are already a reality in nations that have been hit harder by the virus. The United Nations' education agency, UNESCO, says nearly 300 million children in 22 countries on three continents were being affected by school closures last week. In response, it has begun supporting online learning programs.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 57 of 75

In hard-hit Washington, education officials recommended against schools moving instruction online unless they can ensure equal access for all students, including those with disabilities or without internet access. The state's education agency advised schools that it would make more sense to cancel school and make up classes at the end of the year.

"We want to discourage practices that disproportionately impact certain populations, especially those that are more at risk," said Rhett Nelson, director of alternative learning at the state's education department.

Schools also have to consider whether closures are actually beneficial to public health. Very few cases have been found in children and teenagers, and experts caution schools to consider factors such as harm to a children's education and absenteeism among health care workers whose kids have to stay home. For most people, the new coronavirus causes only mild or moderate symptoms, such as fever and cough. For some, especially older adults and people with existing health problems, it can cause more severe illness, including pneumonia.

In Los Angeles, teachers are raising concerns about an emergency plan to move classes online. So far, it's unclear how the district would reach students whose families can't afford laptops or internet service, said Alex Orozco, of the district's teachers union.

New York City officials have said closures would be a last resort, citing concerns that it would disrupt daily life for thousands of families. Gov. Andrew Cuomo on Monday announced a new statewide policy: Any school where a student tests positive for coronavirus will be closed for at least 24 hours for officials to assess whether more steps are needed.

A district in Oregon decided to stay open despite a student testing positive and being at his middle school last week. "Our schools are not only places where learning can continue, but where our students can be supported, supervised, and fed, which is a necessity for many families," Hillsboro School District said.

Some districts plan to distribute Wi-Fi hotspots to students without internet access, and others say they will provide computers to every student. Public schools in Miami say they're readying more than 200,000 laptops ready to go home in case classes move online.

In the Northshore School District near Seattle, which shifted its classes online as of Monday, officials are loaning computers and hotspots to students who need them. They're also providing to-go meals to address concerns about children who get free lunch going hungry.

Dozens of U.S. schools have announced closures of one or two days to disinfect schools, and some are shutting down for longer. Public schools in Scarsdale, New York, are canceling classes through March 18 with no plans to move online after a school worker tested positive. The 64,000-student Elk Grove Unified School District near Sacramento, California, closed through Friday after a district family was placed on quarantine.

Colleges were also moving classes online, including the University of Washington, Stanford University, Princeton University and Columbia.

The closures have proved to be a boon for some online schools and tech companies that help schools teach online. Many say they're seeing increased demand for services, while some are offering to help schools for free. Among them is Google, which is giving schools free access to larger video conferences.

The Leyden High School District near Chicago has been offering "E-Learning Days" for four years when bad weather arrives. All students are given tablets, and they can get free Wi-Fi hotspots if needed. But the practice is normally used only a day at a time, and Superintendent Nick Polyak questions whether it could be sustained for longer stretches.

"We could do something really high-quality for a week. If it's a month, I don't know that we could," Polyak said. "Not every student can just log on to a computer and participate."

Similar concerns have led some schools to plan for outright closures rather than virtual classes. An hour outside Lincoln, Nebraska, officials at Johnson-Brock Public School say they aren't considering online options because internet accessibility is too spotty in their rural community. Instead, the district of 250 students would plan to close and make up days later.

Some other schools are planning for low-tech options, like packets of work that could be sent home every week. Even schools equipped with technology are considering that option for younger students who don't

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 58 of 75

use online learning software.

At the charter school in Providence, Achievement First closed for cleaning while it awaited a teacher's coronavirus test results. She ended up testing negative and the school reopened after just two days.

Soraida Morales' three children attend the school. She still had to go to work at her pharmacy job, but was able to depend on her parents for childcare while she worked. They are also fortunate to have a laptop at home, a luxury that many families in the district don't have. The school serves a large number of English language learners, and the vast majority are considered economically disadvantaged.

Holly Taylor Coolman has two sophomores at the Pawtucket Catholic school shut down for two weeks. She and her husband are both college professors and have the flexibility to stay home with them and their 4th grader, a decision they made so they would not put anyone else at risk. She jokes that her family is in "quaranteen" as she keeps her kids on a strict schedule to keep up with coursework online.

She also recognizes that her family is fortunate to have the flexibility they do, and she wonders about what other families will do who don't have the same kind of privilege.

"There's this much bigger question about how are kids faring right now, who don't have two parents at home or don't have any parent at home," she said.

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Associated Press Writers Jennifer Peltz in New York and Carla Johnson in Seattle contributed to this report. Binkley reported from Boston.

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The Associated Press receives support for health and science coverage from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

## **EU, Turkey to review migrant deal as border tensions simmer**

**By LORNE COOK and SUZAN FRASER Associated Press**

BRUSSELS (AP) — The European Union and Turkey agreed to review a 4-year-old deal on managing migrants and refugees in an effort to settle a dispute that sent thousands of people to the Turkey-Greece border in hopes of reaching Europe, top EU officials said Monday.

Under the 2016 agreement, the EU offered Turkey up to 6 billion euros (\$6.7 billion) in aid for the Syrian refugees it hosts, fast-tracked EU membership and other incentives to stop Europe-bound migrants. The number arriving in Greece from Turkey dropped dramatically after the deal took effect.

After talks with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Brussels, European Council President Charles Michel said teams headed by the EU foreign policy chief and Turkey's foreign minister would work "in the next days to clarify the implementation of the deal between Turkey and the EU to be certain that we are on the same page."

European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said that during the talks with Erdogan "there was a clear focus on, 'Let's discuss what is fact. Let's sort out how both sides see the past and how we evaluate the EU-Turkey statement.'"

The Turkish leader left without speaking to the media. Officials from his office described the talks as "productive."

Turkey hosts more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees, and Erdogan has demanded that Europe shoulder more of the burden of caring for them.

He has accused the EU of not meeting its obligations under the 2016 agreement, including failing to pay money promised to Turkey to stem the flow of migrants to Europe.

The EU says it is disbursing the funds but also accused Erdogan of "blackmail" for waving migrants through to Europe late last month after dozens of Turkish soldiers were killed in fighting in northern Syria.

Asked whether Erdogan promised to restart Turkey's efforts to prevent migrants from leaving the country, Michel said, "What's in the statement, and what's in the camp of Turkey has to be fulfilled."

EU countries have rallied behind Greece, which is also a member of NATO, and described it as a "shield" protecting Europe's borders with the outside world.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 59 of 75

Earlier, a high-level Turkish official, speaking on condition of anonymity in line with government rules, said the sides would discuss a possible revision of the agreement. It wasn't immediately clear if the review will lead to one.

Erdogan had also been expected to raise concerns over alleged violence by Greek authorities as they push migrants back to Turkey.

Greece has deployed riot police and border guards to repel people and the border area has since seen violent confrontations. On Saturday, youths threw rocks at Greek police and tried to pull down a border fence.

Many migrants have alleged mistreatment at the hands of Greek police, and Turkey says two migrants were killed in violence along the border. Greece has denied the accusations.

Von der Leyen said that the use of "excessive force" is unacceptable and that security action should be "proportionate," but the EU has generally been unwilling to openly criticize the actions of the police.

Tens of thousands of migrants were already in Greece before Turkey announced its borders open, many of them in massively overcrowded camps on Greek islands facing the Turkish coast.

Part of the 2016 EU-Turkey deal stipulates that new arrivals must remain on the islands pending deportation unless they successfully apply for asylum in Greece.

Germany's coalition government said early Monday the country was willing to "support Greece regarding the difficult humanitarian situation of about 1,000 to 1,500 children on the Greek islands."

The government said Germany could host children in dire need of medical treatment or those who are unattended minors younger than 14, especially girls. It didn't say exactly how many children Germany would take, but said an agreement would be negotiated by a European "coalition of the willing" in coming days.

The situation on the Greek-Turkish land border was generally calm Monday. Greek authorities said in the 24 hours to Monday morning, they had blocked 1,646 attempts to cross the border and arrested two people — one Moroccan and one Egyptian.

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Fraser reported from Ankara, Turkey. Kirsten Grieshaber and Geir Moulson in Berlin, Samuel Petrequin in Brussels, Elena Becatoros in Athens and Costas Kantouris in Kastanies, Greece, contributed to this report.

## Trainers, vets, others charged in racehorse-drugging scheme

By STEPHEN WHYNO AP Sports Writer

More than two dozen people, including the trainer of champion Maximum Security, were charged in what authorities described Monday as a widespread international scheme to drug horses to make them race faster.

Trainer Jason Servis, whose stable includes the 3-year-old champion, was charged with administering performance-enhancing drugs to that horse and others. Maximum Security crossed the finish line first at the 2019 Kentucky Derby before being disqualified for interference and has since won four of his five high-profile races.

The charges against trainers, veterinarians and others were detailed in four indictments unveiled Monday in Manhattan federal court. Charges brought against the 27 people include drug adulteration and misbranding conspiracy.

Performance-enhancing drugs "were given to racehorses in an effort to increase their performance beyond their natural abilities," William F. Sweeney Jr., assistant director in charge of the FBI New York Office, said at a news conference. "What actually happened to the horses amounted to nothing less than abuse. They experienced cardiac issues, overexertion leading to leg fractures, increased risk of injury, and, in some cases, death. Conversely, the human being involved in the scheme continued to line their purses as they manipulated this multibillion-dollar horse racing industry across the globe."

Authorities say the drugs can cause horses to overexert themselves, leading to heart issues or death. According to the indictments, other drugs used to deaden a horse's sensitivity to pain to improve the horse's performance could also lead to leg fractures.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 60 of 75

Authorities said participants in the fraud — affecting races in New York, New Jersey, Florida, Ohio, Kentucky and the United Arab Emirates — misled federal and state regulators, U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents, various state horse racing regulators and the betting public.

National Thoroughbred Racing Association president and CEO Alex Waldrop called the charges “abhorrent.” “There is no place in our sport for individuals who treat horses with disregard for their well-being or who undermine the integrity of our competition for personal gain,” Waldrop said. “We support the effort to bring these charges to light and are hopeful that their swift adjudication will help assure other horse racing participants and the public at large that our sport will not condone or tolerate the behavior alleged in the indictments.”

Federal authorities searched barns in Florida and a manufacturing facility in Kentucky. The Stronach Group, which operates Gulfstream Park West and Palm Meadows Training Center in Florida, said it complied with the search warrants specific only to the barns and stalls of those charged.

“The Stronach Group is committed to achieving the highest level of horse care and safety standards in thoroughbred racing,” the company said in a statement. “There is no room in our sport for anyone who does not prioritize the health and well-being of horses and riders.”

The group, which also operates Santa Anita Park in California and Pimlico Racecourse and Laurel Park in Maryland, was not charged. There is no evidence these charges have any connection to racehorse deaths at Santa Anita in 2019.

In the indictment, Servis is charged with giving Maximum Security a performance-enhancing drug called SGF-1000, recommending it to another trainer, and conspiring with a veterinarian to make it look like a false positive for another substance. The other trainer, Jorge Navarro, is also among those charged.

Maximum Security on Feb. 29 won the world’s richest race, the \$10 million Saudi Cup.

Servis is alleged to have given performance-enhancing drugs to “virtually all the racehorses under his control.” He entered horses in races approximately 1,082 times from 2018 through February 2020, according to authorities.

“The charges in this indictment result from a widespread, corrupt scheme by racehorse trainers, veterinarians, PED (performance-enhancing drug) distributors and others to manufacture, distribute and receive adulterated and misbranded PEDs and to secretly administer those PEDs to racehorses under scheme participants’ control,” an indictment reads.

Prosecutors noted in indictments that professional horse racing is a \$100 billion industry followed by millions of fans worldwide, leading racehorses to sell at auction for well over \$1 million.

“A sad day for racing but a long time coming,” trainer Graham Motion tweeted. “A good day for those who try to play by the rules, we will all be better for it.”

According to the indictments, marketers and distributors of drugs known as “blood builders” to stimulate a horse’s endurance have infiltrated the horse racing industry for at least the last decade.

One of Navarro’s horses, X Y Jet, who is named in one of the indictments as a recipient of performance-enhancing drugs, was responsible for over \$3 million in winnings and died of an apparent heart attack in January.

“Unfortunately, our worst fears have been confirmed today and those who love sport and equine athletes should be outraged,” U.S. Anti-Doping Agency CEO Travis T. Tygart said. “Fortunately, there are many in the industry who have been pushing to prioritize equine health and safety. However, those who remain opposed to uniform, independent regulation of the sport obstruct the type of progress needed to curb this abuse.”

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Associated Press writer Larry Neumeister contributed to this report.

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## The preventable death of an asylum seeker in a solitary cell

By NOMAAN MERCHANT Associated Press

Roylan Hernandez Diaz's long journey ended inside a white-walled cell in the solitary confinement wing of a Louisiana prison.

Nearby were the last of his belongings: a tube of toothpaste, a few foam cups, and a sheet of paper explaining how he could request his release from immigration detention. He had already been denied three times.

The Cuban man had been placed in solitary six days earlier because he told his jailers he would refuse all meals to protest his detention. The jailers put him there even after medical staff had referred him for mental health treatment three times and documented an intestinal disorder that caused him excruciating pain.

And for at least an hour before he was found to have hanged himself, no one had opened the door to check whether he was alive.

His death might have been prevented. An Associated Press investigation into Hernandez's death last October found neglect and apparent violations of government policies by jailers under U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, at a time when detention of migrants has reached record levels and new questions have arisen about the U.S. government's treatment of people seeking refuge.

ICE requires migrants detained in solitary confinement to be visually observed every 30 minutes. Surveillance video shows a jail guard walking past Hernandez's cell twice in the hour before he was found, writing in a binder stored on the wall next to his cell door. She doesn't lift the flap over the cell door window or try to look inside. The last person to look in the window was an unidentified jail employee, 40 minutes before Hernandez was found.

A person who works at the jail and spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity says the jail later discovered Hernandez couldn't be seen from the window.

Yarelis Gutierrez Barrios was Hernandez's partner. She had been with him for three years as they voyaged through South and Central America, always looking for a way to reach the United States. The man she knew was resilient, she says, determined to win his asylum case, not the kind of man who would give up easily.

"I think they let him die," she says.

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Hernandez spent much of his 43 years in rebellion against the Communist government 90 miles from the United States.

In his early years, he had refused to join a youth group. Then he refused compulsory military service and protested the regime of Fidel Castro.

In 1994, when he was 18, he tried to flee the island in a boat with his father and brother. But they were captured and imprisoned.

Hernandez was jailed for about two weeks. When he tried to escape again, in 2001, he was caught and sentenced to nine years in prison. Upon his release, he continued to be denied jobs and harassed by police.

In 2016, he left Cuba for Guyana, a tiny country in South America, because he could travel there without a visa. From Guyana, he set off for the U.S.

Hernandez and Gutierrez met in Ecuador in 2016. They were among a group of Cubans camping outside the Mexican embassy in Quito, Ecuador's capital, to demand visas that would allow them to reach the U.S.-Mexico border and request asylum. Mexico refused to grant the visas and Ecuador moved to deport the protesters to Cuba.

So they fled. They sold juice from a cart in Argentina, then lived for a year in Peru.

In both Argentina and Peru, Gutierrez recalls, they struggled to support themselves and were told it would be near-impossible to be allowed to settle permanently.

"In the end, we were going to come to the United States," she said.

Through Ecuador and Colombia, they reached the jungle connecting South and Central America known

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 62 of 75

as the Darien Gap. The region is roadless and lawless, controlled largely by gangs who prey on the thousands of migrants who try to traverse it each year.

The couple walked several days in light and dark before reaching a village in Panama. They surrendered at a government border checkpoint.

But in the jungle, Gutierrez says, Roylan lost the papers he had carried with him from Cuba documenting his imprisonment and political problems -- papers that would be key to proving his asylum case in America.

They were detained 10 days in Panama, then taken to a border town in Costa Rica. One by one, they boarded buses and made it through border checkpoints in each country along the way: Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, Mexico. They spent several days detained in Mexico.

After five months, on May 18, 2019, they arrived at the border bridge between Juarez, Mexico, and El Paso, Texas. They waited to be allowed inside.

Hernandez requested asylum and was taken into detention.

He and Gutierrez were initially taken to the same holding facility near the bridge. Men and women were separated and placed in small, cold cells.

She last saw him from across the dining room a few days after they crossed. It was lunchtime, but they weren't permitted to speak to each other.

Gutierrez was eventually released, but an officer at the facility told her Hernandez had been taken to a detention center in Mississippi.

After a few weeks, he would be transferred to Louisiana, a state that for thousands of migrants has become synonymous with prolonged detention. He remained jailed, though an initial screening found his asylum claim was credible.

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In the last days of his administration, President Barack Obama revoked a policy known as "wet foot, dry foot" that had given thousands of Cubans a path to permanent residency in the U.S. and, eventually, to citizenship.

Under President Donald Trump, the U.S. has restricted the grounds on which people can request asylum and pushed immigration court judges to process and deny asylum claims more quickly. It has also detained thousands of asylum seekers who previously might have been allowed to live and work in the U.S. while their cases were pending.

Those policy changes occurred after Hernandez left Cuba for the last time, but they shaped the last months of his life.

Last June 13, Hernandez arrived at the Richwood Correctional Center. Located in Monroe, in the north-eastern part of the state, Richwood is one of at least eight Louisiana prisons that converted into immigration detention centers during the Trump administration.

Looking to fill prisons emptied by criminal justice reform, rural Louisiana communities filled jail beds with asylum seekers and other migrants. At one point last year, Louisiana had about 8,000 migrants in detention, second only to Texas and up from about 2,000 migrants at the end of the Obama administration.

Louisiana also has become notorious for the broad denial of parole to migrants, particularly large populations of Cubans, Venezuelans, and people from South Asia. A federal judge in September ruled that ICE's New Orleans field office was violating the agency's own guidelines by failing to give each migrant a case-by-case determination of whether they could be released.

Little changed immediately after that ruling, but there has been some improvement since. According to the American Civil Liberties Union of Louisiana, of 345 requests between Oct. 17 and Dec. 10, just four were granted. ICE granted parole to approximately 20 percent of asylum seekers in January and February, the ACLU of Louisiana said, citing data ICE has provided in the federal lawsuit.

ICE spokesman Bryan Cox declined to comment on parole practices in the state but said that "any suggestion that the majority of persons arrested by ICE are detained is false."

The detainees at Richwood and other detention centers have repeatedly protested.

At one Louisiana jail, men from South Asia have staged a hunger strike lasting 100 days and counting. At another, officials pepper sprayed migrants who participated in a sit-in to demand freedom.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 63 of 75

Wrote one Richwood inmate last year, in a letter released by the advocacy group Freedom for Immigrants: "We only want our liberty to pursue our cases freely and to leave this hell, because Louisiana is a cemetery of living men."

Speaking by phone from Havana, a man who was detained at Richwood recalls a time he saw Hernandez standing in the yard.

Hernandez was doubled over and clutching his stomach. His face was pallid. He had accidentally eaten something with sugar in it, which had aggravated his condition.

According to the now-deported detainee, Dariel Hevia Leon, Hernandez constantly complained of the pain and felt medical staff was not treating him properly.

"He told me that 'the jail was killing me,'" Hevia said.

According to an ICE report compiled after his death, Hernandez was seen by medical staff when he arrived at Richwood and confirmed to have irritable bowel syndrome.

Yarelis Gutierrez says he had been diagnosed with intestinal problems in Peru and had needed medical help in Panama and Mexico during their journey.

People with IBS can control their pain with medication and diet. The syndrome also has been associated with anxiety and depression.

When Hernandez arrived at Richwood, he refused a mental health referral, the ICE report says. He would twice be referred for mental health treatment, in August and September, though the report doesn't say why. It says he refused both times.

Hernandez told Gutierrez, his partner, and detainees at Richwood that he would fight his immigration court case until the end. But according to what Hernandez told others later, he faced a huge, perhaps insurmountable challenge: the loss of much of the paperwork documenting his case in the jungle.

He made his first immigration court appearance from Richwood, speaking to a judge in New York over video.

The Executive Office for Immigration Review declined to release its recording of that hearing. According to his partner, the judge told him he needed some evidence to prove his case. So Gutierrez started calling people in Cuba and Cubans who had left the island, asking them to write letters supporting his claim that he was persecuted.

"I barely got him three letters, because it took me quite a while to get them since the people in Cuba are afraid to talk," she said. "They are afraid to get involved in problems of this magnitude, but I got them."

On Oct. 9, he had what would be his last court hearing. According to a recording, the judge told Hernandez his final hearing would be scheduled for Jan. 30, more than three months away. Hernandez responds by saying he doesn't understand.

"My case is my case. I've already sent my evidence," Hernandez said, according to a translator heard on the recording. "I've been detained here. My rights have been violated. I don't have any benefits. I've already sent three letters, and my wife is out in the street."

The judge repeated that his final hearing was Jan. 30 and said he could have a lawyer present if he wanted. As the translator explains to Hernandez, the judge says, "Have a good day." The recording ends.

According to Gutierrez, Hernandez called her afterward to tell her that he was going to mount another hunger strike.

"I told him, 'Don't do it,' because I was afraid for his health, that he wasn't going to endure it," she says. "He got mad at me. He tells me, 'I'm going to do it. Support me, because it's the only way I have to get out of here.' In his mind, that was the only way."

The next day, Oct. 10, the ICE report says he was given a medical evaluation before being taken to segregation for threatening a hunger strike. A nurse found his physical and mental health to be normal "except for a withdrawn emotional state."

The interior of the cell where Hernandez was held when he died did not have video surveillance, according to the Ouachita Parish Sheriff's Office, the local law enforcement agency called to investigate soon

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 64 of 75

after he was found dead.

But the sheriff's office obtained video from the hallway outside his cell that captures the last hour before his body was found. This is what it shows:

--1:19 p.m.: A guard walks up to Hernandez's door. She takes a binder from the wall next to the door, writes in it, then puts the binder back on the wall. She never looks into the window of Hernandez's cell door.

--1:26: A man in street clothes walking by the cell stops to open the flap over the cell door window and looks inside. The sheriff's office says the man was a jail employee but doesn't have his name in its records.

--1:54: The guard comes back. Again, she takes the binder, writes in it, and puts the binder back without looking into the cell.

--2:04: Three staff members and what appears to be a jail trusty walk past the cell, filling most of the hallway. Going around the small crowd, a jail captain walks closer to the wall and comes next to Hernandez's cell door. The captain, identified by the sheriff's office as Gerald Hardwell, later told investigators he had noticed a "strong odor" emanating from the cell.

Hardwell stops walking and lifts the flap on Hernandez's door, just as the man in street clothes did. He starts rapping the door with his left hand. He later told the sheriff's office he couldn't see Hernandez.

A minute later, he comes back with a set of keys. He uses his left hand to lift the door flap and the right hand to unlock the door, pressing it open.

Hardwell tips his head into the cell, then immediately runs away from the cell, his left hand covering his mouth.

He had discovered that Hernandez hanged himself with a bed sheet tied to the post of his bunk bed.

The Ouachita Parish coroner recorded his time of death at 2:15 p.m. — 10 minutes after he was apparently dead to Hardwell and others at the jail — and said he was last seen at 1:50 p.m., deputy coroner Joy Davis told AP. The video shows that medical staff stood outside his cell long after he was discovered and that his body was not removed from the cell until almost 4 p.m.

Photos taken of his body show that Hernandez may have been dead for several hours before he was found, based on how the blood had pooled in his hands, according to an analysis done at AP's request by Dr. Nizam Peerwani, the medical examiner for Fort Worth, Texas, and a forensic expert with the advocacy group Physicians for Human Rights.

Peerwani found that the jail missed several warning signs, indications that Hernandez deserved more attention: a well-documented history of intestinal problems, his repeated refusals to receive mental health treatment, and the hunger strikes he staged. Peerwani says Hernandez's death is not due to "commission of a violent act perpetrated against him but rather due to omission."

There is the question of whether he should have remained in segregation at all. According to ICE Health Service Corps guidelines, within 72 hours of when he was placed in segregation for threatening a hunger strike, a health care provider should have reviewed whether to keep Hernandez there. That 72-hour check should have occurred no later than Oct. 13.

There's no reference to any check occurring in the ICE detainee death report. ICE's report says that on the day of his death and the four leading up to it, a nurse noted that Hernandez appeared normal or not in distress.

And under ICE's Performance Based National Detention Standards, anyone in segregation should be monitored at least every 30 minutes.

The video released by the sheriff only includes the hour before Hernandez was found dead, so it's impossible to determine how many times he had been observed.

The employee at the jail who spoke to AP on the condition of anonymity says Hernandez hanged himself in a corner of the cell that couldn't be seen from the cell door window. The same employee said it was also common knowledge that guards falsely logged checks they were supposed to make.

ICE and LaSalle Corrections, the private company that runs the jail, declined to confirm whether the guard who appeared outside Hernandez's cell was fired or whether any other employees were held responsible.

ICE and LaSalle did not answer most questions for this story.



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 65 of 75

Scott Sutterfield, a development executive for LaSalle, declined to answer any questions "due to pending litigation." Sutterfield joined LaSalle last year after serving as ICE's acting field office director for enforcement and removal in New Orleans; he denied one of Hernandez's requests to be released.

"I can say that LaSalle Corrections is firmly committed to the health and welfare of all those in our custody," Sutterfield said.

"We cannot speak for an agency contractor," said ICE spokesman Cox in an email. He added that ICE "holds its personnel, including contractors, to the highest standards of professional and ethical behavior."

"Further, while any death in custody is unfortunate, fatalities in ICE custody are exceedingly rare and occur at a rate roughly 100 times lower than the national average for persons in federal and state custody nationwide," Cox said.

Eight people have died in ICE custody since October, the start of the government fiscal year, the same number that had died in the previous year.

At Richwood, a man from Guatemala tried to commit suicide in December while detained in segregation, months after Hernandez's death.

The man's attorney, Lorena Perez-McGill, says she had seen him earlier that day and warned the local warden that he might harm himself. Guards were able to stop him from cutting himself 5 minutes after he had started.

Jailers took him to a local hospital where he was given stitches. Then, Perez-McGill says, he was taken back to the same segregation cell.

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Aside from Yarelis Gutierrez, Hernandez left behind two daughters and a son, as well as his mother and father.

When he left home for the last time, his family knew he hoped to get to America with the intention of making money to support them. Now, they have many questions about his death: How someone so strong in his convictions could have taken his own life? What happened to him in the jail, and why?

"He had struggled to get to this country, because he loved this country, he loved it with all his life," Gutierrez said. "He gave his life for this country."

## AP Explains: The oil market meltdown and its global impact

By DAVID McHUGH AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) — A clash of two oil titans - Saudi Arabia and Russia - is sending shock waves through energy markets, with wide-ranging implications for consumers and oil companies, including those in the No. 1 producing country, the United States.

The spat between these vital oil suppliers comes at a critical moment; the coronavirus outbreak is squeezing economies around the globe to the point where world oil demand is forecast to shrink in 2020 for the first time since 2009.

Oil prices fell Monday by the most in one day since the 1991 Gulf War. The price of U.S. crude fell as much as 34% to \$27.34 a barrel, a stunning drop for one day and the lowest price since early 2016.

The decline followed Russia's refusal last week to join the OPEC oil cartel in proposed production cuts aimed at supporting prices. Thwarted in its search for cuts, Saudi Arabia, the leading OPEC member, sharply changed course over the weekend by cutting prices and signaling it will ramp up production.

Here is a look at the oil price war and what it could mean over the longer term in the industry as well as for consumers at the gas pump.

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Q: WHY ARE OIL PRICES FALLING?

A: First came the coronavirus outbreak, which reduced travel and transport, sharply reducing demand for fuel. The international Brent benchmark had fallen from \$69 at the start of the year to around \$50 last week.

Then came last week's meeting between OPEC and non-member countries. On the agenda: a produc-

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 66 of 75

tion cut of 1.5 million barrels a day, or about 1.5% of global production. The idea was to keep prices from sagging even more as demand is expected to fall this year. Saudi Arabia, the world's No. 2 oil producer, wanted No. 3 Russia and other nonmembers to take 500,000 barrels per day of the cuts. Since 2016, the Saudis and the Russians have worked together on production issues.

But this time the Russians balked. They refused to join new cuts, or even to extend previous production cuts that were due to expire at the end of March. And the Saudis hit back, telling customers that they were going to ramp up production and slash prices for Asian customers.

Q: WHAT IS SAUDI ARABIA'S GOAL?

A: First, protecting market share. Both Saudi Arabia and Russia have seen U.S. producers take a chunk of their market, and falling prices help keep customers on board.

Second, Saudi Arabia may hope that the pain of low prices will force a Russian rethink. "Saudi Arabia has de facto launched a price war against Russia, promising to sell its oil at a discount in order to maximize its oil revenues," say analysts at UniCredit bank. "It appears Saudi Arabia wants to cement its position as the world's top oil exporter and to persuade Moscow to return to the negotiating table."

Q: WHAT'S BEHIND RUSSIA'S REFUSAL?

A: Russia may have seen no point in cutting production only to lose market share as U.S. shale producers in Texas and New Mexico take up the slack. Analysts say Saudi Arabia may be underestimating Russia's ability to weather low prices. Both countries are heavily dependent on oil revenues for their state budgets. But Russia says it can balance its budget at around \$42 a barrel for its own benchmark crude. Saudi Arabia, whose economy is less diverse, needs more than \$80 per barrel, according to the International Monetary Fund, even though its costs are much lower than Russia's.

What Saudi Arabia has done is to send prices so low that both will feel a serious crunch.

And Russia may have a longer-term target: the U.S. oil industry.

"The Russians are doing this out of long-term strategic considerations," said Tom Adshead, research director for the Macro-Advisory consulting firm in Moscow. "Their view is that by doing this they can damage the financial health of U.S. shale-oil producers and that by doing this they can take a lot of U.S. capacity offline and thereby remove U.S. producers as a source of competition. The other thing that is on their mind in all this is that if they cut then that will also primarily benefit U.S. producers."

"So they've decided they're going to take some short-term pain in order to inflict damage on one of their major competitors," Adshead said.

Stephen Innes, chief market strategist at financial services firm AxiCorp., says Russian President Vladimir Putin may also have decided to hit back at the U.S. industry after Washington placed sanctions on Russian state oil company Rosneft for marketing Venezuela's oil.

Q: WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR US PRODUCERS?

A: The current low prices could constrain activity in the American shale oil industry. A downturn in oil prices in 2014-2016 hurt companies in places like the Permian Basin in west Texas and eastern New Mexico. According to the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, \$50 per barrel is the price at which it becomes profitable to drill a new well in the U.S. Large producers such as Exxon have already scaled back with prices at \$50 a barrel. In Texas, the number of active rigs fell from 553 in October 2018 to 398 in January 2020. Around the same time, the oil industry in Texas shed about 14,000 jobs

"With the growth phase of the shale boom grinding to a halt due to the lack of investment in the industry, now U.S. shale oil could find itself running into a brick wall," says Innes from AxiCorp.

The head of the International Energy Agency, Fatih Birol, believes the U.S. shale industry will survive but the risks are high. He warned countries against being rash with big production decisions: "This is not a Russian roulette."

Q: WHAT'S IT MEAN FOR PRICES AT THE PUMP?

A: Most of the price of gasoline in the United States simply reflects the price of oil, so lower crude prices

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 67 of 75

should mean lower pump prices with a lag of about six weeks. Right now, they're at \$2.42 according to the U.S Energy Information Administration. When crude fell to \$36 in 2016, prices at the pump averaged \$2.15. Lower pump prices mean people have more to spend on other goods.

The impact is less pronounced in Europe since most of the price is made up of taxes. Currently, gasoline costs 1.32 euros per liter in Germany, or about \$5.70 per gallon.

Jim Heintz in Moscow, Jon Gambrell in Dubai, Angela Charlton in Paris and Cathy Bussewitz in New York contributed to this report.

## Sesame's Count wants to get young children counted in census

By MIKE SCHNEIDER Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — No age group was undercounted as much during the last once-a-decade census as children under 5, researchers say. Sesame Street is hoping to use Count von Count to change that.

The Muppet best known as the Count is joining Elmo, Rosita and her mom, Rosa, in public service announcements filmed on the set of the long-running educational television show. The spots encourage parents of young children to make sure they and their children are counted in the 2020 census.

The public service announcements in English and Spanish started airing Monday. The head count starts for most people this Thursday.

In the ad, the Count plays a census taker. Casting for the spots was purposeful, Sesame Workshop officials said.

"Rosita is a bilingual Muppet. Elmo is popular and connected to young children and families, and the Count is so logical when it comes to being counted," said Jeanette Betancourt, Sesame Workshop's senior vice president of U.S. Social Impact.

The Sesame Street characters join a growing group of celebrities using their influence to encourage people to be counted. Morgan Freeman made a public service announcement for census outreach efforts in Mississippi. "Hamilton" creator Lin-Manuel Miranda and U.S. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez cut one for New York City.

Sesame Workshop also is offering fliers and information about the census that can be downloaded and distributed from its website. The television show has promoted the census every decade since 1980, when the character Maria became a census-taker in the Sesame Street neighborhood.

Demographers estimate that 4.6% percent of children under 5, or 1 million children, weren't counted in the 2010 census. The under-counting was worst in minority communities, with under-counting for Hispanic children estimated at 7.5% and for black children at 6.3%, according to researchers.

The consequences of overlooking young children in a community can be harmful since the decennial census helps determine the distribution of \$1.5 trillion in federal spending, including money for schools, Head Start and family nutrition programs.

"We are hoping to really make a dent in that this time. I think that's really, really good because certainly the children are the future," said Stephen Buckner, a senior executive at the U.S. Census Bureau. "Someone entering the first grade is going to be an eleventh grader at the next census. There's a lot that can change in that person's life from grade one to grade 10."

Researchers who have examined the undercount say young children are more likely to be living in multi-generational households, living in foster care, in more than one household because of parental custody arrangements, or living in multi-unit buildings like apartments that are difficult to access.

"Our youngest Americans need and deserve the resources that are vital to get an accurate count," U.S. Rep. Katherine Clark of Massachusetts said last week.

Adriana Gomez Licon contributed to this report from Miami.

Follow Mike Schneider on Twitter at <https://twitter.com/MikeSchneiderAP>

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 68 of 75

## 2020 Watch: Can Bernie get back on track in Michigan?

By STEVE PEOPLES Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Presidential politics move fast. What we're watching heading into a new week on the 2020 campaign:

Days to next set of primaries (Idaho, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Washington) : 1  
Days to general election: 249

### THE NARRATIVE

The earth has shifted over the last seven days. The Democrats' 2020 primary has suddenly become a two-person race in which Joe Biden has a distinct advantage over Bernie Sanders. It's difficult to exaggerate the speed with which things have changed. Last weekend there were five major candidates still in the primary fight, and Sanders was threatening to build an insurmountable delegate lead. But in the span of 72 hours, two leading moderates dropped out and the party's establishment wing sprinted into Biden's camp. The former vice president used the extraordinary rush of momentum to seize a delegate advantage on Super Tuesday. And with Sanders struggling to unify the progressive wing behind him (Elizabeth Warren is out but has refused to endorse), he enters another multistate primary test on Tuesday facing the prospect that Biden could soon build an insurmountable delegate lead.

### THE BIG QUESTIONS

Can Bernie get back on track in Michigan?

As we learned last week, it's a mistake to focus too much on one state. After all, Sanders won Super Tuesday's biggest delegate prize, California, and still finished the day with fewer delegates than Biden. With that warning, Michigan deserves your attention this week. The Midwestern state offers the largest trove of delegates on Tuesday and, almost as importantly, serves as a huge symbolic test of Sanders' remaining political strength. Michigan helped rescue his candidacy four years ago, and it sits as one of three key battlegrounds Democrats desperately need to win in November. Going in this time, Sanders' team had been supremely confident about his standing with the state and its large working-class population — at least until last week's shakeup. Sanders knows he will not win them all, but he can't afford to lose this one.

How does Biden handle front-runner status this time?

Biden has plenty of experience as a front-runner. And he hasn't always fared so well under the bright lights that go with it. After nearly being forced from the race last month following a dreadful start, the 77-year-old gaffe-prone Democrat gets another chance to prove he belongs on top. He will benefit from a lack of establishment alternatives should he stumble. He'll also benefit from the new phase of the race, which has essentially become a series of national contests where voters won't get to see the candidates as closely as they did in Iowa, New Hampshire, Nevada and South Carolina. Still, make no mistake: Biden will face a new wave of fire from the right and the left this week as he seeks to tighten his grip on the Democrats' presidential nomination.

Will Warren help unite progressives?

Warren's silence has been notable. As a crush of establishment Democrats raced to line up behind Biden, the fiery progressive senator has refused to endorse her closest ideological ally, Sanders. There was obvious tension between Warren and Sanders during the primary, yet the same could be said of the many moderate candidates who are now standing behind Biden. Every day Warren sits on the sidelines hurts Sanders. He desperately needs a united progressive wing to defeat Biden, yet key pieces of Warren's coalition are holding back until she makes her move. This is the kind of decision that could have dramatic short- and long-term consequences for the progressive movement.

How will a two-man debate change things?

There have never been fewer than six Democrats on the debate stage at one time in the 2020 primary season. Next Sunday in Arizona, there will be just two. And in case you missed it, neither is a woman or

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 69 of 75

a person of color or under the age of 77. There are clear ideological differences, of course. Despite Biden and Sanders' superficial similarities, the silver-haired septuagenarians will face off representing starkly different views of the future of the Democratic Party and the nation. Sanders thinks he'll benefit from having more time to delve into issues of substance. And with more than four decades in Washington, Biden has a long record to answer for. There will be an unmistakably new dynamic on stage that may give voters their best glimpse so far of how each candidate would perform in a one-on-one debate with President Donald Trump this fall.

Can Trump handle the coronavirus outbreak?

The Republican president is facing the greatest leadership test of his first term. And, so far, Trump is struggling to grasp basic facts about the rapidly escalating coronavirus threat, which has infected hundreds of Americans across 34 states and counting. That's even as he and his administration publicly declared last week that the virus was contained. And beyond public health, the economic fallout could be disastrous. Wall Street just suffered its worst week in more than a decade, and travel companies are bracing for massive losses. The general election is just eight months away. Trump needs to show he can lead the country through this growing crisis or face the consequences in November.

## THE FINAL THOUGHT

There's no need to panic, but the coronavirus threatens to shape American life in 2020 far more than some expected. Public officials are planning for the likelihood that professional sports will be played in empty arenas. Airlines have begun canceling flights. And schools are being closed. It's fair to wonder whether political events may be curtailed sooner rather than later. Even if the death toll remains relatively low, this epidemic may affect all of us in some way before it's over.

2020 Watch runs every Monday and provides a look at the week ahead in the 2020 election.

Follow Peoples at <https://twitter.com/sppeoples>.

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

## Harry, Meghan do their last royal job at Commonwealth event

By DANICA KIRKA Associated Press

LONDON (AP) — Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan, made their final appearance as senior royals at Westminster Abbey, joining Queen Elizabeth II and other members of Britain's royal family Monday for an annual Commonwealth Day service.

The televised event was expected to be the last time the couple works alongside the entire Windsor clan before Harry and Meghan fly off into self-imposed exile in North America. The pomp-filled observance featured no hand-shaking, apparently because of the new coronavirus.

The service ended the two-month drama that began when the couple announced plans to walk away from their roles as senior members of the royal family and into a world where they will have to earn a living. It's uncharted territory for the House of Windsor, which only has the messy abdication of Edward VIII in 1936 as a guide to the potential pitfalls.

"(The Windsors) have lost a major attraction for the future," said Pauline Maclaran, co-author of "Royal Fever: The British Monarchy in Consumer Culture."

The Commonwealth service is a major event on the royal calendar, largely because the 93-year-old monarch has embraced the organization for much of her life. She became head of the network of 54 countries in 1952 when she was 26.

Elizabeth has long considered supporting good relations among Commonwealth members to be her own particular political project, said Philip Murphy, the director of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies at the School of Advanced Study at the University of London.

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 70 of 75

"It's not just what a lot of people would call Imperial nostalgia — a yearning for the good old days of the Raj," Murphy said. "The queen has always embraced an evolving Commonwealth and supported the notion of Britain as a multiracial country because it is part of a multiracial Commonwealth."

The service departed slightly from plan.

Harry and Meghan were ushered to their seats before the monarch's arrival instead of awaiting the queen and walking through the church with her as they did last year. In a change from the order of service, Prince William and his wife, Kate, the Duchess of Cambridge, also didn't take part in the traditional procession of the queen, making the outgoing royals' absence less glaring.

The queen gave Harry and Meghan the titles Duke of Sussex and Duchess of Sussex on their wedding day. Starting at the end of this month, the Sussexes will no longer use their royal titles as they pursue a new life of financial freedom in North America.

The couple are expected to earn their keep at least partly through speaking engagements, which can net as much as \$400,000 per event for the most sought after speakers such as former U.S. President Barack Obama. They've already had at least one speaking engagement, at a JPMorgan investment conference last month in Florida, but it isn't known whether they were paid or how much.

Among the things they may have to pay for is security after the Canadian government said it wouldn't cover the cost of the couple's security detail once they step back from royal duties.

## Dems look to Michigan primary as testing ground for November

By WILL WEISSERT and KAT STAFFORD Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) — Ask Arlene Williams about President Donald Trump's promises to bring back auto industry jobs that have evaporated across Michigan and she'll point with irony to the Chevy Blazer.

General Motors is now remaking the iconic American SUV after a lengthy hiatus — but building parts of it in Mexico and elsewhere overseas.

"These are some of the staple brands and yes, they're back," said Williams, 49, who works at a GM plant in Romulus, Michigan, southwest of Detroit. "They're just not being made in the U.S."

The largest of six states voting Tuesday, Michigan could redefine a Democratic primary that has become a showdown between former Vice President Joe Biden and Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders. But many voters are already looking ahead to November and whether Trump can again win in the state that perhaps more than any other catapulted him into the White House in 2016.

For Sanders, the stakes could hardly be higher. He defeated Hillary Clinton in Michigan in 2016, emboldening his argument that he could win with a diverse coalition that drew well from young voters, working-class whites and African Americans. But it is the kind of victory he has not been able to replicate this time, and if he does not on Tuesday, any chances at the Democratic nomination may be greatly diminished.

Biden has been emphasizing the Obama administration's bailout of the auto industry, which provided an economic lifeline for GM and Chrysler and federal loans for Ford, likely saving thousands of jobs. He is also counting on continued strong support among African American voters.

How Michigan votes will also be clarifying for November. Some see Sanders' sweeping promises to cancel student debt and provide health care for all potentially energizing young voters but not older ones wary of his democratic socialist ideology. Centrist and safe, Biden could do exactly the opposite, though.

Others worry that both candidates are taking black Democrats for granted. All that may add up to neither being able to carry the state against Trump.

"There's not a lot of energy, not enough energy, I would say, even for the primary," said Michigan state Rep. Sherry Gay-Dagnogo, whose district includes a large swath of northwest Detroit. She said the Democratic Party continues to use the same playbook of waiting until the last minute to do intensive community outreach — which crippled it in 2016.

Indeed, major party turnout in Wayne County, which encompasses Detroit and is strongly African American, fell by more than 64,000 votes in 2016 as compared to 2012. That's especially important since Trump leveled the Democrats' famed "blue wall" with narrow wins in states that were supposed to comfortably

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 71 of 75

go to Hillary Clinton: Pennsylvania, Wisconsin and Michigan, which he won by just 10,704 votes out more than 4.8 million cast.

Tuesday will be the first test of Democrats' ability to take them back.

They already can point to hopeful signs. Gov. Gretchen Whitmer, who has endorsed Biden and been mentioned as a possible vice presidential pick, won in 2018, as fellow Democrat and Sen. Debbie Stabenow was cruising to re-election.

Veteran Michigan pollster Bernie Porn said the president remains unpopular with independents and Republican women, especially in the suburbs — though he said Trump's standing has recovered some in the wake of impeachment.

"I think Trump is in trouble," Porn said.

Flipping the state back could be built on gains in places like Grand Rapids, childhood home of Gerald Ford and long the epitome of country club Republicans, often most interested in fiscal conservatism but also closely watching social issues. It has begun moving to the left amid an influx of jobs bringing new residents from other parts of the state and the country, Porn said.

Sanders staged a rally Sunday in Grand Rapids and — vowing to grow the Democratic electorate by winning over young, minority and working-class voters — hit the University of Michigan and blue-collar Flint and Dearborn, home to a large concentration of Arab Americans. It is a promise he has made in other states during the primaries, but so far has largely failed to deliver.

"I am more than aware that Trump in 2016 won the state of Michigan by a small vote," Sanders said. "I do believe the people of Michigan aren't going to make that mistake again."

Sanders canceled a planned trip to Mississippi to spend more time in the state this past weekend. But he has struggled to broaden his appeal with black voters, as evidenced by Biden's wipe-out win in South Carolina and across many other Southern states on Super Tuesday.

Activist Monica Lewis-Patrick, president and CEO of We the People Detroit, said the eventual nominee will need a strong ground game in Detroit to prevent the same mistakes the party made in 2016, when the black community felt largely unseen and ignored. She has endorsed Sanders.

Citing the ongoing water crisis in Flint and Detroit's aggressive water shutoff campaign that has disrupted service for 100,000-plus residential accounts across the city since 2014, Lewis-Patrick said the party needs to speak to issues that are impacting lives on a daily basis.

"We've told every candidate before we got down to the final two that we noticed in the debates when they came to Detroit that was missing from the conversation," she said, referring to when the city hosted Democratic presidential debates last summer. "What we're seeing is that many campaigns are treating black and brown communities as sort of a drive-by vote."

Sanders has spoken to Flint's water problems and the shutoff issue, asking with exasperation, "How is it possible" that people in parts of the state "don't have water coming out of the tap?"

In an attempt to shore up its position no matter who wins the nomination, the Michigan Democratic Party has had staff on the ground since 2017 in "pivot" counties that supported Obama in 2012 but went to Trump last presidential cycle. It also has led campaigns highlighting Trump's "broken promises" when it comes to issues like restoring lost manufacturing jobs.

Still, Gay-Dagnogo said that, though the state Democratic Party opened 15 offices around Michigan, "it's no secret" Trump's reelection campaign has stood up its own operations in the same areas.

"I think sometimes we just wait for something magical to happen, opposed to making sure that there are financial resources in the community to get people out," she said.

Trump, meanwhile, has visited Michigan several times as president and points to a strong national economy as proof he kept his promises to restore the state's lost jobs.

Manufacturing jobs in Michigan grew from 616,800 when Trump took office to 628,900 last December, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. But some counties that Trump won have experienced job losses, and the state faces the prospect of further downturns as coronavirus reverberates through the economy.

While top union leaders have lined up to support either Biden or Sanders, many of their rank-and-file

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 72 of 75

members continue to back Trump because of his views on social issues like guns and abortion.

"A number of union households who voted for Trump and voted against their own economic interests, I think, may do that again," said Matt Vitiote, Democratic Party chairman in Monroe County near the Michigan-Ohio border, which twice supported Obama but voted for Trump in 2016.

Williams, who noted the Chevy Blazer's international flavor, is backing Sanders and his promise to strengthen union membership nationwide. She concedes that Michigan's economy has grown under Trump but hopes it won't be enough for him to win the state again.

"I don't see that there has been real growth in higher-paying jobs," Williams said. "There have been jobs created, but they're low-paying jobs and you've got to have two or three of them in order to raise your family."

Associated Press writer David Eggert in Lansing, Mich., contributed to this report.

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

## Florida theme parks keep eye on virus as spring break nears

By **MIKE SCHNEIDER** and **TAMARA LUSH** Associated Press

ORLANDO, Fla. (AP) — As Florida's busy spring break season kicked off this month, coronavirus czar Vice President Mike Pence addressed something that's been on the mind of tens of thousands of families preparing to travel to theme parks: Is it safe?

Over the weekend, Pence stressed it is safe for healthy Americans to travel, noting "one of our favorite places to go when my children were young and even before my children came was in Orlando."

"Whether it be Disney World, whether it be other destination, whether it be cruise ships ... those most at risk are seniors with serious or chronic underlying health conditions."

"Otherwise Americans can confidently travel in this country," Pence said at a meeting with cruise industry officials in Fort Lauderdale on Saturday.

Still, as COVID-19 concerns multiply, the issue weighs heavily in the tourism industry.

"There is definitely concern. Particularly how and when it could manifest itself in the U.S.," said Dennis Spiegel, president of International Theme Park Services Inc., an independent industry consultant.

He's been watching the spread of the coronavirus for weeks, as theme parks in Asia have closed. He estimated the temporary closure of Disney parks in Shanghai and Hong Kong will cost the company anywhere from \$175 million to \$300 million dollars.

Coronavirus concerns have impacted the state's cruise industry and convention business, but the theme parks have been spared so far, although that could change at any moment.

Orlando is the nation's most visited tourist destination, bringing vast numbers of people from around the globe to its major theme parks, which also include Universal Orlando and SeaWorld Orlando. The city attracted 75 million visitors in 2018.

As of Sunday, the city was at least 65 miles (105 kilometers) from the nearest person testing positive for coronavirus.

Though several conventions in Orlando have been canceled because of concerns, individual leisure travel hasn't been affected, local officials said.

Jennifer Morales, a 47-year-old mother from San Antonio, said the outbreak hasn't changed her plans for an eight-day Walt Disney World vacation with her daughter. She's been to Disney World 20-plus times, and her daughter is in a marching band scheduled to be in a park parade. They leave Sunday.

"I don't think it warrants canceling a vacation right now," she said, adding that she's more worried about sitting on a plane with people with colds and the flu. "I'm kind of a germaphobe. We all have our own personal hand sanitizers, We're diligent about handwashing at the parks, especially after rides. Now we'll spending a little extra time washing hands. I already travel with a small can of Lysol and hose everything down in our hotel rooms."



# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 73 of 75

The state draws hordes of college-age students and families with grade-school children during the spring break season, which begins in earnest in mid-March and runs into April. Cancellations could be devastating during one of the busiest times of the year in the Sunshine State.

Last week, five big conventions said they were cancelling their conferences in Orlando because of coronavirus concerns. President Donald Trump had been scheduled to speak at one of the conventions, and Democratic presidential candidates Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders had been set to headline a forum at another convention.

Over the weekend, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommended that travelers defer all cruise travel, especially if they have underlying health issues.

The U.S. Travel Association on Tuesday predicted a 6% decline in international visitors to the U.S. over the next three months as a result of coronavirus. If the prediction holds, it would be the largest decline in international inbound travel since the recession a dozen years ago, the association said.

Coronavirus fears hit Florida last week as Disney World opened a new ride based on Mickey Mouse, a park first. The resort's most anticipated new land in years, Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge, debuted only last August.

If a Disney visitor shows coronavirus symptoms or first responders think they have the flu, both patient and paramedic will get a face mask, said Tim Stromsnes, president of the union local for firefighters at Disney World.

Speigel said parks and attractions likely will undergo "a lot of fumigation, disinfection, right now, not only in the front of the house, but the back of the house."

Officials with Busch Gardens and SeaWorld didn't respond to email inquiries about how the coronavirus had affected them.

Disney officials said in a statement that extra hand sanitizers were being placed throughout its four parks and more than two dozen hotels.

Tom Schroder, a spokesman for Universal Orlando, said it is reinforcing "best-practice health and hygiene procedures" in response to the coronavirus outbreak and adding more hand sanitizer units to its parks.

"We will continue to closely monitor the situation and be ready to act as needed," he said.

Spiegel added that at many parks, deliveries will be scrutinized and workers will be retrained on cleanliness procedures. Parks may also restrict employee travel to higher-risk countries such as China, Italy and South Korea — a measure Legoland has already taken.

On Wednesday, the opening day of Mickey & Minnie's Runaway Railway at Disney's Hollywood Studios, about 1,000 people were waiting to enter the park, said Kurt Schmidt, the owner of Inside the Magic, a massive online community and news site for Disney fans.

No one was wearing a mask, Schmidt said.

"From where I'm sitting, there's absolutely no difference in how things feel," he said. "I can't see anything that is different."

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Lush reported from St. Petersburg, Florida.

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The Associated Press receives support for health and science coverage from the Howard Hughes Medical Institute's Department of Science Education. The AP is solely responsible for all content.

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Follow AP coverage of the virus outbreak at <https://apnews.com/VirusOutbreak> and <https://apnews.com/UnderstandingtheOutbreak>

## AP Sources: Bills agree to sign cornerback Josh Norman

By JOHN WAWROW AP Sports Writer

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Two people with knowledge of the decision told The Associated Press that veteran cornerback Josh Norman has agreed to sign a one-year contract with the Buffalo Bills.

The people spoke to The AP on Monday on the condition of anonymity because the signing has not been

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 74 of 75

announced. NFL Network first reported the deal.

Norman is an eighth-year player who spent the past four seasons in Washington before being released last month. He struggled to play to high expectations and was cut with one season left on a five-year \$75 million contract he signed in free agency in 2016.

In Buffalo, the 32-year-old Norman gets an opportunity for a fresh start among familiar faces.

Bills coach Sean McDermott was the Panthers defensive coordinator during Norman's first four NFL seasons in Carolina. Norman is also a known commodity to Bills general manager Brandon Beane, who worked in the Panthers' front office at the same time.

Norman will be given an opportunity to compete with Levi Wallace for the starting job opposite Tre'Davious White. He also fills a potential need with cornerback Kevin Johnson eligible to become an unrestricted free agent next week.

Norman enjoyed his best season under McDermott in 2015 on a Panthers defense that led the league with 24 interceptions. He had a career-best four interceptions and returned two for touchdowns to earn his first and only All-Pro honor.

Last season, Norman had only eight starts in 12 games and understood his time with Washington was coming to an end after sitting out the team's final four games.

"You've got to put it on yourself as a person to be better within what is happening, and I wasn't," Norman said on locker clean-out day. "I can accept that."

Upon being released, he posted a note on his Twitter account saying he was "grateful for everything."

Norman had seven interceptions and 43 passes defended in 58 games with Washington. Overall, he has 14 interceptions and 12 forced fumbles in 111 career games.

More AP NFL: <https://apnews.com/NFL> and [https://twitter.com/AP\\_NFL](https://twitter.com/AP_NFL)

## Today in History By The Associated Press

Today in History

Today is Tuesday, March 10, the 70th day of 2020. There are 296 days left in the year.

Today's Highlight in History:

On March 10, 1985, Konstantin U. Chernenko, who was the Soviet Union's leader for 13 months, died at age 73; he was succeeded by Mikhail Gorbachev.

On this date:

In 1496, Christopher Columbus concluded his second visit to the Western Hemisphere as he left Hispaniola for Spain.

In 1848, the U.S. Senate ratified the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, which ended the Mexican-American War.

In 1864, President Abraham Lincoln assigned Ulysses S. Grant, who had just received his commission as lieutenant-general, to the command of the Armies of the United States.

In 1876, Alexander Graham Bell's assistant, Thomas Watson, heard Bell say over his experimental telephone: "Mr. Watson — come here — I want to see you" from the next room of Bell's Boston laboratory.

In 1906, about 1,100 miners in northern France were killed by a coal-dust explosion.

In 1913, former slave, abolitionist and Underground Railroad "conductor" Harriet Tubman died in Auburn, New York; she was in her 90s.

In 1933, a magnitude 6.4 earthquake centered off Long Beach, California, resulted in 120 deaths.

In 1969, James Earl Ray pleaded guilty in Memphis, Tennessee (on his 41st birthday) to assassinating civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. (Ray later repudiated that plea, maintaining his innocence until his death.)

In 1980, "Scarsdale Diet" author Dr. Herman Tarnower was shot to death at his home in Purchase, New York. (Tarnower's former lover, Jean Harris, was convicted of his murder; she served nearly 12 years in prison before being released in January 1993.)

# Groton Daily Independent

Tuesday, March 10, 2020 ~ Vol. 28 - No. 252 ~ 75 of 75

In 1988, prior to the 50th anniversary of the Anschluss, Austrian President Kurt Waldheim apologized on his country's behalf for atrocities committed by Austrian Nazis.

In 2000, Pope John Paul II approved sainthood for Katharine Drexel, a Philadelphia socialite who had taken a vow of poverty and devoted her fortune to helping poor blacks and American Indians. (Drexel, who died in 1955, was canonized in October 2000.)

In 2004, teenage sniper Lee Boyd Malvo was sentenced in Chesapeake, Virginia, to life in prison for his role in the October 2002 killing rampage in the Washington, D.C., area that left 10 people dead. (Malvo, 19, was sentenced a day after sniper mastermind John Allen Muhammad was given the death penalty.)

Ten years ago: President Barack Obama denounced waste, inefficiency and downright fraud in the government's health care system as he sought to rally public support for his revamped overhaul plan during a rally in suburban St. Louis. About 200 women who'd flown airplanes during World War II as Women Airforce Service Pilots were awarded the Congressional Gold Medal. Actor Corey Haim died in Burbank, California, at age 38.

Five years ago: Breaking her silence in the face of a growing controversy over her use of a private email address and server, Hillary Rodham Clinton conceded that she should have used government email as secretary of state but insisted she had not violated any federal laws or Obama administration rules. A U.S. Army helicopter crashed in dense fog during a training exercise at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida, killing seven elite Marines and four experienced soldiers.

One year ago: A Boeing 737 Max 8 operated by Ethiopian Airlines crashed shortly after taking off from the capital, Addis Ababa, killing all 157 people on board; the crash was similar to one in October in which a 737 Max 8 flown by Indonesia's Lion Air plunged into the Java Sea minutes after takeoff, killing all 189 people on the plane. (The aircraft would be grounded worldwide after the two disasters, bringing fierce criticism to Boeing over the design and rollout of the jetliner.) "Captain Marvel," the first female-fronted superhero movie from Marvel Studios, took in more than \$150 million domestically and \$455 million globally on its opening weekend, making it one of the biggest blockbusters ever led by a woman.

Today's Birthdays: Talk show host Ralph Emery is 87. Bluegrass/country singer-musician Norman Blake is 82. Actor Chuck Norris is 80. Playwright David Rabe is 80. Singer Dean Torrence (Jan and Dean) is 80. Actress Katharine Houghton (Film: "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?") is 78. Actor Richard Gant is 76. Rock musician Tom Scholz (Boston) is 73. Former Canadian Prime Minister Kim Campbell is 73. TV personality/businesswoman Barbara Corcoran (TV: "Shark Tank") is 71. Actress Aloma Wright is 70. Blues musician Ronnie Earl (Ronnie Earl and the Broadcasters) is 67. Producer-director-writer Paul Haggis is 67. Alt-country/rock musician Gary Louris is 65. Actress Shannon Tweed is 63. Pop/jazz singer Jeanie Bryson is 62. Actress Sharon Stone is 62. Rock musician Gail Greenwood is 60. Magician Lance Burton is 60. Movie producer Scott Gardenhour is 59. Actress Jasmine Guy is 58. Rock musician Jeff Ament (Pearl Jam) is 57. Music producer Rick Rubin is 57. Britain's Prince Edward is 56. Rock singer Edie Brickell is 54. Actor Stephen Mailer is 54. Actor Philip Anthony-Rodriguez is 52. Actress Paget Brewster is 51. Actor Jon Hamm is 49. Rapper-producer Timbaland is 48. Actor Cristian (kris-tee-AHN') de la Fuente is 46. Rock musician Jerry Horton (Papa Roach) is 45. Actor Jeff Branson is 43. Singer Robin Thicke is 43. Actress Bree Turner is 43. Olympic gold medal gymnast Shannon Miller is 43. Contemporary Christian singer Michael Barnes (Red) is 41. Actor Edi Gathegi is 41. Rock musician Matt Asti (MGMT) is 40. Actor Thomas Middleditch is 38. Country singer Carrie Underwood is 37. Actress Olivia Wilde is 36. Rhythm-and-blues singer Emeli Sande (EH'-mihl-ee SAN'-day) is 33. Country singer Rachel Reinert is 31. Country musician Jared Hampton (LANCO) is 29. Actress Emily Osment is 28.

Thought for Today: "He who knows, does not speak. He who speaks, does not know." — Lao Tzu, Chinese philosopher.

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